18F Education

Discovery research guide

18F is conducting a six week research sprint in July and August 2016 to inform the first iteration of 18F Education.

Research goals and framing questions

Research goal 1

Are there educational interventions that 18F could offer that can aid in supporting digital transformation or digital services?

- In what areas is education going to be effective?
- Among the top practices that contribute to a successful transformation[1], which ones do people within agencies struggle with the most?
- Are those practices ones that educational interventions can strengthen?
- Among the top barriers to a successful transformation[2], which ones could be remediated by an educational intervention?
- Which learning needs are already satisfied by resources offered elsewhere?
- What other types of interventions should education be paired with?
- What 21st century skills do government workers need?

Research goal 2

If it seems education *is* appropriate …

What subject areas would have the most impact?

- What kinds of skills do people at different levels of a transformation need?
- Which skills are they lacking?

Who should be involved in the educational intervention?

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[1] From Top practices that lead to a successful transformation, Transformation research report
[2] From Top barriers to a successful transformation, Transformation research report

- What roles within an organization are likely to be able to have the largest impact for a successful transformation?
- Would it be better to take a 'train the trainers' approach? Instead of teaching a course about HCD, would it be better to teach a course about how to train your colleagues on HCD?
- Are there educational resources we could offer that could help educators working within agencies into superpowers?
- Are there educational resources we could offer that could help turn community organizers working within agencies into superpowers?
- Who are the most likely early adopters of 18F Learn's offerings?

When would an educational intervention be appropriate?

- If different kinds of training are needed to support a transformation, which ones need to happen first, or is there an appropriate order in which they need to happen?

What format should the training be in?

- What types of educational resources and programs do government employees currently seek out?
- How well are they able to apply those learnings to their jobs? Do some formats work better than others?
- What types of educational resources or programs do government employees request but are denied permission to attend or purchase?
- When (what time of day, from where, etc) do government employees seek out educational resources?
- What gets in the way?

Research goal 3

Is there demand for educational offerings from 18F? If so, how is that demand articulated?

- What kinds of language do government employees use to describe what they want out of education or training?
- How do government employees see the role of 18F?

Assumptions

- First offerings for 18F Education will focus on helping seed the ground for successful agency transformations.
- We are basing our definition of successful agency transformations on the findings outlined in the transformation research report[3]. Specifically:
    - People at all levels feel connected to the agency's mission, have a sense of purpose, and are empowered with the autonomy to act on that purpose.
    - The agency chooses and manages technology effectively in the service of its larger mission.
    - The agency is capable of and committed to practicing [continuous improvement](#).
- We'll lead with the concept of learning to support digital work, with the belief that this is a lead-in for broader best practices and transformations across many fields.

Who should we talk to?

- People who are leading innovation or education initiatives at their own agencies (what educational intervention would help them become superpowers?)
- The 'community organizers' discovered through the transformation research project (what educational intervention would help them become superpowers?)
- People who have led transformation projects at 18F and outside 18F – what barriers did they face? If they could inject training into their projects, what would they opt for? When in the process? Who would be involved?
- Can people who have led transformation projects at 18F connect us with people at their partner agencies who have been advocates for the project/change/etc?

Research sprints

[R0 – Initial interview conversation guide](#)
- Who are the most likely early adopters of 18F Learn's offerings?
  What roles within an organization are likely to be able to have the largest impact for a successful transformation?
- Among the top practices that contribute to a successful transformation[4], which ones

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[3] [The goals of digital transformation, Transformation research report](#)
[4] From [Top practices that lead to a successful transformation, Transformation research report](#)

do people in the above roles struggle with the most?

Week One Interview Prompts

Hello friend —

We are exploring the topic of learning and the types of education needed to support modern, digital work inside the federal govt, and would like to talk to you about your experience working in this space.

Background information

Name

Title/Role

Team make up

Can you take us through an average day in your job? What are you daily tasks?

What does learning look like to you?

How do you know someone is ready for training? How do you target?

How did your training program get started?

How do you measure success?

What did you find to be most valuable?

How do you develop a new training program, from decision to execution?

What is the most helpful training that you've ever taken, anywhere and why?