

## **About GovConnect**

### **GovConnect Objectives and Proposed Methodology**

Recently, a number of agencies have started piloting approaches to share talent across their agency. The EPA Skills Marketplace, GSA Project Network, State Department FLEXConnect and other programs are beginning to yield demonstrable successes and may serve as potential models for Governmentwide adoption. GovConnect will build upon these agency-specific experiences and will be designed to engage, and enhance the potential of the future workforce today by helping to put the right people in the right jobs at the right time.

Ultimately, GovConnect will provide both an overarching program and technological capability that encourages and enables:

- Rapid assembly of skills-based teams and deployment of talent within and across agencies.
- More effective and nimble response to solve America's most significant concerns.
- A flexible, talented pool of Government employees who, in addition to having depth of knowledge in their disciplines, also have a breadth of experience across Government.
- A collaborative, less hierarchical and non-siloed environment where employees are encouraged to do what is in the best interest of the Government and the people it serves.
- Improved efficiency by reducing the time spent trying to locate the right people with the right skills, reducing the likelihood of duplicative projects and wasted resources by identifying others who are working on similar initiatives across agencies.
- A more rapid and effective response to critical events thereby providing better outcomes for the public and increasing public trust.
- Enhanced employee engagement, innovation and productivity by giving employees access to the tools (and people) they need to efficiently share knowledge, collaborate and innovate.
- A strengthened knowledge base across the Government and reduced reliance on contractors.

This project uses an agile approach to develop the GovConnect program concept through a collaborative network of stakeholders; including employees, unions and managers, good government organizations (e.g., Senior Executives Association, Partnership for Public Service, etc.), universities (e.g., Stanford d. School) and the private sector on the East and West Coasts. It will incorporate and build upon lessons learned and promising practices from similar agency-specific initiatives, while exploring and testing innovative practices within and outside of the public sector (including Silicon Valley). It will strengthen bridges across agency headquarters and regional offices.

### **GovConnect Models and Concepts**

GovConnect will evaluate the effectiveness of three workforce agility models through a phased pilot approach:

- a. Phase one will include agencies piloting one of three starting models.

- b. Phase two will include additional agencies piloting one of three starting models, supporting phase one agencies with piloting additional models and incorporating cross-agency pilots and technology enablers.
- c. Phase three will include testing cross-agency pilots and technology enablers.

The three models to be tested are considered best practices in Federal agencies and the private sector including:

- a. **GovProject model (manager initiated micro-projects):** Employees can apply their skills and expertise on a part-time basis (e.g., up to 20 percent time) to support project opportunities within the employee's agency or in another Government agency. This model is management-driven and supports the rapid deployment of cross-agency action teams to respond to complex problems or time sensitive needs.
- b. **GovStart model (employee initiated micro-projects and professional networks):** Employees can identify talent quickly across their agencies or across Government based on desired skillsets, to assemble part-time teams (e.g., up to 20 percent time) to work on innovative initiatives and strengthen professional networks within and across agencies. These micro-projects are grassroots, employee-driven as opposed to management-driven.
- c. **GovCloud model (Cloud-based skills deployment):** Employees are hired by the Federal Government and are detailed to agencies on a project-by-project basis to address critical skills gaps. GovCloud employees may work on one project at a time or work on multiple projects at once. Note: although the capacity to be "hired by the Federal government" in lieu of a particular agency doesn't yet formally exist, there are a number of ways to test cross and intra-agency skills deployment in this manner, some of which are already underway.

Hypotheses to be tested include:

- Federal employees are willing to participate in additional projects or activities that they are passionate about and/or are complementary to their skill-sets.
- Federal managers are willing to support their staff's participation in projects in a different part of their agency or in a different agency.
- Federal managers are willing to adopt an entrepreneurial approach to developing teams from across their agencies or from other agencies to get their critical work done.
- A "bottom-up" approach where employees are empowered to start projects and initiatives, find collaborators, and garner agency/department support increases employee engagement.
- A "top-down" approach where managers garner support for projects, then open them to employees to participate, is in the interest of Federal employees.
- Federal employees, with a GovConnect-like culture, can be more engaged and effective than their colleagues in traditional Federal culture.
- Federal employees are able to broaden their professional networks through one or more of the GovConnect models.
- Federal managers are able to reduce skills gaps through one or more of the GovConnect models.
- Engagement can be measured through surveys (including specific Employee Viewpoint Survey questions) and employee interviews. Effectiveness can be measured by the number of innovative projects undertaken, the quality and/or speed at which they are completed, the diversity of the teams participating, and the level of participation.