

White Paper

Mission-Centric Talent Management: Empowering the Next Level of Results in the Federal Government

In Association with:



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Executive Summary

Talent is widely recognized as the most significant and sustainable asset for the public sector. However, effectively leveraging talent to drive government performance presents challenges to the organization that are far more difficult to harness than physical or even information assets. The Federal Government is being asked to do more, with less than ever before. There are simply less talented people available to hire, they are harder to keep, and talent management methodologies and technologies either do not exist or have not been modernized to compete in today's talent war.

Leaders in Federal agencies have instinctively known that top talent drives superior performance. Recently, Federal agencies have been putting that intuition to practice with real results. Increasingly, public sector executive teams are looking to leverage the assembled workforce, and even external talent pools, as corporate assets to create more taxpayer value. Yet, the current workforce climate is the most turbulent and challenging environment in history.

Talent has never been more critical to driving mission performance, but managing talent has never been more challenging. Leaders from around the Federal Government are recognizing that the emergence of talent management is critical towards driving mission performance. Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), HR departments and staff stand at the front lines with an unprecedented responsibility to produce results in difficult circumstances. They must find great people that can solve great problems, from securing our homeland or saving people from large environment disasters, to resolving complex foreign policy situations. Yet they are also aware of tight cost controls due to tightening public finances and an increasingly wary public. Top of mind issues for CHCOs include the need to:

- Find, hire and retain talented people quickly and at the right cost
- Effectively manage, develop and align them to objectives and mission
- Take an empirical, outcome base approach to HR decisions
- Drive a talent management mindset through their department or agency

Now, more than ever, talent management is public sector management. Increasingly, legislators and Administration leaders are asking Senior Executive Service officials about the agency's leadership, succession plans, and top talent. In fact, Federal organizations are now required to incorporate talent management measures as part of their management appraisals. Managers need to understand the skills and capabilities of their teams much more intimately and be able to align their people to mission goals and objectives to effectively drive government performance.

In response to the challenging workforce issues and need for alignment with increasingly dynamic strategic goals, the Chief Human Capital Officer's (CHCO) mission is evolving from policy creation, cost reduction, and process efficiency to the evolution of a talent management mindset throughout the organization. This new view of the role of talent and how

it is managed throughout the organization can best be described as Mission-Centric Talent Management.

Mission-Centric Talent Management is the use of innovative processes and technologies to drive a talent management mindset throughout the organization, empower line managers to align talent to mission more effectively and drive a new level of value for citizens, stakeholders, and employees. In this new mission-centric model—instead of being the owners of processes, forms, and compliance—the HR office becomes the strategic enabler of talent management processes that provide organizations value for managers and employees alike.

The President's Management Agenda outlined several critical areas of improvement for the Government with an overall goal of improving the efficiency and performance of the US Federal government to become citizen centric and results oriented. To date much progress has been made in rethinking the government, it's role and it's processes, however, in the area of workforce management, in many cases technology has not kept up.

While many HR systems deployed today are managed as in-house systems, the next generation of talent management solutions will be hosted over a state of the art internet infrastructure and delivered to users "on demand" directly to the agency or through a shared service center, any time of the day or night. These new state of the art, on demand platforms provide security, scalability and reliability with little IT investment. Next generation talent management solutions are available today that provide a unified, outcome based talent management platform that can help HR to deliver:

- Streamlined, automated and innovative recruiting and hiring processes
- Unified performance management, succession planning, goals management and compensation to drive a performance oriented culture
- Robust workforce analytics for human capital decision support
- Cutting edge solutions designed to deliver line of business users easy to use tools, relevant human capital information at the right time and advanced networking and collaboration tools

Mission-Centric Talent Management empowers the agency, bureau or division to effectively manage the next generation workforce with next generation talent management processes and practices, running on the next generation talent management technology platform to drive better mission results by optimizing the acquisition and performance of human capital assets.

Large organizations as diverse as NASA, The U.S. Navy and the Intelligence Community have already begun to invest in talent management solutions which shift the focus from HR content development and ownership to talent management ownership and accountability for line-level managers and senior executives.

The Talent Age

Talent is widely recognized as the most significant and sustainable asset for the public sector. However, effectively leveraging talent to drive government performance presents challenges to the organization that are far more difficult to harness than physical or even information assets. The Federal Government is being asked to do more, with less than ever before. There are simply less talented people available to hire, they are harder to keep, and talent management methodologies and technologies either do not exist or have not been modernized to compete in today's talent war.

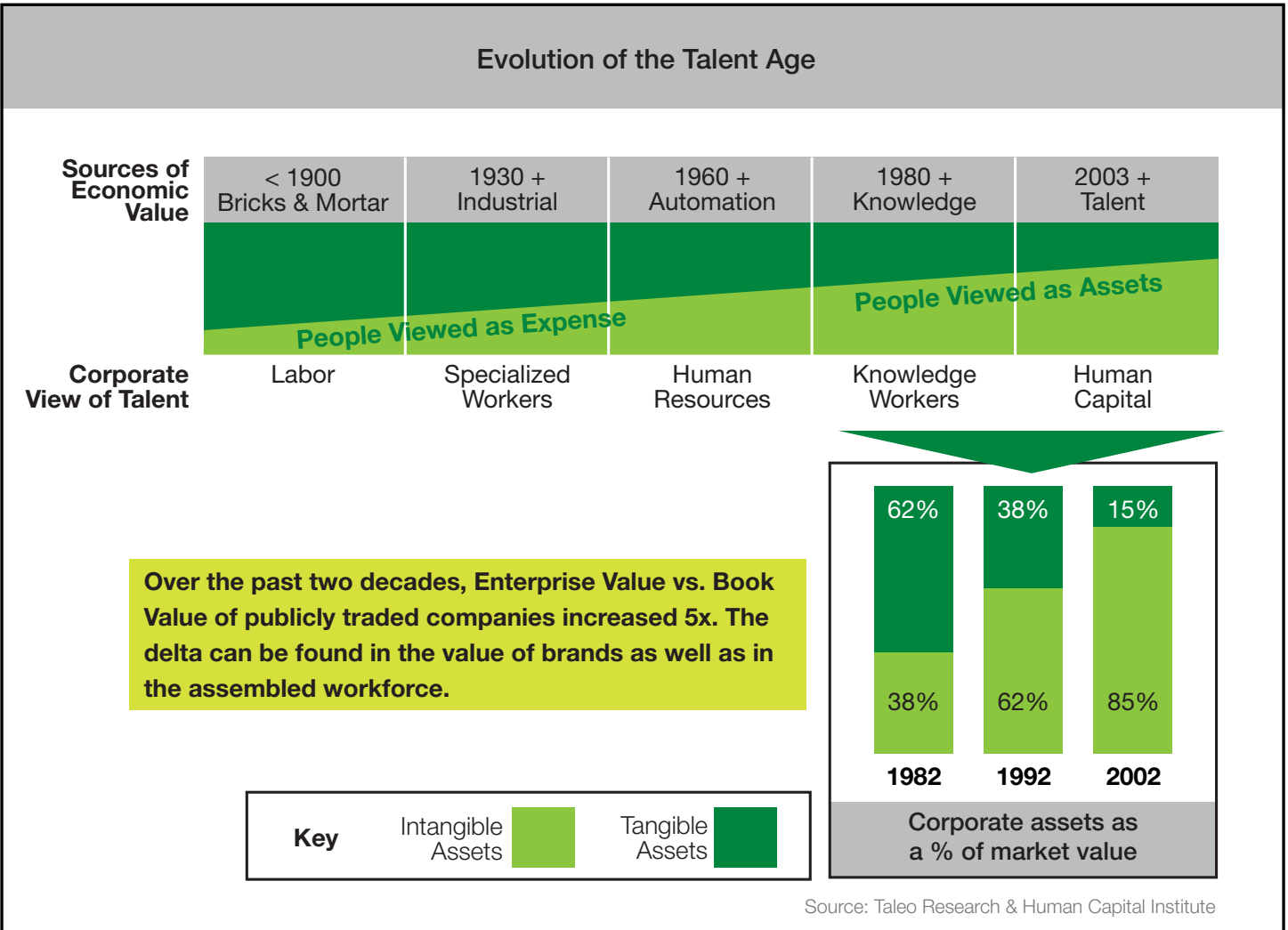
We entered the talent age. When was the genesis of this new era? Historically, during the agricultural age, the economy was based on land, a truly physical and very tangible asset. The industrial age followed with a manufacturing-driven economy, again based on physical assets. Most taxpayer value and organizational performance was derived through the most effective use of government processes and infrastructure, such as administrative and distribution networks of government services.

Subsequently, the knowledge age has moved the basis of government's value to information assets. The enhanced value of today's public sector organization is largely seen through policy-making, intellectual capital, and

multi-sector coordination. Public organizations became closer to citizen requirements through a better understanding of their needs and enhanced use of intellectual capital at all levels.

Today, the use of the government's tangible assets and processes are only the minimum requirements for effectiveness. The 9/11 commission crystallized this point very succinctly, "...the quality of the people (talent) is more important than the quality of the wiring diagrams (information)." Responding to growing mission needs and increasingly tight budgets requires a greatly enhanced use of intangible assets like talent, skills and people. In short, the agricultural, industrial and knowledge ages are past. We are at the outset of the talent age in which people are the greatest creator of value.

In the last twenty years, the private sector has recognized and reacted to this change, a change that can be seen in the valuation of publicly traded companies. Over the past two decades, the enterprise value versus the book value of publicly traded companies has increased five times. The delta can be primarily found in the value of knowledge management and workforce planning.



Talent Drives Performance

“In surveys conducted over the past year, human capital was the number one concern of federal Chief Financial Officers, Information Officers and procurement officials.”

— Partnership for Public Service & Grant Thornton
Federal Human Capital: The Perfect Storm

Leaders in Federal agencies have instinctively known that top talent drives superior performance. Recently, Federal agencies have been putting that intuition to practice with real results. Consider the following examples:

- National Institutes of Health recently rewrote its individual performance plans throughout the agency to reward scientists on innovative practices, effective changes in methodology, and process improvement techniques.
- The US Defense Intelligence Community is implementing a new talent management system to enhance the deployment of the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS).¹ The new system links talent and competencies among multiple organizations in an effort to connect the dots between commands and branches. As a result, the Community will be able to better harness its full talent portfolio to confront the nation's security threats.
- The U.S. Department of Treasury recently reviewed its Talent Management framework to connect training and development with Individual Development Plans. Today, for the first time in many years, managers and employees develop their IDPs together to focus on individual strengths and the organization's needs. Mandatory training for all employees is currently being re-examined to better support actual mission needs.

Over the past half a decade, the way the government's career leadership thinks about talent has evolved into a top-of-mind issue. Accordingly, these leaders are looking to HR to provide processes, policies, and technology to acquire, retain, and optimize talent in the organization. In fact, one study of corporate leaders found that the same trend is happening in the private sector. According to the survey:

- 82% believe that human capital has an impact on mission impact.
- 92% think that human capital has a significant effect on citizen satisfaction.
- 72% believe that human capital has an impact on innovation.²

¹ For more information on this directive, visit: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/140035p.pdf>

² Source: *Human Capital Management: The CFO's Perspective*, CFO Research Service Report.

Likewise, government leaders acknowledge that talent drives performance in the form of better customer service, higher sales performance, product and service innovation, organizational process improvement, as well as strong management and leadership.

Increasingly, public sector executive teams are looking to leverage the assembled workforce, and even external talent pools, as corporate assets to create more taxpayer value. Yet, the current workforce climate is the most turbulent and challenging environment in history.

The Government's Talent Age Challenge

“Top talent has never been more valuable, nor the competition for it more fierce.”

— Fortune Magazine, January 30, 2006

Talent has never been more critical to driving mission performance, but managing talent has never been more challenging. Government agency CHCOs, HR departments and HR staff stand at the front lines with an unprecedented responsibility to produce results in difficult circumstances. They must find great people that can solve great problems, from securing our homeland or saving people from large environment disasters, to resolving complex foreign policy situations. Yet they are also aware of tight cost controls due to tightening public finances and an increasingly wary public. Top-of-mind issues for CHCO's include the need to:

- Find, hire and retain talented people quickly and at the right cost.
- Effectively manage, develop and align them to objectives and mission.
- Take an empirical, outcome base approach to HR decisions.
- Drive a talent management mindset through their department or agency.

Challenges also exist outside the area of human capital. The Performance Institute's 2008 Government Performance Summit

“There is an overwhelming consensus that the quality of our federal workforce is vitally important to the effectiveness of our government, and our federal leaders have their work cut out for them as they try to build the civil service that the American people deserve and the times demand.”

— Partnership for Public Service & Grant Thornton
Federal Human Capital: The Perfect Storm

featured a Federal SES poll of top organizational challenges for the next five years.³

The top five organizational challenges cited by the respondents were:

1. Financial Pressures to Cut Costs
2. Rapid Mission Expansion
3. Increased Demands for Accountability and Transparency
4. Adapting New Service Delivery Mechanisms
5. The Aging Workforce

Even though many organizations face increased workload, they are often limited by lack of knowledge about the people who are already employees as well as shortages of the key external talent to effectively execute their key strategies. This limitation is driven by two factors: the monumental changes in the global workforce and the related talent management challenges they cause for all organizations.

The current Federal workforce environment may be the most challenging in history. A 2007 Report by The Council for Excellence in Government & The Gallup Organization reported the following:

"The predictions are dire when it comes to the future of the federal workforce.

60 percent of the federal government's General Schedule (rank and file workforce) employees—and 90 percent of the Senior Executive Service (federal government's top managers)—will be eligible to retire in the next ten years. The nation risks losing a huge portion of government's most precious asset—its people . . . as well as continuity, important technical expertise, and critical institutional knowledge. If that were the entire story, the challenge would be daunting. But the reality gets worse. In addition to the federal government brain drain, the entire US workforce is getting older, with record numbers of baby boomers retiring. . . . As a result, the competition among the public, private and non-profit sectors for America's best and brightest is going to be unparalleled and fierce. The effort that government makes now could be its strongest and most competitive edge for the future. Information about tomorrow's workforce, particularly in key areas of experience and expertise, is a critical component. To reach them, we need to understand their wants, needs and preferences about work."

Consider the following workforce challenges which are unique to the public sector:

- The average age of a US Federal government employee is 47 years old.
- The average age for a new US Federal government employee is 33 years old.

³ Findings of the 2008 Government Performance Summit – February 25th 2008, Hosted by The Performance Institute.

- The government's workforce is almost ten years older than the private sector's, creating more urgency for better talent solutions.
- 25-30% of the US Federal workforce is currently eligible to retire.
- 2008 through 2011 projections from OPM indicate that over 60,000 Federal employees will retire per year.
- 15% of the available US labor force is made up of foreign born workers.
- Executive Order 11935 requires that only U.S. Citizens and National can be hired by the Federal Government.
- Agencies screen out many applicants for positions requiring security clearance.
- There is a 10 million worker gap between baby boomers and generation X and Y.
- Federal agencies will need to hire for numerous mission-critical positions within the next two years including 35,350 medical and public health workers, 6,423 physical and biological scientists and 10,679 engineers. ⁴

These demographics are at the root of an unprecedented set of talent challenges for the Federal Government. With so many unique challenges, the sudden emergence of talent management in Federal Government as the critical issue is not surprising.

Talent Management Challenges and Workforce Drivers

Workforce Challenge	Talent Management Challenge
Shrinking Workforce	• Heightened competition for talent.
Aging Workforce	• Loss of experience and intellectual property. • Leadership gaps.
Globalization	• Mobile and diverse workforce.
War for Talent	• Skills shortages in key roles.
Low Employee Engagement	• High turnover. • Poor performance.
Generation X & Y Workforces	• New recruiting/sourcing techniques. • Focus on employment brand. • New techniques for employee engagement and motivation.

⁴ Source: Where the Jobs Are: Mission Critical Opportunities for America, Partnership for Public Service, July 3, 2007.

Mission-Centric Talent Management

Now, more than ever, talent management is public sector management. Increasingly, legislators and Administration leaders are asking Senior Executive Service officials about the agency's leadership, succession plans, and top talent. In fact, Federal organizations are now required to incorporate talent management measures as part of their management appraisals. Managers need to understand the skills and capabilities of their teams much more intimately and be able to align their people to mission goals and objectives to effectively drive government performance. This new view of the role of talent and how it is managed throughout the organization can best be described as Mission-Centric Talent Management.

Managers are also increasingly involved in working with HR to find and hire the right people for their team, relying not only on support from the recruiting team, but also their contacts inside the organization and their personal contact networks. Finally, workers are becoming more proactive about managing their own careers and are more selective about where they work and what their work means in their lives.

Such a heavy focus on talent across all lines of business is bringing to light a very interesting dichotomy: in many cases, line managers and HR think about talent and talent management processes very differently.

Traditionally, HR has regarded people and HR issues in terms of role specialization, HR policies/initiatives, risk management, and cost control. Over the years HR has excelled at specialized roles such as compensation management, training, organizational development, labor relations, payroll, and benefits administration. In each of these roles, HR has pursued meeting government's specific, rules-driven workforce

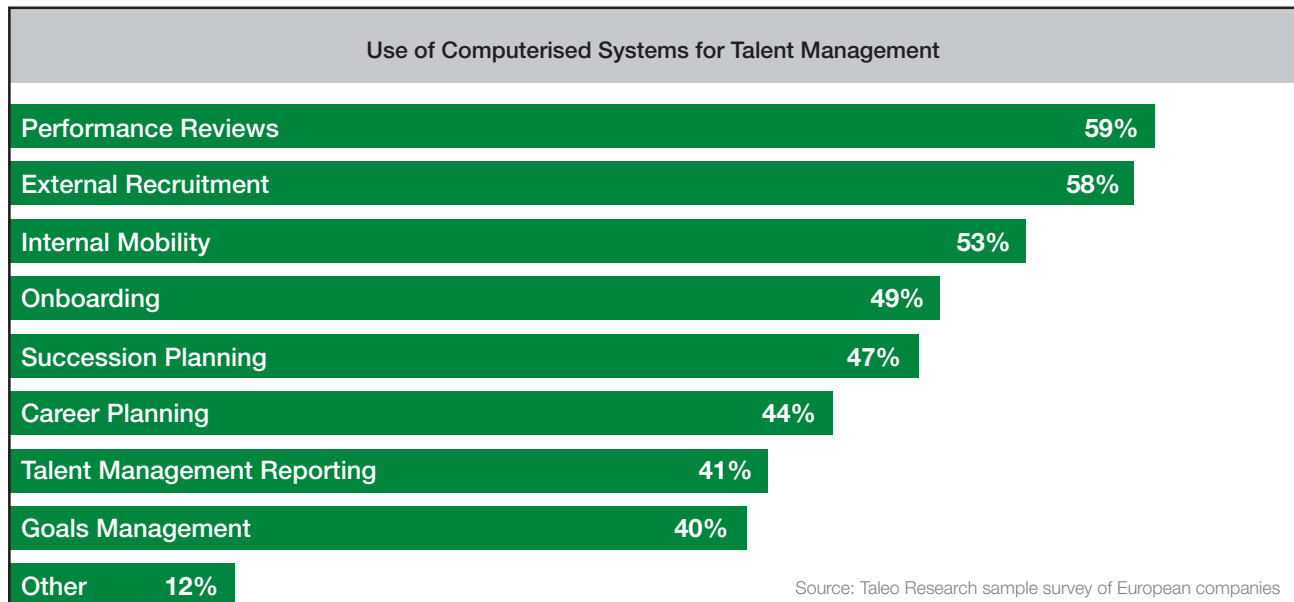
Mission-Centric Talent Management

The use of innovative processes and technologies to drive a talent management mindset throughout the organization, empower line managers to align talent to mission more effectively and drive a new level of value for citizens, stakeholders, and employees.

Since 2004, Federal policy has tied the performance of the Senior Executive Service to performance, which includes their ability to drive organizational results through employee development.⁵ This new regulation "requires agencies to make decisions on setting and adjusting rates of basic pay for SES members based on individual performance and/or contribution to the agency's performance and their significance to the agency's performance, as well as the senior executive's current responsibilities."

As performance-based compensation and talent management both move forward across government, so does the drive towards bringing them together in executive's appraisals. Across government, there is a growing recognition that talent management skills must be recognized, encouraged and rewarded in Federal executive's compensation. This connection is already being seen in the private sector as noted in the IBM study below.

⁵ Source: OPM's regulations at 5 CFR chapter 430, subpart D



requirements. HR offices led many transactional and administrative HR processes, but occasionally did so at the expense of providing superior internal customer service and proactively serving management's strategic direction.

From a supervisor or manager's perspective, talent is seen through a different lens. Instead of thinking about discrete HR issues, managers have begun focus on assembling, managing, and optimizing their teams to accomplish their mission. Accordingly, managers tend to look at HR issues more holistically. In this mission-centric view of talent management, they have to understand and identify:

- Who has the particular skills or experience to complete a certain objective, task, or project?
- Who may be at risk of leaving the team?
- What positions are open on the team?
- What impact that will have on mission performance?
- What kind of new people they would like to bring onto the team?
- Who are their high potential workers?
- What types of reward or recognition best motivates workers?

These disparate perspectives on talent management can result in friction between the executive leadership and traditional HR practices. HR may feel that an important initiative such as completing annual performance reviews, building career paths, or developing competency models is not being taken seriously by organizational leaders who are too busy to support the activity. Conversely, leadership may deem some of these HR projects as nice to do and of long term value, but not critical to running their portion of the agency today.

A good example of this divide is the growing importance of performance reviews. Even with the recent growth of performance-based pay in government, performance reviews are still too often viewed by managers as merely an administrative hurdle.

Mission-Centric Talent Management and HR Transformation

What are the organizations doing about bridging this chasm? Since talent is critical to mission success and is now a top of mind issue for both senior leadership and Administration officials, the HR function has been undergoing a major transformation. HR is moving from effectively managing HR processes and the HR budget to helping leadership understand how to effectively leverage the assembled workforce and external talent pools to drive outcomes and results.

The advent of efficient technology support and shared service models has allowed HR to master their specialized tasks such as recruiting,

compensation management, payroll and benefits. HR departments are now beginning the transition to talent departments. They are shifting their attention to strategic impact issues such as turnover, employee engagement, and quality of hire. HR talent management initiatives include providing decision support, implementing advanced performance management technology suites, and coaching/mentoring the entire organization.

The Evolution of the HR Function

The Evolution of the HR Function		
Administrative > HR Process > Business Process		
Personnel	HR	Talent Management
Transactional	Strategic	Holistic View/ One Workforce
Payroll Benefits	Recruiting Em- ployee Self-Service	Talent Acquisition Performance Management

Source: Taleo Research

This transformation is leading HR to probe questions such as:

- What value do we add to leaders in delivering their mission objectives?
- How do we help align talent to long-term strategy/objectives?
- How do we develop a talent management strategy in a pragmatic way?
- How do we improve the management effectiveness of line managers?
- How do we increase the productivity and job satisfaction of employees?

To provide optimum organizational value, the legacy of the personnel department is evolving. The traditionally conservative, rules-driven HR department is emerging as a key organizational change agent to drive ownership of talent management throughout the entire organization. Ownership of effective management of talent must progress from ownership by HR to ownership shared among senior-career and appointed officials. Empowering HR this way will empower the organization.

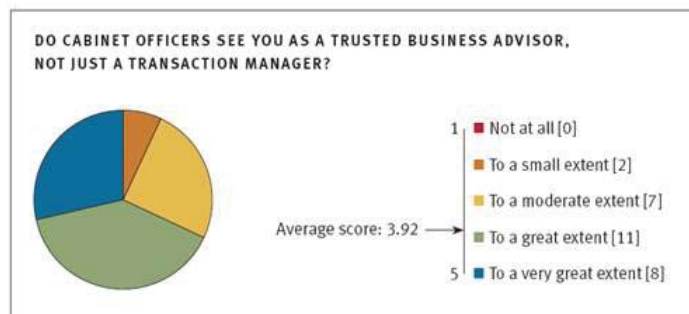
In response to the challenging workforce issues and need for alignment with strategic goals, the HR department mission must evolve away from a regulatory view on cost reduction, process efficiency and risk management. Rather, the highest performing agencies work to drive a talent management mindset throughout the organization. Leadership at all levels and even employees must drive the talent management process.

Higher Expectations for Strategic HR

78% of executives view their senior HR executive as a strategic business partner.

Only 11 percent said they are very satisfied with the performance of the HR function.⁶ These focused activities are apparent in survey results finding that 75 percent of respondents have started to develop a comprehensive talent management strategy.⁷

The Federal chart below from the 2006 OPM Performance Accountability reports shows a similar response from Cabinet-level officers across 28 Agencies.



Source: OPM Fiscal Year 2007 Performance and Accountability Report

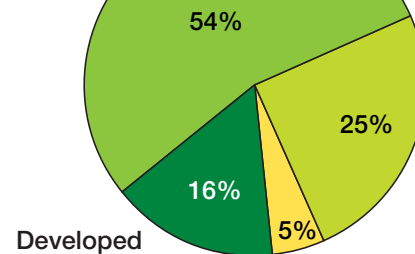
While Human Capital officers have made large gains in becoming a strategic partner with other executive decision-makers, the challenge for both public and private sector remains in developing new talent management strategies. The 2007 survey displayed below echoes a similar theme in Federal Departments.

⁶ Source: *High Performance Workforce Study*, Accenture, 2006.

⁷ Source: *High Impact Talent Management*, Bersin & Associates.

Maturity of Talent Management Strategies

In Process
Strategy is developing.



Not Far
No integrated strategy developed yet.

Developed
Owner and plans in place.

Advanced
Clear strategy and operational plans in place.

Source: *Bersin & Associates, 2007*

Mission-Centric Talent Management Challenges

While many HR organizations have embraced the concept of transformation to a mission-centric talent management mindset, there are still many challenges to creating and implementing a successful talent management strategy. These include changing HR skills requirements, the need for governance and new organizational structure, process design, and management adoption initiatives. Also critical is the technology platform to support successful talent management strategies.

Today, many organizations are struggling with silos of HR processes and technologies. The future of talent management is embodied in solutions designed from the ground up to provide functionality on a unified talent management platform.

In this mission-centric model—instead of being the owners of processes, forms, and compliance—HR becomes the strategic enabler of talent management processes to provide value for managers and employees alike. In addition, HR is the beneficiary of user-generated performance review data, succession plans, organizational charts, skills and competencies, career paths, and much more. Integrated data can be simply pulled from the system to analyze and evaluate.

Talent 2.0 – The Role of Technology in Mission-Centric Talent Management

The President's Management Agenda outlined several critical areas of improvement for the Government with an overall goal of improving the efficiency and performance of the US Federal government to become citizen centric and results oriented. To date much progress has been made in rethinking the government, it's role and it's processes, however, in the area of workforce management, in many cases technology has not kept up.

As the public sector's work environment is becoming more distributed to multiple field, regional, and teleworking environments, a growing number of Federal managers have less interaction with their HR directors and training staff. As a result, Federal agencies should adopt an on demand, mission-centric talent management solution-- one where program lines, the CHCO staff, employees and the growing number of private sector partners are able to effectively tap into a talent management structure.

Until now, much of the available talent management technologies were centered simply on HR process demands. However, the Federal workforce is quickly becoming more "atomized." In other words, agencies are distributing their workforce among loosely grouped communities within the organization that may not be formalized, such as parts of the workforce working on OMB or OPM initiatives. As this trend continues, talent management information such as goals, succession plans, skills and competencies will become harder to communicate among various divisions and branches. The current approach for most agencies is to audit and evaluate training and development through the HR function. Looking forward, accountability for driving talent management efforts must fall on the line manager whose chief concern is her/his employees.

"To reform government, we must rethink government."

— President's Management Agenda

Next Generation Talent Management Solutions

While many HR systems deployed today are managed as in-house systems, the next generation of talent management solutions will be hosted over the internet and delivered to users "on demand" directly to the agency or through a shared service center, any time of the day or night. These new state of the art, on demand platforms provide security, scalability and reliability with little IT investment. For many years, agency executives have aimed for increased accessibility to critical talent management applications—anytime, anywhere. On demand services can be accessed entirely online, paid for on a low monthly basis, and require no

maintenance or support. Most importantly, these applications provide a common framework to bring the organizations competencies and skill sets together, whether it's a co-worker in the next cubicle or a partner halfway around the world.

Next generation on demand talent management solutions are available today that provide a unified, outcome based talent management platform that can help HR to deliver:

- **Streamlined, automated and innovative recruiting and hiring processes.** Right now there is a mixed bag of systems and processes for recruiting and hiring ranging from partially automated processes, to highly efficient automated processes. However, many of these processes and technologies are static, with little flexibility to adopt new techniques and technologies such as candidate career portals, social networking technologies, talent pooling capabilities and advanced search and sourcing techniques to find mission critical talent and attract them to your agency.
- **Unified performance management, succession planning, goals management and compensation to drive a performance oriented culture.** Strong internal talent management processes start with a strong on boarding process for new hires. On boarding is a key link between the recruiting process and ongoing talent management. Unified processes for performance management, succession planning, goals management, learning and compensation are the key to empowering line managers to get the right talent, in the right role, at the right time to accomplish the mission.
- **Robust workforce analytics for human capital decision support.** Popular business wisdom states that what gets measured, gets done. Talent management technology must provide robust reporting and analytics capabilities to identify areas for improvement and insight into processes that are working. More importantly a good technology solution will provide the support for Chief Human Capital Officers as they increase their influence in long-term strategic planning, outcome measurement development, agency-wide resource allocation and other strategic roles.
- **Cutting edge solutions designed to empower mission-centric talent management for line of business users.** Line of business users need easy to use tools, relevant human capital information at the right time and advanced networking and collaboration tools. Very simply, a Web 2.0 designed talent management solution should connect line-level supervisors and managers with human capital strategy and capabilities. The ultimate goal: Useful data that empowers decision making in real-time.

The Performance Institute's work in the field indicates that civilian, Defense, and Intelligence Agencies are all moving towards four strategies to create a real-time talent solution:

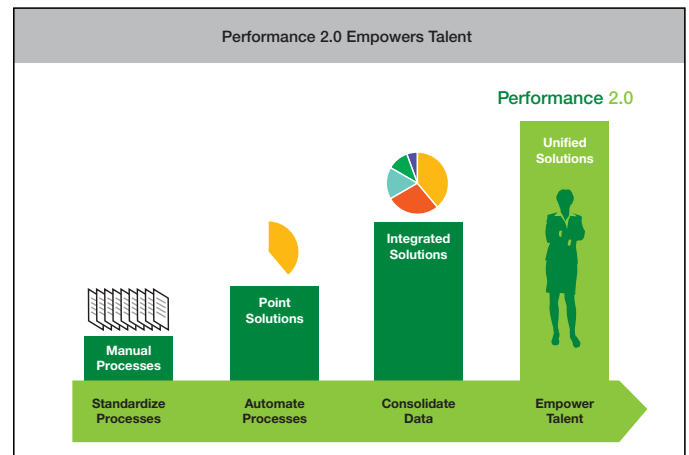
1. **Relevant Information** Viewing see the talent-related information they need when they require, and in the best format needed to solve their performance challenges.
2. **Usability** Intuitive user interface that requires little to no training and is designed to work seamlessly with common productivity tools such as Microsoft Office.
3. **User Driven Content** A line-level, bottom-up initiative that mirrors internet developments in user-created content. For true viability, all levels of management need to create realistic career paths and key occupations.
4. **Collaboration & Networking** The ability to create, maintain and leverage social networks for mentoring, coaching, and learning. (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn)

Mission-Centric Talent Management Solutions Designed for Mission Success

- The line manager is the owner of talent.
 - Talent Management is a unified process.
 - Talent Management is an ongoing process.
 - Usability and value-driven adoption.
-

Unified, Mission-Centric Talent Management Platform

- Flexible and Agile
 - Scalable and Expandable
 - Single Talent View
 - Common Talent Profile
 - Shared Competencies
-



Empowering Talent with Technology

Mission-Centric Talent Management applications built on a unified talent management platform shift the focus from HR content development and ownership to talent management ownership by the user.

This approach:

Empowers Talent by providing tools that talent can use across the entire employment lifecycle—from a compelling and engaging candidate portal that provides candidates with up to the minute information on their status in the hiring process—to on-boarding solutions that get that same new hire productive quickly—to innovative career planning capabilities to enable them to see dynamic career paths and have new internal employment opportunities pushed to them on a regular basis.

Empowers Managers by providing a single, holistic view of talent management information and processes, the way they need to see it—one screen, one click, talent management information—with easy-to-use collaboration and communication tools.

Empowers Executives by providing talent scorecards with visibility to key decision support information on talent to drive strategic decisions.

Empowers HR to drive talent management practices and mindset throughout the organization by providing timely decision support to executives, operational tools to managers, and personalized self-management tools to employees

Driving Results through Mission-Centric Talent Management

Mission-Centric Talent Management represents a radically different view of how organizations drive organizational performance and value for their citizens, stakeholders, and employees. Traditional levers used to drive performance and value in the industrial and knowledge ages are giving way to radically new concepts of how to drive performance in the organization in the talent age.

Mission-Centric Talent Management acknowledges the central role of individual users—employees, managers, and executives—in making talent management decisions an integral part of an organization's daily management activities. It seeks to make talent management relevant to the user's execution challenges. This solution overcomes adoption hurdles by adapting to users' daily work patterns and incorporating the latest in popular Web 2.0 usability concepts found in consumer oriented websites such as Amazon.com, LinkedIn, YouTube, Yahoo, Google, Wikipedia, and Facebook.

Mission-Centric Talent Management requires that Federal agencies:

- Drive talent management processes and practices throughout the organization to identify and align key talent to mission critical initiatives that will drive the most value.
- Holistically manage both internal and external talent pools to attract and hire the best talent to bring into the organization, leverage alternative talent pools such as contract workers and older workers, and develop and retain the key talent they already have.
- Provide key information and insights to the executive/senior leadership teams about how current and future workforce issues will impact future performance.
- Identify and build ready pools of local top talent that they can mine at any given time to support new goals and initiatives.
- Implement integrated and flexible talent management processes and systems that can adapt to rapidly changing organizational needs.

Mission-Centric Talent Management empowers the agency, bureau or division to effectively manage the next generation workforce with next generation talent management processes and practices, running on the next generation talent management technology platform to drive better mission results by optimizing the acquisition and performance of human capital assets.

Mission-Centric Talent Management in Real Life: NASA's Office of Human Capital Management

Overview NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center Office of Human Capital Management (OHCM) was one of the earliest Federal adopters in this area, creating a Talent Cultivation Office (TCO) in 2005. The OHCM re-structured its approach around two clear themes: organizational capacities and talent.

NASA OHCM Organizational Structure

- OHCM Directorate Office
- Business, Planning and Strategic Alignment (BPSA) Office
- Organizational Leadership and Culture Office (OLCO)
- Organizational Capability Office (OCO)
- Talent Acquisition Office (TAO)
- Talent Cultivation Office (TCO)
- Performance and Work-Life Dynamics Office (PWDO)

Overview of the Talent Cultivation Office (TCO) NASA Godard's success clearly hinges on hiring for the unique talent and potential that have made the United States the long-time leader in space flight. However, the TCO was established to fortify the organization's greatest challenge --- appropriately investing in the development of their human capital as mission types and pace rapidly change. The TCO utilizes multiple development modalities, including classroom training, reference and research learning materials, online learning, and facilitation of experiential learning and mentoring to develop and implement an array of programs, products and services that provide personal and professional development.

Through the deployment of a central talent management office, NASA is highlighting the critical importance of recruiting and retaining the best talent. "It is the quality of the people you have been able to attract and retain over the years," says a TCO veteran interviewed for this whitepaper. "I know you heard this before. Hear it again from me. Your people are not only the most expensive asset of your organization, but also the core of it. The quality of your service, the total image of your organization, everything is the direct result of the effectiveness and efficiency of your people."

By focusing on examining the overall learning dynamics of the organization, areas of core skills training, leadership and career development, the office is moving beyond its roots as a training center and is working with managers on utilizing a full talent suite and re-thinking development from an organizational capabilities perspective. TCO focuses on clearly defining performance and competency criteria according to seniority level. "Our strategy is that these are the expectations at certain grade levels."

To support this approach, supervisors' competencies are tied to the success they have with learning and development of their employees. "People are being promoted based on technical skills, but they do have dual track."

Creating a Mission-Centric Talent Management Strategy: Top Ten Questions for Federal Agencies

When determining your agency's talent management strategy, we recommend bringing key stakeholders together to answer the following ten questions. The answers can be used to guide your agency's unique talent management approach while ensuring all the critical ingredients are in place.

1. Is your HR or Personnel Department organized and staffed to drive a talent management strategy?

Your HR department is charged with a human talent management function. The effectiveness of your department will affect every facet of your organization. In some cases you may need to upgrade or change the skill set of your team to drive a strong talent management strategy. Consider outsourcing if you think there are serious deficiencies.

2. Does your HR function use the most effective technology and software to management your talent initiatives?

There is a lot of software out there that can help simplify and improve the efficiency of your recruitment, and development and other HR practices. Take a look at them once in a while even if you believe the system you have now is sufficient.

3. Do you have a talent management strategy? Is it tied to your organization's long-range plans?

No matter how good your organization's planning processes, nothing can be achieved without an effective talent management strategy that is forward looking, and ties people closely to your plans. The plans, once made, must be implemented and executed effectively. Only the right people, with the skills and experience in the right places can accomplish this.

4. Are you attracting the right kind of people to help your organization grow and make your agency an employer of choice destination?

The most effective vehicle for attracting great people is your employees, more than your clients, your funders/supporters. If they consider your organization a good place to work, they will be your evangelists and more talented people will want to be a part of our organization.

5. Is your organization losing good employees to the competition?

Usually, your best people do not leave because of money. They leave because of either a poor relationship with their direct supervisor or a perceived lack of opportunity within your organization. If your attrition rate is higher than the market rate, look at why your employees are leaving, and take what they say in the exit interviews seriously. Not acting on exit interview data, can only make the situation worse and send the signal that you don't care. Be sure to make it at least as easy, or even easier, for employees to find new career opportunities within your organization as it is for them to find new career opportunities outside of your organization.

6. Are you using the right recruiting process to hire to hire the right staff?

The standard process of recruitment is hit-or miss. The selection and hiring process is usually much different for a budget analyst than it is for a registered nurse. Do you need both? Do you use the same recruiting and hiring process? Also, using competency based recruitment practices with advanced screening and behavioral assessment testing ensures that you hire for the right skills and abilities, attitude and behavior.

7. Do you have a system in place to identify and groom high potential employees for higher future roles in the organization?

This doesn't need a comment. Your high potential employees are the most likely ones to leave for better opportunities elsewhere unless they find it in your organization. Your organization needs to groom this group to ensure availability of capable talent in future roles. While succession planning for executives and high potential employees is critical, a strong talent management strategy helps you to understand what your critical positions are and what type of bench strength you have at each position.

8. Do you have organization-wide and individualized employee development plans?

Employees need to be trained and have their skills upgraded not only to improve their performance in their job but also to keep them up to date with developments in their fields. If you have not paid adequate attention to this either because of money, or the workload, your performance will stagnate (at best) or worse still regress. Also, don't limit yourself to standard learning management solutions and classroom course. Usually the best development opportunities come outside of the classroom through mentoring, stretch assignments and interaction with peers.

9. Does your compensation system pass internal equity and external competitiveness test?

Simply put, is there serious disparity in compensation between roles within your organizations. How do stack up against ruling market structure? A sense of internal inequity will drag down morale, and employees will leave for better pay elsewhere if your compensation package is not competitive.

10. What does your agency need to focus on to ensure that it has a future-oriented talent management system in place?

What resources do you need? Where and how can you get them? What will it take? Have a pow-wow with executive staff, do a compensation study, and have your board look at your needs. Most of all make sure your organizational structure and people are ready to support strategic talent management in your organization and then implement the robust technology to support your initiatives.

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ABOUT TALEO

Taleo delivers on demand talent management solutions to leading companies worldwide. Taleo enables organizations of all sizes to assess, acquire, develop and align their workforce for improved business performance.

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