

The Human Resources Playbook for Government

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Executive Summary

The heartbeat of any organization can be summed up in one word: **people.**

It isn't the technology or automated processes that many agencies have come to rely on over the years.

The truth is, when organizations hire good people, the technology takes care of itself. People provide overall direction and vision for an organization, ensure that technology enhances operations and ultimately develop more leaders to implement effective plans.

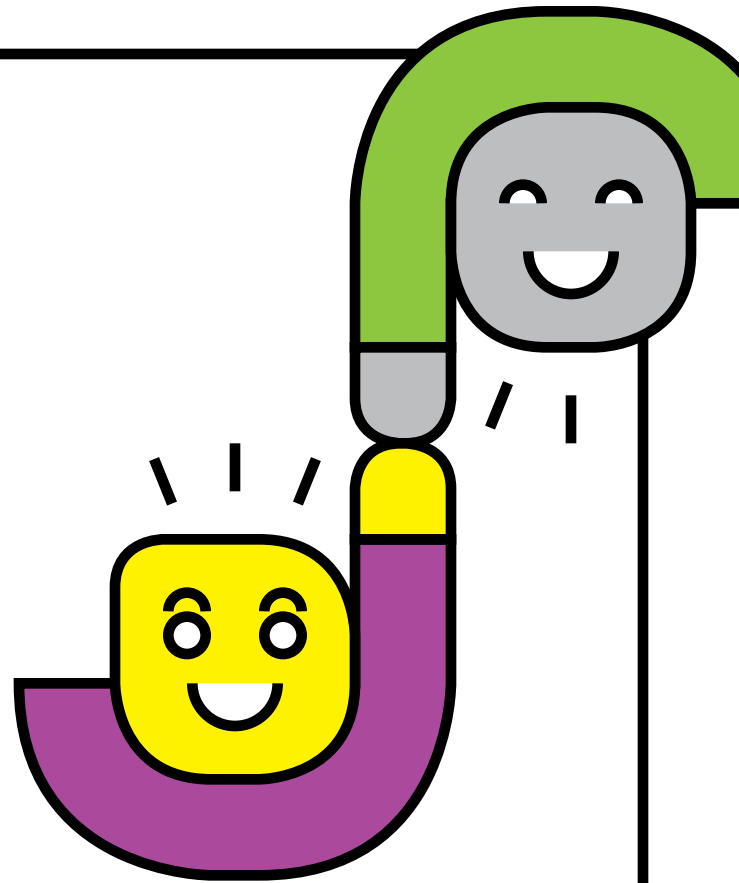
But people are often the costliest — although undeniably the most valuable — resource within an agency. Author Jim Collins, whose books are widely read by government hiring managers, has said great organizations get the right people on the bus, get the wrong people off the bus and get the right people in the right seats.

That's why this GovLoop playbook focuses on the key issues agencies must address to achieve those outcomes: recruiting, hiring, onboarding and employee development. To better

understand how agencies are addressing these key issues, we sat down with chief human capital officers (CHCOs), human resources directors, hiring managers and rank-and-file employees at all levels of government. They include professionals from Denver, Indiana, the General Services Administration's digital consultancy group, 18F and the Labor and Homeland Security departments.

In addition to practical tips for addressing some of government's most pressing HR issues, there are also takeaways for employees to help them navigate the hiring process and be their own advocates for career development.

Before we dive into specific plays, let's take a closer look at the key issues and trends in government HR.

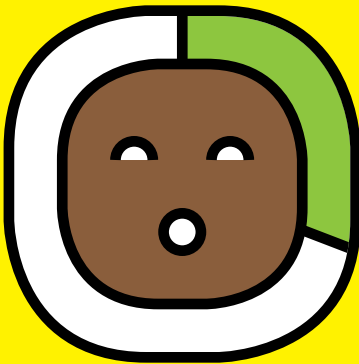


HR Issues & Trends

600k

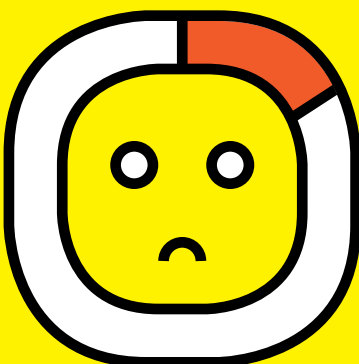
Federal employees will be eligible to retire by September 2017.

31%



Almost **one-third of the workforce** will be eligible to retire by September 2017.

16%



Only 16 percent of government employees are **younger than 35**.

By September 2017, 600,000 federal employees will be eligible to retire, according to Government Accountability Office stats.

"That's a staggering 31 percent of the workforce," and "unfortunately those under 35 years of age make up only 16 percent of government employees," Oklahoma Sen. James Lankford said during a September 2016 hearing on recruiting millennials.

Lankford lamented that government is too slow to bring talented employees on board. On average, it takes 100 days to fill an open position. Office of Personnel Management Acting Director Beth Cobert wants to get that number down to 60 days, but even that can seem like eons for younger employees who are used to decisions being made quickly and efficiently, Lankford said.

This isn't just a federal government issue. State and local agencies are grappling with the same impending retirement wave and challenges of hiring skilled employees to fill those gaps. For the time being, many are managing multiple generations at once. To do that effectively, Karen Wilcox, Director of HR at the Colorado Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT), is considering what motivates these different age groups and what they expect from their employers.

OIT, like many government agencies, is being forced to rethink how it recruits, hires, retains and invests in employees who may stay for two to three years, as opposed to 20 or 30. For critical positions such as cybersecurity, Cobert has said the government is working on hiring and talent development policies that will make it easier for professionals to build skills inside and outside the federal government and more easily use their talents across sectors.

When it comes to the federal workforce, hiring authorities are often touted as a way to speed hiring, but GAO data shows that agencies aren't taking full advantage of them. There are

"We've spent a lot of time and a lot of resources on training people in communication skills and soft skills."

Sydney Rose,
CHCO at the Labor Department



more than 100 hiring authority codes in government, but agencies only use a small portion of them, **according to GAO**. "We really do have a lot of hiring authorities, flexibilities and recruiting tools," said DHS CHCO Angela Bailey. "We have a lot of things at our fingertips. Let's just figure out how to creatively partner with the line managers and actually use those, instead of continuously running to the Hill asking for yet another hiring authority, or running to OPM. The tactic that we're really starting to take is, let's crack open these books and look at what's available and make use of those."

Bailey also noted that identifying top talent isn't just about bringing in people from the outside. Numerous HR professionals we spoke with, including Bailey, stressed the importance of training current employees. Training is usually the first to go in tight budget times, but agencies are finding creative ways to invest in employees' career growth at low to no cost.

We also heard from these professionals that technical expertise isn't the only part of training.

"We've spent a lot of time and a lot of resources on training people in communication skills and soft skills," said Sydney Rose, CHCO at the Labor Department. They're training employees on how to motivate people, reward them, recognize them and deal with nonperformers.

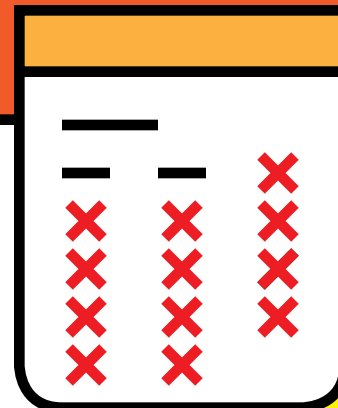
Across government, agencies are using tools such as data analytics to drive training, hiring and recruiting decisions. In Colorado, Wilcox and her team are using various metrics to assess the state's current and future workforce needs and determine what stats may no longer need to be tracked.

"We have a wealth of data within the HR office," Bailey said. "We have access to the payroll data, so we can see trends in sick leave usage, trends in the way people use leave without pay or workers' compensation." That data is often paired with employee engagement data to get richer insights about the workforce.

In the next section, we will view workforce stats from the annual Federal Viewpoint Survey, as well as state and local workforce trends.

100

Average number of days it takes to fill an open position.





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Cloud-Based Human Capital Management to Support a Changing Government Workforce

An interview with Jim Gill, Vice President of Government for Cornerstone OnDemand

The government workforce of the future is drastically changing thanks to advancements in technology and the evolving demands of digitally savvy workers. Agencies are adjusting to managing multiple generations while also planning for two key issues: the pending retirements of seasoned workers and grappling with work-life balance issues for employees who are empowered to work anytime, anywhere on any device.

Technology has not only redefined when employees work but also how they work. In fact, some manual jobs — such as data entry associates and typists — are becoming obsolete, while the need for employees who embrace modern technologies to do their jobs more efficiently is growing.

Jim Gill, Vice President of Government for Cornerstone OnDemand, sat down with GovLoop to provide some insights on the evolution of the government workforce and the role Cornerstone plays in helping agencies address the complex issues that come with change. As a leader in human capital management (HCM), Cornerstone develops cloud-based systems that help agencies recruit, train, manage and connect people across the organization.

"We're starting to recruit a new generation of the government workforce," Gill said. "Their daily lives are dictated by how they communicate and how they conduct their personal lives with this rapidly changing technology. They're used to consuming information and discussing that information in real time. They're going to expect forward-thinking technologies where they have a lot of collaboration in the workforce, as well as visibility and transparency into the mobility of their career path."

The ideal solutions for meeting these workforce demands include cloud-based technologies that enable HR professionals to effectively manage the full hire-to-terminate lifecycle of government employees. Gill says HR staff need solutions that are developed around the needs of employees, while also helping to increase recruitment, engagement, education and retention. For example, many cloud-based technologies help organizations better recruit millennials by giving hiring managers access to real-time data about the talent pool.

But implementing such technologies can be challenging because most agencies are still using siloed, legacy IT systems that are expensive to maintain and do not support real-time data analysis. However, the House of Representatives passed an IT modernization bill in

September 2016 that establishes working capital funds for agencies to improve, retire or replace IT systems. This makes Gill hopeful that these types of developments will promote governmentwide use of efficient, adaptable and innovative technologies.

For example, agencies have gradually shifted to cloud solutions — specifically unified systems that give HR teams one portal, instead of disparate tools — to manage their entire workforce. "That gives HR professionals, as well as senior government officials, the ability to make informed decisions about the current workforce and the size and needs of the future government workforce," Gill said.

Agencies are using Cornerstone's capabilities to do more than just woo potential new employees. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has made great use of Cornerstone Recruiting to better recruit top talent, Cornerstone Connect to boost engagement and collaboration, as well as Cornerstone Performance and Cornerstone Succession.

With a unified platform, all workforce data and every phase of the employee lifecycle are accessible to all users through a single interface. Gone are the days of fielding data from several IT systems and manually feeding it into HCM systems.

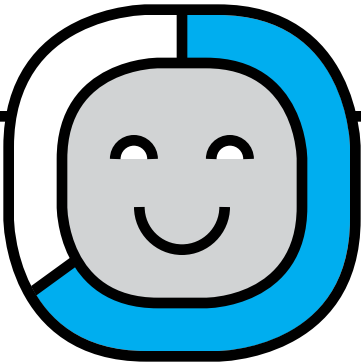
HUD began implementing these capabilities in 2013 in a phased approach that allowed the agency to capture essential HR data elements and ensure the various facets of the system worked together cohesively. HUD tested the system with newer employees, who were mostly millennials, and used their feedback to make necessary changes.

"There has never been a more important time for government agencies to get strategic about the workforce," Gill said. "A unified human capital management solution enables government organizations to build the workforces they need by providing a single, streamlined tool instead of a series of disconnected programs." Specifically, it helps agencies better manage limited resources and make more data-driven decisions around recruiting and learning, performance management, and succession planning.

"In turn, HR staff can spend less time on paperwork and manual data entry and more time focusing on strategic planning and data analytics," Gill said. "They're empowered to better serve employees, deliver more effective programs and improve organizational and employee performance."

By the Numbers: Government Workforce Stats

65%

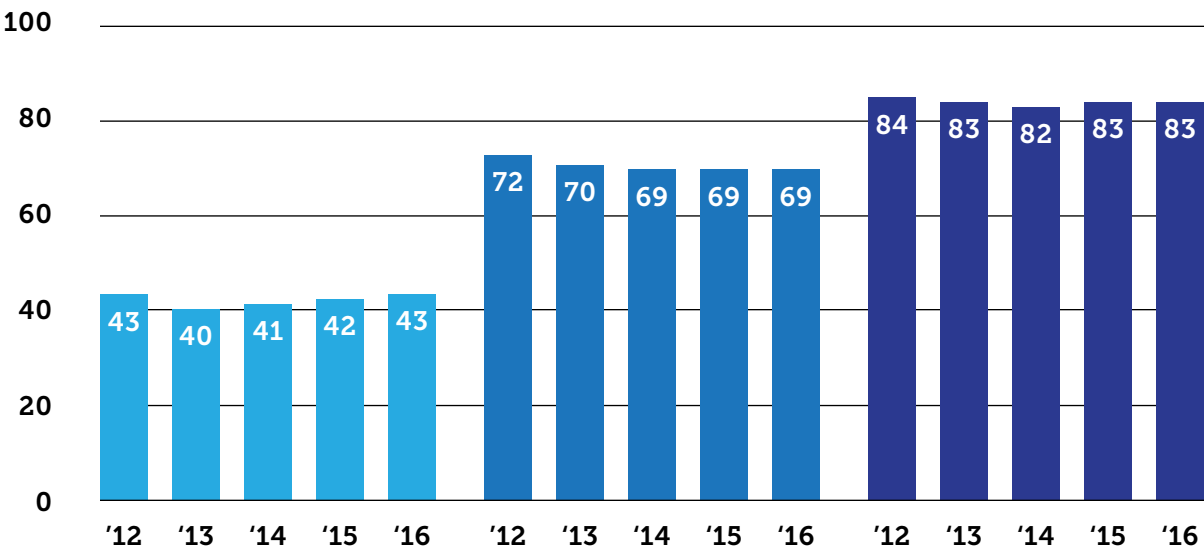


Federal Workforce

One of the bright spots in this year's [Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey](#) is that employee engagement governmentwide is steadily rising. The increase, while small, is trending in a positive direction and is one indication of a happier workforce. According to the voluntary survey of 407,789 employees across 80 agencies, 65 percent said they are engaged at their workplace, compared with 64 percent last year and 63 percent in 2014.

65 percent said they are engaged at their workplace.

The 98-question survey included questions that gauge employee sentiments about their supervisors, personal work experience and a range of other topics. Here are a few stats that are pertinent to topics discussed in this guide. The scores are based on a 100-point scale and indicate what percentage of employees agree with each statement.



My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.

The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.

I like the kind of work I do.

State and Local Workforce

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence, a nonprofit that seeks to bring government leaders together to help them do their jobs better, conducted its annual survey in spring 2016. The trends study included responses from 330 participants.

Here are a few highlights:

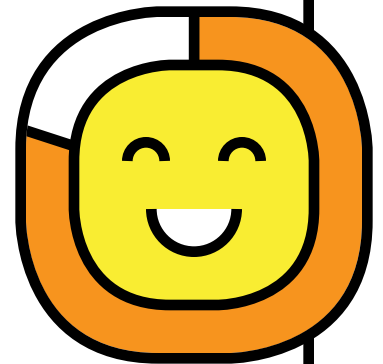
Most important issues for state and local government HR managers:

- 92%** Recruiting and retaining qualified personnel
- 80%** Succession planning
- 79%** Staff development

Top three skill sets respondents feel new hires need:

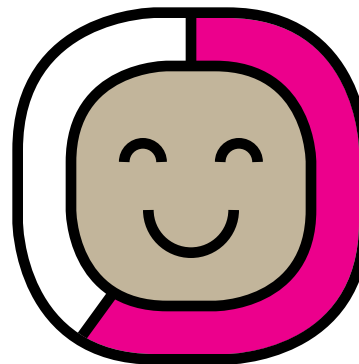
- 63%** Interpersonal
- 53%** Technology
- 42%** Written communications

85%



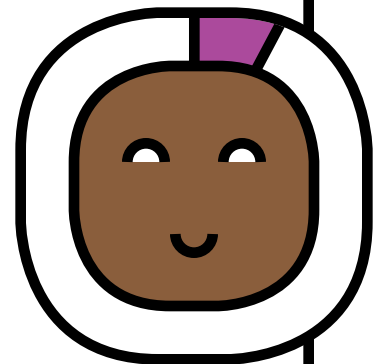
85 percent of respondents agree that their agency's benefits compensation offered to employees is competitive with the labor market.

60%



60 percent say that their gov agency hired more people in 2015 than in 2014.

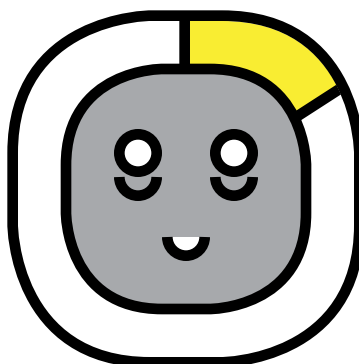
8%



Only 8 percent say they hired less than the previous year.

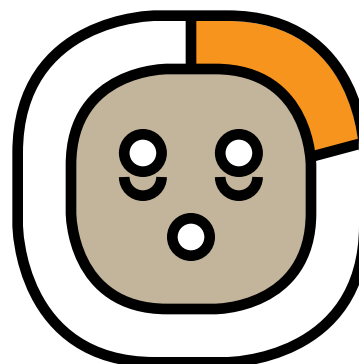
If the silver tsunami scares you, then this won't help:

16%



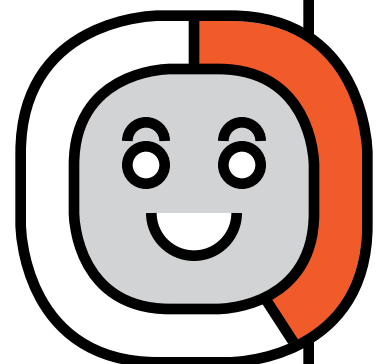
16 percent of respondents reported that their retirement-eligible employees have accelerated their retirement plans.

21%



Only 21 percent report plans being postponed,

41%



and 41 percent report no changes.

Key Milestones in Federal HR



2008

In February, 2008, OPM and the CHCO Council Subcommittee for Hiring and Succession Planning launched an “end-to-end” **hiring initiative**. This new initiative was created with applicants in mind and focused on depicting the entire hiring process, all the way through an employee’s first year at work.

2009

On Nov. 9, 2009, President Barack Obama signed **Executive Order 13518**, which launched the Veterans Employment Initiative. This created a Council on Veterans Employment to work with the president to increase employment opportunities for veterans in the federal government.

2010

On May 11, 2010, the president released a **memorandum** titled “Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process.” The memo highlights the inefficiencies within the federal hiring system and calls on OPM to take measures that simplify the application process and attract the highest caliber of candidates.

2010

On Dec. 9, 2010, Obama signed into law the **Telework Enhancement Act**, which requires agencies to create a telework policy and sets expectations and guidelines for telework reporting.

2015

On March 9, 2015, OPM released the Recruitment, Engagement, Diversity, and Inclusion (**REDI**) **Roadmap**. The strategy is meant to help agencies attract, develop and retain a talented, engaged and diverse workforce.



2015

On Dec. 15, 2015, Obama released an **executive order** titled "Strengthening the Senior Executive Service." This order aims to reform how senior executives are hired, rewarded and trained. A key part of the executive order requires agencies to develop plans for promoting SES rotations to different departments, sub-agencies and non-federal partners.

2014

On Dec. 23, 2014, the administration released a memo pertaining to the President's Management Agenda Cross Agency Priority (CAP) **goal** on People and Culture. The key objective of this CAP goal is to drive efficient performance governmentwide by increasing employee engagement and unlocking the full potential of the workforce.

2016

On May 6, 2016, OPM launched its first **Hiring Excellence Campaign** session. This campaign is a yearlong, nationwide effort to improve the government hiring process and to encourage agencies to connect with top talent and ease the application process for interested candidates. This includes working on the USAJobs website, as well as emphasizing diversity, inclusion and strategic recruitment.



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76% of next-generation talent *want to
turn their hobbies into full-time jobs.*

* Mashable, <http://mashable.com/2014/08/20/generation-z-marketing/#wqbB5WH6mkqD>

How to Engage Next-Generation Talent by Differentiating Your Agency

An Interview with Dr. Tim Lagan, Director of Professional Services at Monster Government Solutions

Younger professionals are redefining the workforce of the future, specifically millennials and digital natives born in the mid-1990s and 2000s, or Generation Z. They are driven by mission and a strong sense of purpose to transform their communities and the nation for the better.

This sense of purpose is what agencies must tap into when recruiting next-generation talent. "Thankfully, government agencies are mission-driven by nature," said Tim Lagan, Director of Professional Services at Monster Government Solutions, a HR solutions provider for the public sector.

"They are making policies and programs every day that will transform the world we live in."

Expressing that commitment to changing the world is paramount when attracting fresh talent, but that is something many agencies struggle to do. That's why they must focus on creating a strong brand that tells their story and appeals to a diverse workforce.

A great first step when developing a brand is asking your current employees why they enjoy working at your agency and then relaying that message to your potential hires. According to the annual **Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey**, nine out of 10 government employees say their work is important, so they will send the right message to younger recruits.

"But to reach top candidates, you have to go where millennials and Gen Z live — online," Lagan said. "Your brand presence needs to be available on a mobile-friendly website so these young prospects can find it. About 20 percent of people in this age group only use mobile devices to access the internet, so this is essential."

Lagan highlighted **Marines.com** as an example of a website that leads with its brand. "You know right away that working there would allow you to have a huge impact in the world," he said.

Maintaining a strong online presence also means having active social media accounts. By using Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, you can reinforce that brand message through channels many next-gen prospects use every day. This is also a great way to find passive candidates that have niche skills in areas like IT and cybersecurity. In 2015, Federal CIO Tony Scott said the government has some 10,000 openings for cybersecurity jobs. Based on additional reports, that number could be closer to 15,000.

The challenge for agencies is finding skilled, younger workers to replace an aging workforce. "Only about 7 percent of current government workers are under 30, compared with 30 percent in the private sector," Lagan said.

One reason for such low numbers is the federal government's job application process. "We are relying on millennials and Gen Z to find and search job boards that often end with extremely lengthy applications," Lagan noted. "Instead, we could be leveraging tools that allow HR departments to proactively pique these candidates' interests. Cutting-edge hiring tools can integrate with emails and social posts for a much easier recruiting experience."

Some agencies are taking an innovative approach to address the government's most pressing hiring challenges. For example, NASA, which has been rated the top agency to work for the last four years, tells the story of its culture using the hashtag #NASAProud on Twitter. NASA officials interview current employees on why they love the work they do. It gives a real human element to the agency and provides that personal sense of belonging that millennials and Gen Z look for.

Lagan shared practical steps that all agencies can take to improve recruiting and hiring.

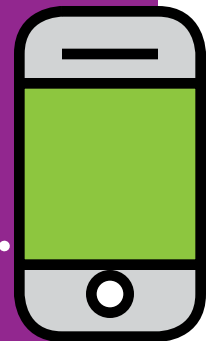
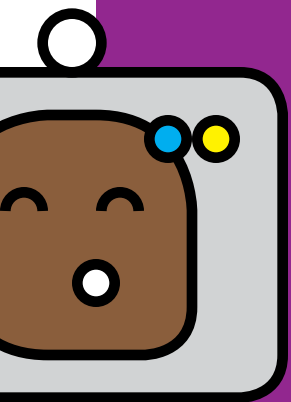
The first is build your message. Make sure your agency is branded to show how it is making an impact. You can also stress the soft benefits of working for the government.

Next, think like a digital native. Next-gen talent does its research online when looking for a job. You can continue to reach them by adding appealing new content to your career site to boost your relevance in search engines and attract organic visitors.

Lastly, make sure you are spreading the word through social media platforms. Putting your message on social channels and tracking your interactions with passive and active candidates will put your agency front and center in the minds of young talent looking for a new job.

"While many of these tips are tactical for HR managers and hiring departments, it is up to all employees up and down the chain at government agencies to spread the word," Lagan said. "By sharing their stories of why the work they do is important and how their agency is changing the world, each and every person in your organization can make a significant impact on recruiting next-gen talent."

Introduction to Your HR Plays



For the remainder of this guide, we'll focus on specific HR-related topics that should be top of mind for every organization: recruiting, hiring, onboarding management and employee development.

Instead of providing a broad overview, we took a more focused approach. For each of those topics, we honed in on more granular issues that remain the Achilles' heel of many agencies. They include tips for:

- Recruiting stellar managers to nurture and effectively lead the workforce
- Hiring and promoting employees internally and being transparent about those opportunities
- Onboarding remote employees and effectively welcoming them into the fold
- Creating solid coaching programs that develop future coaches and leaders

In each section, you'll glean practical tips from leaders at all levels of government who have embraced change, remained steadfast through challenges and are reaping the fruits of their labor.

Tips for Workforce Management

Play 1

How to Manage a Distributed Workforce

For a growing number of government employees, work is less about where they're located and more about the work they're doing. Technology has freed employees from being chained to desktop computers and enabled them to work from anywhere — home, hotels, coffee shops or in the field.

But managing and enabling today's distributed workforce requires more than technology. There must be clear expectations between employees and managers to ensure that productivity doesn't slip and workplace relationships don't diminish. Whether employees are working in the office or remotely, operations should be seamless, said Danette Campbell, Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Telework Program.

"When someone is working from home, it should be no different than when they're sitting here in [our] Alexandria [Virginia] campus," Campbell said.

The number of teleworkers at USPTO ballooned from 18, who lived within a 50-mile commuting radius, in 1997 to 10,879 by the end of the fourth quarter of 2016. More than half of these teleworkers work from home four to five days a week and are distributed across the United States, Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. To put that into perspective, 86 percent of the entire USPTO workforce teleworks at least one day a week.

The agency's total workforce has doubled since 2006 to nearly 13,000 employees, but USPTO has not had to increase its real estate footprint on its Virginia campus. "If we had to call back all of these full-time teleworkers and find real estate for them, we would have to secure about \$34 million-plus in real estate to house them," Campbell said. "There's a huge return on investment associated with our telework programs and the agency has done everything that it can do to make [telework] strategic, transparent and seamless."

Campbell offered these recommendations for managing a distributed workforce, particularly those who telework.

- **Establish rules of the road for telework**, such as performance standards for employees, and make them available via your agency's intranet or telework resource site. It sounds like a no-brainer, but failure to do so can create friction if the dos and don'ts around telework are not made clear.
- **Training is a must, not just for rank-and-file employees but managers too.** Does your agency offer training and resources for managing a distributed workforce? If not, consider taking cues from USPTO. The agency conducts focus sessions around telework and an annual recertification training to ensure everyone knows the agency's telework guidelines.
- **All teleworkers at USPTO participate in two types of training: one for IT and one for non-IT.** Training includes performance requirements, responsibilities and expectations. Employees must be comfortable establishing a virtual private network connection and using their personal identity verification card to securely access USPTO resources.
- **Ongoing communication is key.** "You cannot just distribute laptops and say, 'Go home and prosper,'" Campbell said. "When we talk to people about managing teleworkers [or] a distributed environment, we say that accountability, engagement and a shared sense of purpose will really unite this distributed workforce. Those are the same components in the brick-and-mortar environment."
- **Ensure collaboration tools and IT resources can support employee communications and workloads.** Make sure all employees, not just those who are distributed, are comfortable using collaboration tools. Set expectations around the frequency and methods that will be used to communicate.
- **Clear performance expectations and managerial trust are critical to managing a distributed environment.** Does your telework program ensure employees who work away from the office have the competencies and resources they need to be successful? What are the eligibility requirements for employees who want to telework? If employees are not eligible to telework, do they know why?
- **Consider having shared work calendars** so everyone knows who is working remotely or if they're out of the office.
- **Keep your distributed workforce engaged.** One way is through regularly scheduled on-campus events that allow distributed workers to network and participate in team-building activities.
- **Establish how your telework metrics will be measured and tracked**, whether they're emissions reduction, transit costs, real estate savings or productivity gains.

Tips for Recruiting

Play 2

How to Recruit From Within

There's a lot of talk in government about recruiting talent from Silicon Valley, private firms nationwide and directly from colleges and universities. But sometimes the perfect candidate for the job isn't across the country or in a classroom; they're down the hall or in a field office.

"As long as I can remember, there's been this huge push to hire talent from outside the federal government — to hire the best and the brightest, said Angela Bailey, who has served as CHCO at DHS since January 2016. "I think every time we say that, the message we send to our employees is, 'We either need to replace you, or you don't know what you're doing so we have to find the best and brightest from outside the federal government.'"

It is no wonder federal employees, with DHS as no exception, generally believe that their departments do not offer many opportunities for career progression, promotions, reassignments and job rotations, Bailey said, citing employee sentiments shared in the annual viewpoint survey. "At DHS, we're starting to turn that sentiment a bit, [so it's clear that] we value our employees. We actually want to help them find their niche and establish a meaningful career path, just as much as we want to infuse ourselves with talent from outside DHS."

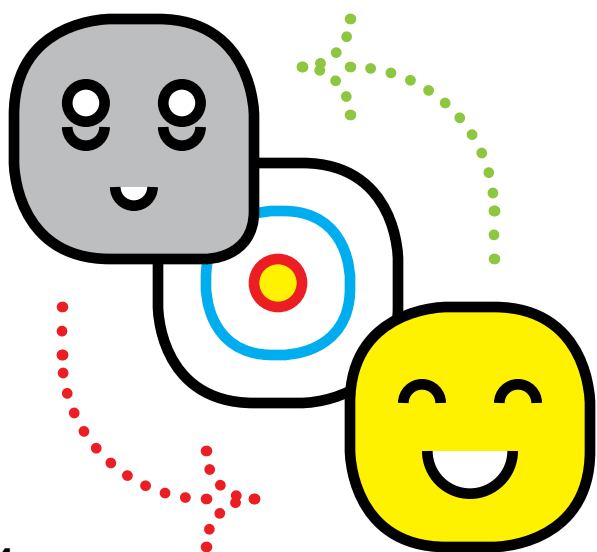
It didn't take a 10-point plan and massive resources to make improvements at DHS. "One of the very simple things we did is every time we have a job announcement, we send out an email to say, 'Hey, just want to let you know that this assignment is available or this promotion is available,'" Bailey said. "By announcing what those positions are, people within DHS know that there are opportunities here."

"We actually want to help [our employees] find their niche and establish a meaningful career path, just as much as we want to infuse ourselves with talent."

Angela Bailey, CHCO at the Department of Homeland Security

Below are a few of the measures DHS took to improve internal recruiting:

- **Be transparent with employees about vacancies and opportunities for promotion.** Ensure that information is well known and published and that the criteria used to assess individuals' qualifications are clear.
- **Manage employee expectations.** Establish a clear process for considering candidates, in terms of time periods for the selection process and when candidates can expect to hear feedback.
- **If the applicant pool isn't too large, provide constructive feedback to employees about why they weren't selected.** Bailey highlighted one instance in the CHCO office in which a qualified employee didn't make the final cut for a position. The issue wasn't the employee's qualifications but rather how they were presented on the resume, which leads us to the next point ...
- **Set your employees up for success.** Sometimes the remedy is as simple as helping them with resume writing. "It's not giving them the answers to the quiz," Bailey said. "It's just helping them format their resume in such a way that it actually tells the right story." In fact, at a cybersecurity hiring fair this year, DHS teamed with OPM to provide resume writing to the 2,000 attendees, both feds and non-feds.
- **Make sure your employees are prepared for promotions.** Let them know what career paths are available and be willing to put your money where your mouth is, Bailey said. "If training is truly important to you, then you'd better invest in it." Unfortunately, it's typically the first thing that gets cut.
- **Don't underestimate the power of job fairs for attracting talent inside your organization.** About a third of the people who got jobs at the DHS cyber fair were already employed by the department or another federal agency. "Nobody saw it as losing somebody. Instead, they saw it as helping people get career progression within DHS."
- **Expose employees to new opportunities.** At DHS that's the goal of a new Joint Duty Program aimed at providing GS 13 to SES (and equivalent level employees) with rotations and details to different components within the department.



Play 3

How to Recruit Stellar Managers

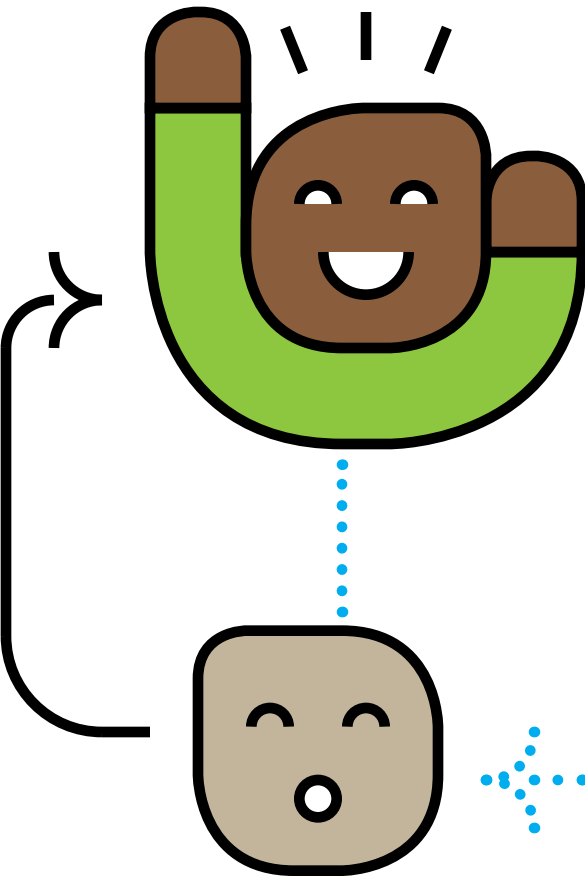
Wooing the right managers to lead and develop employees is no trivial task. Whether they're homegrown or recruited from outside the agency, managers play a vital role in how their direct reports view the organization and their role in it.

"One of the primary reasons someone leaves a job is because of the relationship with their supervisor," said Sydney Rose, CHCO at the Labor Department. People want managers whom they respect and who also respect them.

That's why soft skills, particularly organizational empathy, are critical, said David Bray, Chief Information Officer at the Federal Communications Commission. In fact, that was one of the main attributes Bray looked for when hiring his deputy and associate CIOs.

"I think that's so key because when you are taking on the role of being a manager, probably the best analogy is you're being given the gift of fire, in the sense that fire can warm people, it can provide good food, it can create a place of festivity to gather around, but fire can also scald and do other things," he said. "And so when you're given the gift of fire, you have to know how to use it well."

But recruiting isn't just a one-way street, and hiring managers aren't the only ones making decisions. Potential candidates are deciding if the agency is a good fit for them and if they want to be managers. "What we have seen over the last few years is there are fewer incentives to go into management," Rose said.

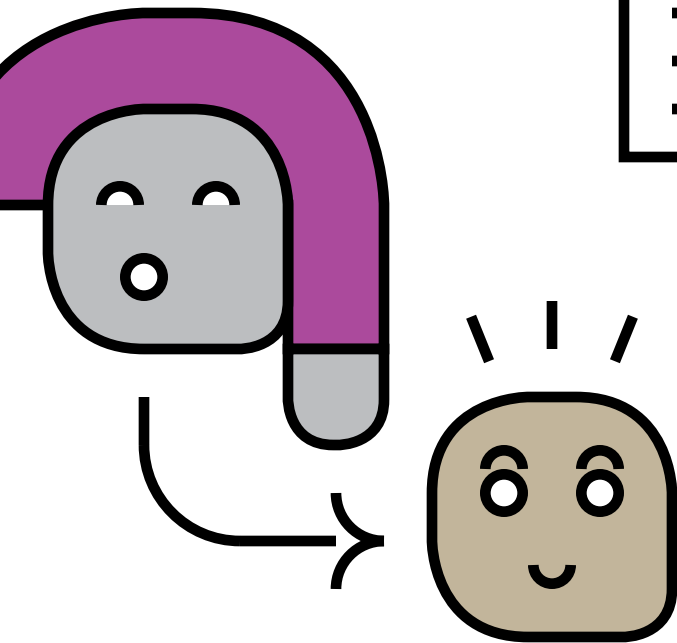


With that in mind, Rose and Bray shared some practical tips for bringing stellar managers on board.

- **Consider incentives for potential managers, such as student loan repayment.** Under this type of agreement, the agency would agree to pay off student loans in exchange for a commitment for service from the employee. Such options could be more enticing than retirement packages or other benefits for younger managers who are plagued by loan debts.
- **Look for people who can serve as facilitators, cultivators or champions of a team, Bray said.** These types of people help employees take on obstacles that they may not want to face because they're too hard or uninterested.
- **Find managers who exude organizational empathy.** Bray defined this as an awareness of or willingness to understand the narratives across the organization (what people believe to be true), an awareness of the values in the organization (what motivates and discourages people) and an awareness of the trust relationships and the degree of trust between individuals, offices and teams.
- **Effectively sell the mission and opportunities available to managers at your agency.** It's not the money that ultimately wins over candidates, who could get paid much more in the private sector. It's the sense of mission and the ability to take on unique and impactful opportunities only government affords.
- **Inspire future managers and leave them wanting to know more about your organization.** Bray does this through social media and by speaking about FCC endeavors at events that put him in front of hundreds of potential managers. He has also recognized that public service has multiple paths. Maybe someone is interested in service but would rather do it as a contractor. Be open to those options.
- **Don't give management roles as rewards for people who are good at their craft,** whether that's solving technical problems or routinely meeting deadlines. The skills that made someone accomplished in that role likely are not the skills that will make them good managers. If you promote that person, you have to train them, Rose said. "You're suddenly asking a right-handed person to write with their left hand, but we're not going to help them?"
- **The cost of not preparing and hiring stellar managers is insupportable,** Rose noted. "People will not be productive, they will not be engaged and the organization will start hemorrhaging. You'll have an attrition rate that's even higher than the normal high [you're] preparing for."



Tips for Hiring



Play 4

How to Use Direct Hire Authority for Digital Experts

Nimble, flexible and innovative.

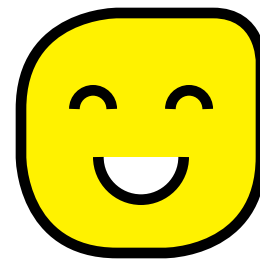
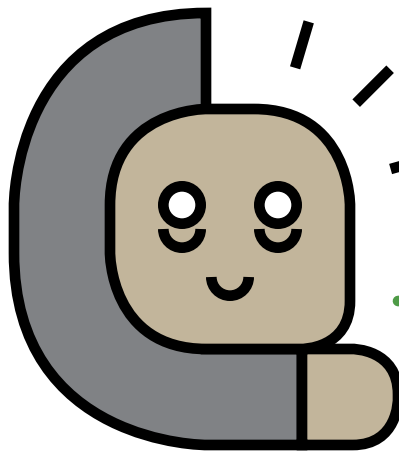
These aren't words typically associated with the federal hiring process — and for many reasons. Job-seekers who have endured what can be a monthslong waiting game know the frustrations of navigating USAJobs.gov, matching their qualifications to federal job announcements and then hoping to hear good news.

But federal organizations such as GSA's 18F are hoping to reverse that stigma through the use of Direct Hire Authority — a temporary authority OPM grants to agencies to hire individuals in an expedited manner. The digital consultancy group, which is composed of technologists, designers and researchers, has used a particular type of **hiring authority known as Schedule A** to temporarily hire digital service experts.

"These are term appointments for two years that can be extended for another two years if needed and the performance is strong," said Jen Tress, Director of Talent at 18F. The organization launched in 2014 with 15 full-time employees, and hiring was on a referral-only basis. As of October 2016, that number has grown to more than 200 using full and open competition to recruit top talent. Other agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and Housing and Urban Development Department, are teaming with 18F to implement similar hiring tactics.

We sat down with Tress to get some practical tips on how 18F is using Direct Hire Authority to attract digital professionals to government service.

- **Focus on creating partnerships between hiring managers and HR personnel.** Both sides must be engaged in the hiring process. At 18F, HR staff embed with the team, and they meet twice a week to discuss hiring issues.
- **HR and hiring managers should collaborate to create job profiles up front,** including employee responsibilities, required qualifications and compensation.
- **A big complaint that program offices have with traditional HR shops is the perception that they always say no to their requests, and don't explain why.** One way to combat this issue is for hiring managers to familiarize themselves with the basics of hiring authorities. From there, a meaningful conversation with HR might go like this: "I need a really great person in these areas with these skills. Can you help me figure out the best path to get them on board?"
- **Craft a position description that clearly explains the major duties, responsibilities and supervisory relationships of your future digital experts.** To simplify this process, 18F classified its workforce, including designers, digital software engineers and product managers, as innovation specialists under the 301 occupational series.
- **Coordinate with HR to involve your subject-matter experts in the initial rating and ranking process for evaluating candidates.** For example, if your agency is hiring software engineers, then have software engineers on your team rate and rank applications because they have that domain expertise. "That's a partnership that we brokered with HR," Tress said. HR is still responsible for issuing the final list of eligible applicants.
- **Consider using technical recruiters who have expertise in the key areas you're looking to fill,** whether that's engineering, design or change management. These recruiters reach out directly to candidates through social media and other methods and inform them about openings, encourage them to apply and can talk specifics about the type of work they would be doing. They also keep potential employees engaged and in the loop throughout the hiring process.
- **Test for the technical and emotional quotient.** For example, in addition to completing coding exercises with an applicant, make sure to also test for empathy and problem-solving skills. One way is to ask questions that reveal potential candidates' tolerance for bureaucracy, how well they work in teams or how they respond to ideas they don't agree with. (Head to **Page 25** for a list of some questions you should be asking.)



Play 5

How to Build a Strong Succession Plan

Succession planning is one of those critical tasks that organizations know they need to do. But few do it well — if at all.

To be clear, succession planning isn't an HR issue; it's a workforce issue for everyone, and it's also hard work, said Karen Niparko, Executive Director of the Office of Human Resources (OHR) for the city and county of Denver.

It isn't easy knowing that employees you groom for future roles could resign and pursue other offers. But managers can't be paralyzed by that fear because employee development is one of the most important steps they can take to increase retention and make people feel like they are contributing.

The question every manager, HR professional and senior leader must consider, Niparko said: Are they effectively planning for readiness candidates who are able to step in when someone retires or leaves the organization?

But here's part of the challenge: "In a private company, you can identify internal talent, place them on a development path for succession, and when the job opens you can promote them," she said. "In the public sector, with competitive hiring, when you have an opening you commit to post it and make it available to everyone and select the most qualified candidate. If your leaders have been coaching for development and growth, they will have developed a pool of internal employees who can compete well for the position."

Although challenging, proper readiness planning is not impossible. Here's how Denver gets the job done.

- **First identify what Niparko calls your exposure.** What is the impact if key employees retire or resign? How would your agency respond to these events? What future plans are in place? For example, does your agency anticipate that the workforce will grow? Will new skills be required?
- **Determine what development opportunities are in place for employees.** If your organization conducts employee engagement surveys, use that data to gauge sentiments about career opportunities and the ability to be promoted.
- **The number of retirement-eligible employees isn't the only data agencies must consider.** Part of readiness planning is identifying how many people could leave and when that is most likely to happen. Niparko said one Denver agency could lose 16 percent of its workforce next year if all retirement-eligible employees decide to move on. That's where data analytics comes in. Using analytics, Denver found that on average, people typically retire within two years of becoming eligible. Denver still needs to plan, but granular data is helping the city create a more effective readiness and workforce strategy.
- **Start preparing readiness candidates and work with leaders to see who could potentially fill positions before they become vacant.** What type of development are those candidates receiving, and have you spoken with them about their aspirations, skills and skills gaps that would preclude them from moving into certain roles?
- **Create a competency-based learning and development model for individual contributors, supervisors and agency heads.** The model should make clear what the competencies are for each role.
- **Expose employees to information that extends beyond their daily tasks.** For example, Denver encourages employees to develop stronger skills by getting involved in city initiatives and committees outside their department.
- **The city has a budget policy called dual incumbency that requires a partnership between agencies and the city's budget office.** Let's say an employee decides to retire in the next month or two. To ensure knowledge is transferred and disruptions in operations are limited, an agency can use the competitive hiring process to hire or promote an employee who can work alongside the future retiree, glean expertise and prepare to fully take on the role when the retiree leaves.
- **Succession planning is not a canned program, Niparko said.** It is specific to an organization. Start the conversation with department leaders and partner with HR. It's a collaborative process.

Tips for Onboarding

Play 6

How to Onboard Remote Employees

There's a lot of stigma surrounding remote working for those who live outside their agency's geographic area. For starters, there are strong opinions about whether employees are actually working or occupying themselves with personal matters on the agency's dime.

But agencies are coming to grips with the fact that today's worker wants options, and that the agency may be missing out on top talent by requiring employees to relocate.

With new technologies emerging and employees seeking more workplace flexibilities, the ability to work remotely has become an increasingly coveted perk. Although there are many benefits, it can be difficult for agencies to properly communicate with remote employees. Effective onboarding, for example, can be challenging for everyone involved, including managers and new employees.

But Keith Wilson, Innovation Operations Manager at 18F, is taking this challenge head-on. Throughout his career, Wilson has championed many onboarding techniques that have proven to be highly successful among remote and teleworking employees.

At USPTO, Larita Jones, Division Chief for Patent Core Operations within the Office of Human Resources, and Sharon Watson, Marketing and Communications Advisor, have also successfully implemented onboarding programs for telework employees. Jones and Watson emphasized the importance of communication at every step of the onboarding process, as well as keeping employees connected — no matter where they're located.

We sat down with each of them to get the inside scoop on creating a thriving onboarding program for remote employees.

- **Have onsite points of contact at your agency's remote locations during the initial onboarding period,** especially if employees can't come to the main campus. Ideally, these contacts should have insights into the topics being discussed during onboarding. These individuals may be a mix of HR personnel who can shed light on benefits, agency operations and other topics.
- **Use the technology.** Creating user-friendly systems that anyone can use to complete their daily tasks is key to helping employees feel connected, even when working from home. For onboarding, consider what processes can be digitized but still personalized for each employee. Wilson's team at 18F uses scheduled messages via Slack to send pertinent information to new hires.
- **Communicate the process and keep it consistent.** "The challenge with any onboarding experience, regardless of whether it's a distributed workforce or coming into the same office, is creating a consistent process that makes people feel really welcomed," Wilson said. Providing employees easy access to digestible information is critical, Jones added. USPTO has a website with all necessary documentation for new employees to complete before their first day.
- **Assign buddies.** One way to help streamline communication and foster healthy relationships for remote employees is to assign buddies. It's also important to assign buddies who are willing and ready to make a commitment, Wilson said. Make sure to clearly communicate their duties and responsibilities as a buddy. This way, there are no surprises, and the new employee is getting the best possible buddy experience.
- **Get connected.** There are many ways for employees to connect and get to know one another inside and outside the office. Organizing common interest groups is one way Jones and Watson have been able to help everyone feel included, and they have groups for everything from engineering interests to women in the federal workforce. Wilson also suggests that employees reach out to one another to set up virtual coffee or tea breaks. These are short phone calls designed to meet new people and talk about things they might normally chat about in an office breakroom or the hallways. These virtual meetings extend the onboarding process and help employees assimilate into their new work environment.
- **Consider employees' learning styles.** Provide information in formats that work best for different types of learners, Wilson said. Most of what virtual employees have access to is written information, but that alienates auditory and hands-on learners. Try mixing things up with a short video or online training.





The first days, weeks and months of a new employee's time at an agency play a huge role in their future performance and attitude about working there.

Play 7

How to Ensure Consistent Onboarding

Think back to the first day at your current job. Did you go through an all-day orientation? Were you stuck in a conference room filling out paperwork? More importantly, did that first impression stick with you and shape your outlook of the agency?

If your answer is yes, you're not alone. The first days, weeks and months of a new employee's time at an agency play a huge role in their future performance and attitude about working there. Successfully onboarding a group of new-hires isn't easy, and keeping the onboarding consistent for all employees is an even bigger challenge.

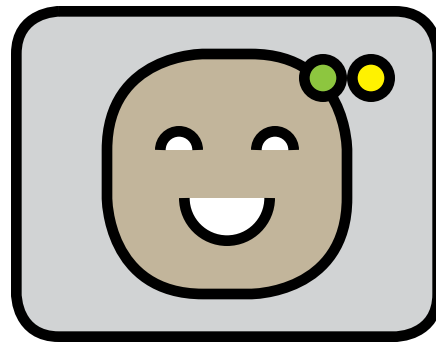
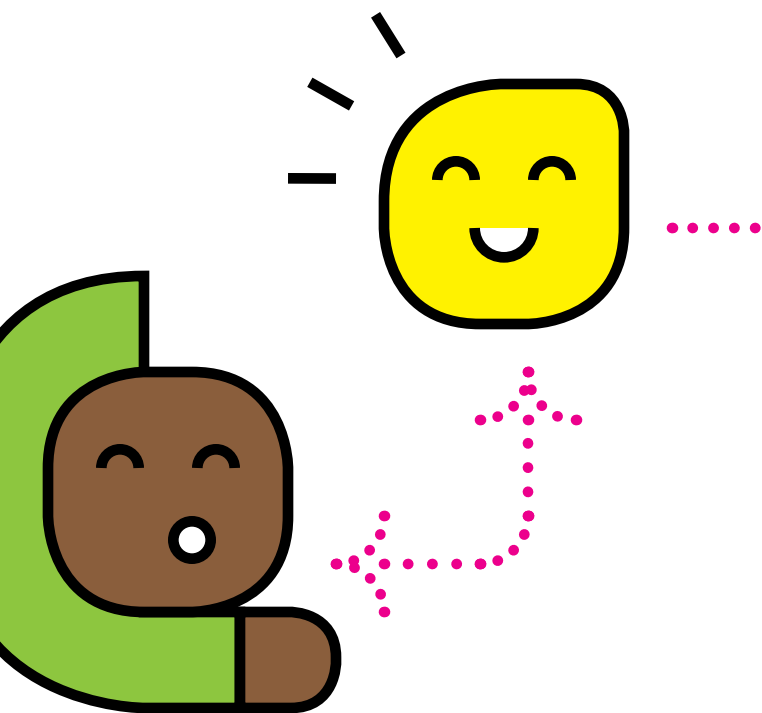
But it's not impossible. Ashley Emsweller Hungate, Communications Director for the State Personnel Department in Indiana, and her colleague, Special Projects Manager Melissa Thomas, are intimately involved in making the state's onboarding program efficient. As of early October, the duo had already helped onboard 2,760 employees, or nearly three-fourths of the state's new employees.

Tony Garvan, Innovation Specialist and Software Engineer at 18F, also has implemented new strategies and tactics to help make onboarding a smooth and consistent process for all employees. We sat down with these three experts to get some useful tips.

- **Branch out.** Not all employees will travel to your agency's headquarters for onboarding. That's why it's important to establish connections at field offices so that every employee feels included, no matter where they're located. Providing those offices with supplemental information for onboarding new employees will make the transition stable and help the new-hire get acclimated.
- **Checklists are good.** Garvan has some important insight here. 18F implemented a technology referred to as Checklistomania — an automated, online checklist for new employees to view and track tasks they need to complete for onboarding. Checklistomania is an open source project in the public domain and can be adapted by any organization. Indiana has also made use of an employee checklist to help track onboarding progress for new hires.
- **Clarity is key.** 18F has about 60 items on Checklistomania. Some tasks can be completed in minutes, such as taking the oath of office, acknowledging that you received your computer and changing your password. These granular details enable 18F to better govern its onboarding process, and employees develop a vested interest in checking off tasks.
- **Create a hiring manager's toolkit.** By working closely with managers, Indiana created an online hiring manager's toolkit. This provides managers with resources they might need to help assimilate new employees and answer any questions they might have about the onboarding process and what they can expect.
- **Get ahead of schedule.** Before Day One, have new employees fill out as much paperwork as possible to stay on top of the process and ensure they don't get bogged down with too much paperwork during orientation. Garvan even has Checklistomania send out automatic reminders to an employee before a certain form is due to make sure everything gets done in a timely manner.
- **Emphasize the culture.** To establish a seamless transition for new employees, Hungate recommends being ambassadors of the agency's culture during onboarding. Explaining what the office environment is like and what employees should expect throughout their time there ensures new hires won't be blindsided after orientation.
- **Solicit and implement feedback.** No process is perfect, and there is always room for improvement. Employees at 18F are encouraged to share any issues they have with the Checklistomania platform via GitHub, an online repository that enables people to collaborate on and improve software. The system and processes are improved biweekly.

Tips for

Employee Development



Yager offered these helpful tips for reaping the benefits of coaching at your agency.

- **Streamline your goals.** To start a coaching program at your agency, it's important to align program goals with your organization's values. Stronger teams, better communication skills agencywide and a more self-confident staff are all products of coaching that can benefit your agency.
- **Get trained.** It's important to take the program seriously. Train members of your staff to be certified coaches, as Yager was trained. OPM offers training programs to become a certified career coach. The goal is to train and certify coaches across government, so they can provide coaching to federal employees.
- **Process strengths and weaknesses.** Whether you're a coach or a recipient of coaching, recognizing your own strengths and weaknesses is key to implementing a strong program. Yager even suggests participants fill out a short questionnaire with top developmental goals and recognized strengths and weaknesses that they want to address and work on throughout the coaching program.
- **Be flexible.** Flexibility is key in a coaching relationship. As a coach, you never know what your client may need help with. On the other hand, as a client, the advice your coach gives you might be out of your comfort zone. "You don't know what the client is going to bring up in each session," Yager said. "So you just have to be ready to be flexible and follow their lead."
- **Keep things on the down-low.** Confidentiality is another critical aspect of coaching. As a coach, your clients are trusting you to not only help them with their problems, but also to keep their business private. Trust and respect have to be earned, and if a coach can't keep a client's information confidential, that won't happen.
- **Engage in active listening.** It can be easy for coaches to insert their own opinions into their clients' problems. Asking questions and truly engaging in the conversation, however, is what the client needs, and what the coach is there for.
- **Keep it positive.** Coaching has had a bad connotation in the past. An employee who isn't performing well may be forced to go into coaching, for example, as a punishment. This isn't productive. Instead, Yager suggested that employees view coaching as a positive perk and something they want to voluntarily participate in.

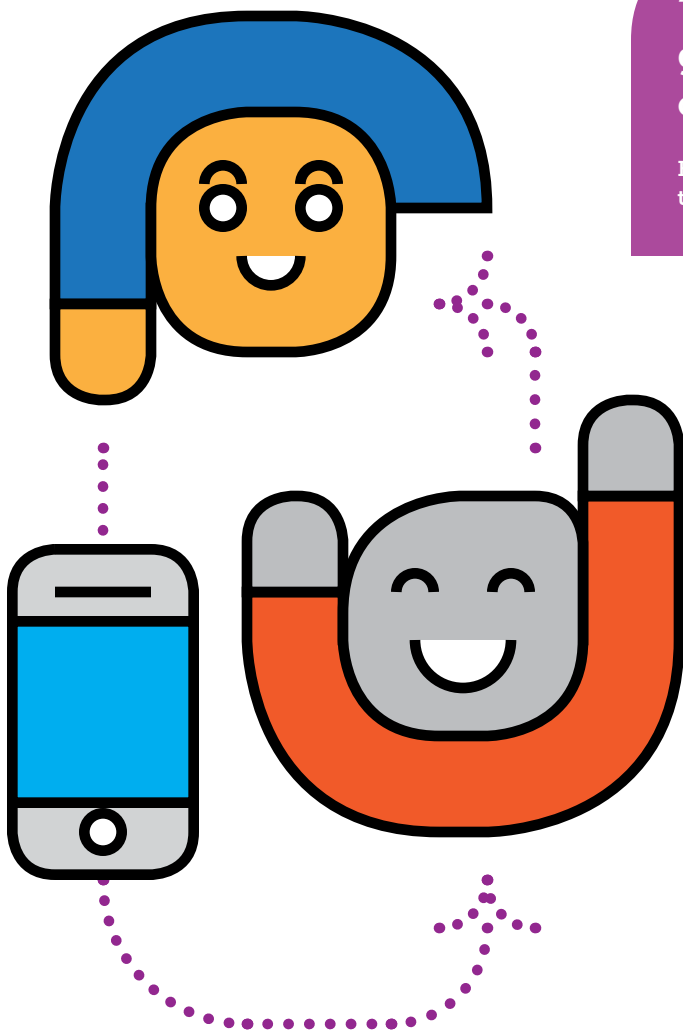
Play 8

How to Create a Coaching Program

Navigating a successful career isn't easy, especially when you're doing it alone. That's why one of the most helpful resources for any professional is someone who is willing to help, guide and coach.

The term coaching may not be what comes to mind when you think of a career in government, but as Kelly Yager, Management Analyst at the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, points out, having coaches at every level of your career is an asset. A coach helps people realize what's holding them back from reaching their goals, Yager noted.

Coaching is different from mentoring. Yager explained that while mentoring focuses on giving helpful advice, coaching is more action-focused. "A mentor is telling and a coach is asking," she said. For example, coaching questions may focus on why you feel you don't have a good relationship with your boss, rather than telling you how to respond to your boss.



"Reverse mentoring is all about giving junior employees new opportunities to grow."

Kevin Barta, Director of Digital Communications at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Play 9

How to Foster Reverse Mentoring

Going on coffee runs, making copies and answering phone calls is an all too real job description for some young professionals. Whether they're interns or even full-time, entry-level workers, doing mundane tasks is the norm for them.

But many agencies are trying to fight that stereotype and give employees a platform to take on new roles and expand their spheres of influence. Mentor relationships are one option. Although it isn't a new phenomenon, by fully embracing the mentor-mentee relationship, agencies can benefit from another form of mentoring where roles are reversed.

Reverse mentoring, as Kevin Barta, Director of Digital Communications at the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, put it, is all about giving junior employees new opportunities to grow. Allowing the mentee to show off her skills and being open to having her teach you something valuable can open the door to a meaningful, productive relationship.

Barta and his mentee, Megan Soule, a graduate student at Syracuse University, gave us advice on how to implement reverse mentoring at any agency and reap the rewards of a non-traditional work relationship.

- Remember that it's a mutually beneficial relationship.** At the heart of mentoring is the notion that it's beneficial to the mentee. With reverse mentoring, both parties are learning and growing as professionals. Whether mentees are showing their mentors how to work cloud technology or a mentor is reviewing a mentee's resume, everyone should be gaining something from this relationship.
- Come prepared.** Interns and entry-level employees should have an idea in mind of something bigger they can contribute to the agency, Soule said. On the agency side, Barta stressed the importance of having significant tasks ready for these employees to do, not just busy work.
- Get clarity up front.** To foster a strong mentoring relationship, Barta suggests being open and honest about career goals from the start. By talking through employees' long-term goals, managers are better prepared to assist them with career growth. Also, making goals clear allows both groups to see how they can learn from each other, in more specific ways.
- Scope out a bigger project.** Soule and Barta's reverse mentoring experience never would have happened if Soule hadn't made clear her Adobe expertise. Because she did, she ended up teaching a class of 30 State Department employees on how to properly use Adobe. Don't be afraid to reach — even teach — higher. And if you're a senior-level employee, be open to a younger employee teaching you.
- Start small.** To really flesh out what a particular employee is capable of, Barta suggested giving them a small project and gauging how much assistance they require. From there, it's possible to grow those responsibilities.
- It takes a village.** While it's great for new employees to have one particular supervisor that they can go to with questions or help, Soule and Barta both speak to the notion of surrounding them with potential mentors in every department at your agency. This provides a holistic view of the work that's being done. Then mentees can form stronger relationships with senior employees and more easily cultivate reverse mentoring opportunities.
- Don't treat someone like an intern.** Even if someone technically is an intern, giving them banal tasks isn't helpful. It hinders their ability to learn and could end up giving the employee a negative opinion of the agency.

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Run Simple

Tips for Recruiting and Hiring a Multigenerational Workforce

**Dan Falvey, Executive Advisor
for HR Strategy at SAP**

The ability to effectively recruit and hire top talent isn't a unique challenge to government. Other established industries, such as engineering and manufacturing, are also feeling the pressure of increased competition for skilled professionals.

"Agencies are competing with each other and with commercial entities for the same talent," said Dan Falvey, Executive Advisor for HR Strategy at SAP, an enterprise management solutions provider for the public sector. "Some blame this competition on a shrinking talent pool, while others feel they need to broaden the pool of candidates they recruit from."

That's only part of the problem, Falvey said. "There is also an image and a brand challenge that government agencies face."

Government is often perceived as employing an older, more tenured workforce. The impression is the work environment is static and more transaction-oriented, leaving little room for innovation. Instead, agencies should be leading the conversations about their workplaces and shaping how others identify them.

When it comes to branding, Falvey recommended that agencies create a brand that can be marketed to a broad range of potential candidates. Building a strong brand can help an agency stand out in a competitive environment, one where employers are vying for employees with similar skills. He offered some tips to help agencies create a thoughtful and meaningful brand.

"One way is to tap into the excitement of highly engaged employees and find out what drives them," he said. "Find out how they describe the agency to other people, both internally and externally, and what they find rewarding and exciting about working there. You can use those insights to develop your brand."

In terms of hiring and recruiting, another ongoing issue that agencies grapple with is compensation.

"I don't necessarily mean overall pay packages," Falvey said. "It's a mix of total rewards that government agencies may have to reconsider and tweak." For example, seasoned employees may be more interested in healthcare and retirement benefits than younger employees, who may need immediate cash flow to pay off loans. Agencies

must consider the varying needs of a multi-generational workforce and how they can create competitive compensation packages with limited funding.

In addition to competition, branding and compensation challenges, agencies must also evaluate whether their onboarding practices are helping or hindering their hiring efforts. New employees can become engaged or disengaged very quickly, depending on their first weeks and months at an agency. Negative experiences can affect productivity, engagement, retention and reputation, all of which impact recruiting and hiring. Ensuring employees have meaningful work assignments early on and creating a modern work environment with technology can go a long way in engaging new employees early and often.

Falvey highlighted technology as a key enabler to enhance the overall recruiting and hiring process. It can help agencies optimize their search efforts by connecting them with the best candidates via social media and other online channels.

"Technology can help agencies create a talent community," he said. "The interesting thing about creating a talent community is that you're maintaining relationships with people who have come through your world voluntarily. Maybe they've sought out your agency for employment opportunities in the past, or maybe they've referred somebody internally for a position."

Human capital management (HCM) software enables agencies to manage and engage that talent community. For example, SAP works closely with agencies to maintain full visibility of their talent pool, making it easier to quickly identify candidates internally and externally when needs arise. The company's cloud-based solutions equip agencies with collaborative tools for recruiting, hiring, workforce management and more.

"The challenge for many employers is there are often too many steps in the hiring process, specifically when it comes to interviewing candidates," Falvey said. "They get interview fatigue and in some cases disengaged because there are too many steps that could be streamlined." That's an area where technology can also benefit agencies. Thanks to automation and better tracking tools, agencies can document and streamline hiring and keep candidates informed throughout the process. But technology alone can't address every challenge.

Hiring managers and HR professionals must work collaboratively to ensure candidates are a good fit for the agency, taking into account both personality and skill. They should also hire for development capacity, Falvey said. Younger employees want a career path, and they want to know that they're working toward a goal.

"As the workforce evolves, leadership has to embrace this multigenerational and multicultural group of employees," he said. "They have to create a culture that embraces everybody. When that happens, it will fuel efforts to brand the agency and improve hiring, recruiting and retention."

Conclusion

"Any time there's a transition, people naturally get nervous about their jobs."

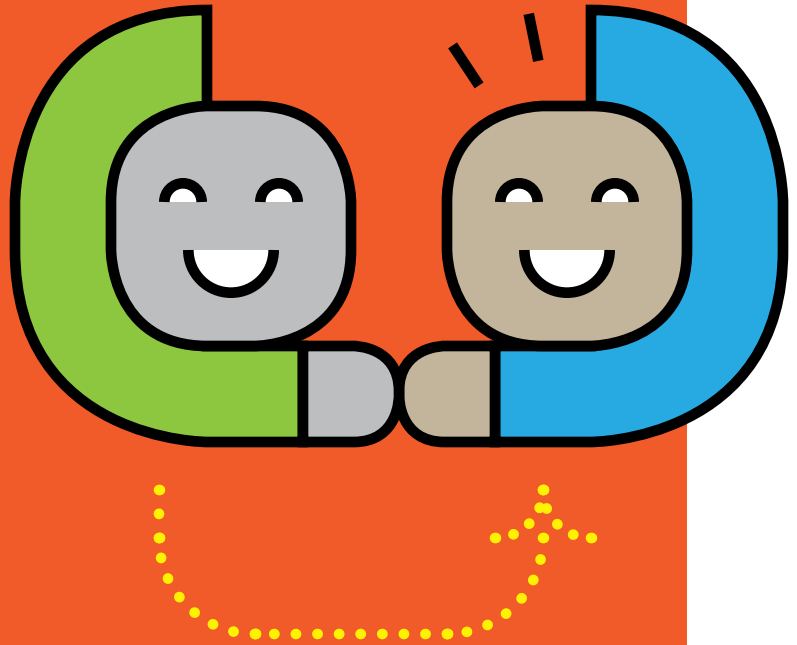
Ventris Gibson, Director of
D.C.'s Dept. of Human Resources

Managing Through Transitions

Federal agencies have a big transition ahead of them as a new president takes office. To ensure they not only survive but thrive, here are some words of wisdom from HR professionals who have endured presidential elections and devised successful game plans.

"One of the things that we've all been talking about is what are those things that are nonpartisan, that are just really smart business things to do or smart HR things to do?" Bailey said. Take onboarding, for example. "It doesn't matter who wins, nobody is going to argue that onboarding is not something you should do. Nobody is going to argue succession planning shouldn't be done. Nobody's going to argue training shouldn't be done."

Bailey advised agencies to identify initiatives that will continue during and after a transition and to also determine how those initiatives can be done more efficiently. For those who joined government during the Obama administration, which is the case for many millennials, this will be their first transition. So keeping employees informed about what to expect — through town hall meetings, online chats, intranet sites and other means — is key to keeping morale up and ensuring employees are focused on the mission.



Ventris Gibson, Director of the District of Columbia's Department of Human Resources, knows firsthand all the moving parts that agencies will have to contend with, particularly in the early stages of a transition. Landing teams selected by the incoming administration will be on the ground at agencies to learn more about operations, gather information and identify top priorities.

Gibson, who has served in senior HR roles at the Health and Human Services and Veterans Affairs departments and the Federal Aviation Administration, recommended that agencies clearly articulate to the landing teams the mission, vision, values, workforce makeup, budget, top priorities and challenges of the agency, as well as the key congressional committees that your agency reports to.

That's not all. Another area where HR will play a key role is in bringing a level of calm to the workforce.

"Any time there's a transition, people naturally get nervous about their jobs — the Senior Executive Service being one and other career employees," Gibson said. "Remember that regardless of who walks in as the incoming administration, making sure that the mission of that agency or that department continues to be the primary accomplishment and that goals are identified appropriately is critical."

Worksheet

Creating Empathy-Focused Interview Questions

Hiring the perfect person for the job isn't an easy task. Someone may seem perfect on paper but not have the social skills or core values that align with your agency. So how do you weed through applicants to find the perfect candidate with the right mix of technical and softer skills, such as empathy?

GovLoop adapted interview questions from 18F and DHS to provide you with the worksheet below. Whether you're a job seeker or hiring manager, these questions can serve as valuable resources.

1. Why do you want to join this organization?

**2. One of our organization's core values is transparency.
What does openness and transparency mean to you, and how has it affected your work?**

**3. Our agency has a largely distributed environment. Have you ever worked in this sort of environment before?
If you have, can you talk about challenges you faced and lessons you learned? If you haven't, do you think you would be able to work well in a remote environment? Or with a team that is distributed all across the U.S.?**

**4. Where do you do your best thinking? Do you ever put these thoughts into action?
Has anything spectacular come from you thinking while taking a walk?**

**5. Talk about a time at your past job when you were told to do something that you knew wasn't a good idea.
What did you do? In hindsight, what would you have done differently?**

- 6.** Talk about one of the most challenging obstacles you have faced at work. Include what the challenge was, how you went about trying to work it out and what you learned from the overall experience.

- 7.** What do diversity and inclusion mean to you? What kind of impact do you think you might have or want to have in helping us continue to improve our diversity efforts?

- 8.** Tell us about a time when you had to work on more than one project at the same time, and when the interests of these two projects were competing. What did you do? How did you handle the situation, and what did you learn from it?

- 9.** Can you talk about a time you provided advice or mentorship to coworkers or someone interested in your work?

- 10.** Have you ever worked on a project involving civic, social, or public services or organizations? Tell us about it.

- 11.** Talk about a time when you were involved with a project that was concerned with the real end users of said project. How did it turn out, and what did you learn?

About & Acknowledgments



About GovLoop

GovLoop's mission is to "connect government to improve government." We aim to inspire public-sector professionals by serving as the knowledge network for government. GovLoop connects more than 250,000 members, fostering cross-government collaboration, solving common problems and advancing government careers. GovLoop is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with a team of dedicated professionals who share a commitment to connect and improve government.

For more information about this report, please reach out to info@govloop.com.

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