

**The Government of the Future**

According to a 2012 study conducted by the PEW Institute, only 33% of Americans had a positive view of the government. In addition, 79% of Americans did not believe the federal government was careful with tax payer dollars[[1]](#footnote-0)

Startled by the results of this survey, the White House, in conjunction with the Performance Improvement Council, convened a commission to determine the root causes of public dissatisfaction and to submit a report with their combined recommendations for improvement through the year 2039. The information below represents a summary of the findings in the 2013 Government Performance Improvement Commission (GPIC) Report.

**Structure of the Federal Government:**

The GPIC finds that the current government structure fails to provide effective and efficient customer service to the American people. The current proliferation of government agencies, commissions and sub-agencies leads to bureaucratic delays, missed deadline, system inefficiencies and disjointed customer service. Moreover, as reported by the General Accounting Office’s “2013 Annual Report, Actions Needed to Reduce Fragmentation, Overlap and Duplication and Achieve Other Financial Benefits,” redundant federal agencies and programs cost the American taxpayers billions of dollars each year.

*Recommendation:*

The GPIC recommends that the federal government dissolve the current agency structure and converge into one entity, while maintaining separate functional business lines to accomplish targeted services and goals.

There are a plethora of examples of agencies that perform the same functions conducted by other agencies. For example, the aforementioned 2013 GAO Report found that “76 programs to prevent or treat drug abuse are spread across 15 agencies, costing $4.5 billion in FY 2012.”[[2]](#footnote-1) By developing the prevention of drug abuse as a business line of the federal government, the current 76 programs could be combined to one business line, allowing the concentrated focus of time, energy and money. Rather than dissipating resources, focusing on achieving the delivery of the service through one body would combine the dispersed personnel from various agencies under one umbrella and represent a more cost-effective use of the government’s time, money and personnel. It would also eliminate many layers of fiscal and approval red tape that occur when multiple agencies undertake the same project.

**Communication and Customer Service**

GPIC finds that the negative perception of the federal government is caused, in no small part, by the failure to communicate its successes, budget and planned activities to the American public.

*Recommendations:*

The improved perception of the federal government will be heavily dependent on its ability to deliver excellent and convenient customer service. It is equally important that the government is accessible to the public, and uses the feedback received from customers to inform the decision-making process. To that end, it is GPIC’s recommendation that the government work on methodologies to create an open, transparent and customer-service oriented environment.

GPIC hopes that the government can utilize technology to develop a network of one-stop customer service centers throughout the government that would allow its customers to obtain many of their most commonly requested services. At the press of a button, the public could be virtually connected to a knowledgeable virtual representative that would escort them to a virtual conference room. Through use of a device, customers would be able to feel that one-on-one contact and personal attention that are the hallmarks of exceptional customer service.

The customer centers would also use biometric information to provide instantaneous service for such items as passports, social security and other benefits information. In this environment, an individual could literally walk into a customer service center, press a button, have a virtual conference to obtain information about their social security benefits, press another button and obtain a virtual passport that would allow access at any airport throughout the world, and attend a webinar on a topic of interest.

Similarly, most of the services would also be available to individuals using their home laptops and mobile devices, providing the public an option of accessing the government through the comfort of their homes. However, the customer service centers would still be available for individuals that may not have access to computers or mobile devices.

**Employee Retention**

The federal government has had difficulty retaining its newest recruits because of a lack of a comprehensive training plan, mentoring plan and retirement plan.

*Recommendation*:

The government of the future will be known as an employer of first resource because of their “Cradle to Grave” employee development process. From the moment of hire, employees will be provided with a comprehensive orientation that acclimates them not only to the business line under which they have been hired, but to their new role as a government employee. They will automatically be paired with a human resources business line expert, who will help them to understand their insurance and benefits. They will explain to the new employee about hiring flexibilities, such as the right to work completely at home, utilizing the virtual conferencing technology. The new employees will then become part of the human resources business line expert’s portfolio, and will stay with them throughout their federal career. The new employee will also be paired with a mentor to assist them with the adjustment process.

Each employee will be provided with an employee dashboard, where at a glance, they can see their current job responsibilities, entire portfolio of work, past training and certifications, reports, retirement accounts and contact information. The dashboard also demonstrates how each employee’s work relates to the larger business line strategic goals, performance metrics and employee performance. At a click of a button, a manager can roll the information in each of their employee’s dashboard into a comprehensive report- which can in turn be rolled into larger business line reports.

The new government-wide federal training division- FED U- will be available to provide additional training, degrees and certifications. They will work in conjunction with universities and colleges to provide up-to-date and interactive virtual and in-person training throughout the employee’s career.

The new decentralized government will require synergy between training options, enabling employees to fluidly move between agencies. In a sense, each employee will be project owners with a portfolio of completed works that can be used to instantaneously apply for a pool of vacancies throughout the government. The more flexible the workplace can become, in terms of hiring, promotions and job flexibilities, the easier it will be to acquire and retain talented employees.

**Budget**

GPIC finds that the current budget process is not transparent to the American public, which leads to distrust.

*Recommendation*:

By 2039, the government will have a centralized budgeting system that is transparent to all business lines. Easy-to-navigate and accessible, the budget system will be used to quickly and efficiently allocate funds to each business line. With a push of a button, there will be a running budget tally available on every employee’s dashboard. With that same access, each business line will have a coherent and transparent view of the purpose of the funds. Budget line items will also be listed next to each other to help eliminate duplicative contracts for the same services and goods.

This same view will be accessible to the general public for viewing their tax dollars at work. This will help to alleviate the concern that the government is wasting tax dollars by actually allowing the public to have a transparent view of government. The general public will also be able to submit a personal approval rating on proposed projects to add greater accountability to government spending. By efficiently allocating funds for certain needs, the government also can set benchmarks based on its own performance, the cost savings for the previous year, and the types of savings that occurred.

**Technology**

Currently, the government uses out-of-date equipment, which hampers its ability to deliver exceptional customer service.

*Recommendation*:

The PIC recommends that the government establish business contracts with major corporations such as IBM and Microsoft to provide a solid technology base and the best service to the public. With a rotating personnel internship exchange program, the government will have access to some of the best IT engineers in the country and in turn, those engineers will gain real world experience and training while simultaneously providing an invaluable service to the government.

The government will also have access to the newest technology with a lab-to-market process that uses the government as a major testing ground for products prior to release to the public sector. The lab-to-market process will keep the government on the cutting edge, thus helping to eliminate outdated and inefficient systems, and quickly enabling to the government to serve the public ever more efficiently.

**Conclusion**

By providing a transparent, efficient, inclusive and participatory system- the proposed 2039 government would truly represent one seamless fit for all citizens.

1. “Public Perception Federal Government 15-Year-Low Survey Shows,” located at: <http://www.federaltimes.com/article/20120427/AGENCY02/204270304/Public-perception-federal-government-15-year-low-survey-shows>, cited on May 27, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)
2. “Wasted Government Spending,” located at: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2013/04/09/wasteful-government-spending/2063511/>, cited on May 24, 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)