

# 2021-05-20, Working Forward Forum

**MATTEOBECCHI** MAY 19, 2021 04:40PM

**ANONYMOUS** MAY 20, 2021 04:33PM

## Group Seven

**Engagement.** How do we engage our workforce, particularly engage our geographically dispersed (or asynchronous) teams and apply the appropriate IT platforms in support

**Performance management.** How do we manage and track performance in this new environment? How do we ensure equity across teams working onsite or remotely?

**Managerial buttons.** Importance of finding the managerial buttons to make things happen in this new environment. Supporting, training, and empowering managers and supervisor while also defining accountability.

**Strategic focus.** The discussion of future sometimes reverts getting people back to work (reentry) vice the more strategic focus over the next few years. We must remain focused on the broader strategic opportunities and imperative. We cannot fall into the trap of looking solely at the short-term

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## Group 8 (Levers)

- open communications with senior leadership
- updated policies/training will help with leading in a new work environment
- fix inequities between workforces to include frontline
- engaging in government-wide councils and collaborating across councils
- reframe what type of work is done at home v office

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## Breakout 5

We have to address all generations of work and what matters.

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## Room 5 Concerns/Reality

Don't want organizations to go back to the pre-pandemic work environment. People are afraid of returning to work - health, transportation and childcare.

The workforce, especially the younger ones, will turn and go quickly to places where they can have flexibilities to be creative.

Systems are inflexible and may limit our ability to reach all levels of employees across the organization.

Need to understand what parts of the way we manage talent work and should stay, and which can go away. Shed the old thinking of how work gets done, and get to the end-goal.

What will be the behaviors of the customers that seek our services? What about those without internet or tech?

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## Breakout 5

Opportunity for HR to have a seat at the table and actually eat.

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## Room 5 - Excited about

Huge opportunity with workforce planning and data-enabled modeling of different ways to make changes and know the impacts at speed to deploy agile changes.

Skillsets that our people actually have and where THEY want to go with their skills and

HOW can we leverage the skills instead of boxing people in. Younger generations are blurring these lines are are excited to be in multiple boxes.

Reshape our path forward and making a seat at the table for human capital that we are invited to sit at. HC shifted to a total technology model and we don't want to go back.

Long-term strategy to invest in high schools and recruiting and reaching out with our Federal missions.

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## Breakout Room 6

1. What excited you

- A. We are discussing a return to normalcy while considering what went right with respect to performance and employee well being
- B. We are able to be productive in a telework environment
- C. there is a mental health component because employees are working longer hours.
- D. The **link between FEV scores and productivity.**

2. What exists in the agency to leverage what the future needs?

- A. Open dialogue to discover new options
- B. Telework is now a reality.
- C. Leveraging tech. tools e.g. pallet.
- D. Name the behavior that changed during COVID that allowed performance levels: trained on how to stay engaged in a pandemic; name loneliness; taking care of people - leadership stay engaged with those they lead.
- E. Bought additional bandwidth to allow MS Teams introduction; video has significantly increased engagement; everybody has their cameras on; people comfortable making the connection.
- F. Men fearful of being seen with a beard, and they were asked to "reveal," it was a relief. OK tp change what was worn.

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## Room 8 (Excitement)

- opportunity to make changes we've talked about for a long time
- people are thinking about the present
- proof of concept that employees are productive and responsive as remote workers
- leverage technology, but need long term funding to implement/sustain
- government-wide push may push some agencies to be more progressive/how will agencies be held accountable
- focus on organizational culture and supporting the employee and inclusion

- that people are actually having conversations about being creative about managing the workforce

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## thoughts on future of work (room 4)

**-most exciting:** flexibility is both a curse and a blessing--helps meet personal needs and can improve productivity, but challenging for managers  
-work from anywhere helps parents manage competing demands

**-Levers:** how do you have issue recognition and resolution/build relationships when you can't walk down the hall and get an answer? requires new processes and agility to model/create organic conversations (not just electronic messages or chats).  
-also requires establishment of "availability parameters"--do we expect people to be electronically available 24/7, to respond within a specific period of time...or do we promote periods of sign-off and non-availability?  
-must have systems in place to evaluate and manage performance and effectiveness...can't assume old styles of management can be directly translated to the new modes of work  
-need to get comfortable with the idea of many different versions of work, even within the same office. no "one size fits all"

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## Breakout 1

Denise Biaggi-Ayer  
John Marshall  
Blair Duncan  
Doug Follansbee  
Dawn LeBlond

### 1 - What resonated about the conversation

- o The **amount of data** was outstanding. Would be helpful as we update policies
- o The pyramid structure helps share with employees what we're focusing on. How do we move to an adaptive workplace?
- o Zoom in and Zoom out was a different way to think about what we're grappling with. How can we reel people in who are going to fast versus getting people up to speed
- o This gave us a language to talk about the challenges that we inherently know but haven't been able to put words to

- o The continuum of work flexibility and recognizing that we may have different components of our organizations at different parts of the continuum.
- o The digitizing of work has helped make this possible. And COVID accelerated it

## 2 - What levers do we have available to us now?

- o Not a lot of levers available to us right now
- o I can help educate my HR directors
- o How do we train people differently to work in this environment?
- o We're listening to our employees, so we can be sure what we do next is what everyone wants and we can continue to execute our mission
- o The **data** we're seeing is a lever (looking out burnout, engagement, etc.)
- o Recruiting (dir. hiring authority, attracting talent, USAJobs, etc.). Remaining competitive without virtual/remote work is not a possibility. Communicating that with late adopters helps them adopt.
- o Huge populations of our workforce aren't even part of the discussion in terms of remote work (inspectors, fire fighters, etc)
- o Analyze "why" we want to go back to work, and leverage time back in the office to build relationships/community/collaboration.
- o Build a coalition among leadership within our agencies to discuss this and move our agencies forward together.

### Top Lever: Leverage our Data

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## Breakout #2 (scribe: Matteo):

### QUESTION 1: With what you just heard, what's most exciting for you about the Future of Work?

- + Increased Opps for Managerial Training to increase their management skills / people skills, as now people lose out on advancement by relying only on technical skills
  - > We need to improve our Management Skills w/ the Virtual Workplace now in the picture
  - > Employee-Relationship is most influential for Employee happiness
- + Disconnect between the presentation & polling question, which did not have Data or Skills/Talent on the polling list of answers
  - > Without attention to this we are not making progress; we need to get to a future of work to capitalize on what Tech can unlock

- + Workplace vs. Virtual Worker is much more equitable now (very exciting!)
  - > Now the power and access is much more evenly spread between "in the office" vs. "remote" folks

- + The willingness to Change Cultures in Fed Govt
  - > Even DoD and Military is willing to take on change in their Culture, including Telework
    - Mental health must be attended to (esp. w/ isolation for the extraverts of the world, ex: "missing the water cooler convos"); we need to be aware and prepare for this more and more
    - > Instead of the water cooler convos, in full-remote, people have found other, deeper ways to connect more deeply with one another.

- + Technology has been a great set of resources to help us get through the pandemic, and to learn new ways of working virtually together.

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### QUESTION 2: What levers are available to you to make this future a reality?

- + Technology enabling remote work +
- + Flexible working arrangements, access to a wider applicant pool
- + Money is not the only currency: Ex: Workforce Data info (HR data) can be leveraged system-wide across Fed Govt
- + Harnessing our Collaborative Culture
- + Employee Resource Groups, DEI Council, Labor Union Relationships Improvements, Space for people to share their voices, leveraging Collaborative tools
- + Existing policies in place will lend to make this future a reality
- + Leadership has already bought into the Future of Work!
- <<||>> First line supervisors might be our Challenge/Barrier <<||>> --> Need to develop this category of staff
- + the Younger applicants are Tech Savvy already (Digitally Born) ... the more we hire and onboard them, the more culture change will happen in our Fed workforce (makes our workforce more agile, embracing Tech, creativity, innovation)
- <<||>> How do we keep the younger, tech savvy talent in Fed workplace (vs. Private Sector)? <<||>>
- > Public-Private partnership

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