

# Action Learning Scenario 2



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## *Action Learning Scenario 2*

- How do we plan, prioritize, and implement multidiscipline training within the concept of a strong region/discipline organization?
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# **Plan for Enhancing Workforce Skills**

## **Background**

The Strategic Change Team set three goals for Enhancing Workforce Skills:

- Instill in our workforce the scientific, technical, and leadership skills necessary to enable our science and ensure the excellence of our organization.
- Enhance science and technical skills of the USGS workforce.
- Foster visionary leadership and management professionalism.

## **Guiding Principle**

“The USGS will attract and maintain a diversified, quality workforce with the skills that enhance our programs and serve our customers.”

The USGS is committed to the vision of being a world leader in the natural sciences through our scientific excellence and responsiveness to society’s needs. Enhancing all aspects of workforce skills will play a key role in achieving that vision. The plan summarized here and in the attached table (and in more detail in the appendices) will aggressively move the USGS forward in the arena of employee development for those already on board. It also outlines a framework for attracting and retaining individuals with skills that we need to meet the scientific, technical and support demands placed on us both now and in the future. While the level of effort to fully implement the recommendations provided is significant, we must begin to act immediately on those that are most important, build on successes, and then guide an evolution of the programs to full implementation. This summary highlights key short-term action items, while the appendices outline recommendations for long-term actions.

## **Recommended Actions**

### **1. Workforce Planning**

Develop a “workforce planning” approach to guide our overall workforce skills enhancement efforts. View workforce planning as a framework to guide decisions about the appropriate mix of skills, succession planning, permanent vs. nonpermanent staff, and work performed in-house vs. outsourced.

#### **Short-term actions include:**

- Conduct comprehensive analysis of the demographics and skill mix of our current workforce, including projected attrition, to provide the basis for development, staffing, and outsourcing decisions.
- Identify scientific and other skills that will be required based on our future science directions and strategic change.

- Link workforce planning efforts with those of the Privatization Study Team to balance the need for permanent in-house staff with the need for outsourced capabilities and nonpermanent staff.

## 2. Employee Development

- A. Adopt a USGS policy of “continuous learning,” which recognizes that USGS effectiveness in meeting its science mission and responding to the changing needs of its customers is directly linked to its commitment to continuous employee development.

Key points include:

- Employees’ scientific and technical skills must be kept current and aligned with USGS strategic goals. The leadership and management skills of our supervisors and managers must be developed.
- *Employees* are responsible for developing their own skills and seeking opportunities to use new skills on the job. *Supervisors* are responsible for participating with employees in identifying developmental experiences and providing time for learning. The *Bureau* is responsible for insuring that a structure and funding are provided for development.
- The resources devoted to continuous learning must be viewed as an investment in the future of the USGS, not as an expenditure.

- B. Establish a USGS Employee Development Program.

Short-term actions include:

- Initiate a bureauwide program of scientific and technical training that includes cross-discipline training to enhance a broader understanding of the work of the USGS.
- Implement a bureauwide leadership development program. Focus first on senior (SES, GS-14/15) and mid-level (GS-12/13) executives because of their critical role in the strategic change process, and then begin to move deeper into the organization to reach all levels.
- Implement a bureauwide supervisor/manager development program, using existing training modules from within the USGS and outside, concentrating first on those whose mandatory training requirements have not yet been met. Link supervisor/manager training to leadership development.

- Implement a bureauwide mentoring program. To increase our retention of new employees, focus initially on employees who joined the USGS within 3 years. Expand the program to include mentor training for leaders before the end of the first year.

C. Develop the infrastructure to support the USGS Employee Development Program.

Short-term actions include:

- Establish an Office of Employee Development that reports to the Chief, Office of Human Resources, and is responsible for managing the Employee Development Program.
- Consolidate all USGS training facilities and programs under the umbrella of a single USGS National Training Center in Denver. The Training Center will be responsible for coordinating the delivery of all USGS training whether the training is conducted in a classroom, in the field, or using a variety of technology-based training media.

### 3. Measures

Evaluate the effectiveness of our efforts to enhance the skills of our workforce, using metrics established for the Skills goal of the USGS Strategic Plan and Strategic Change Theme on Workforce Skills.

Short-term actions include:

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Employee Development Program, our efforts to acquire skills through outsourcing and partnering, and our success in accomplishing USGS science goals.
- Benchmark our investment in training and development against other high-quality knowledge-based organizations.
- Evaluate our ability to maintain an appropriate balance of permanent in-house staff with outsourced capabilities and nonpermanent staff.

### Anticipated Benefits and Challenges

Our efforts for enhancing workforce skills will be successful if linked to the day-to-day process of doing science, with both short-term and long-term objectives in mind. We must change the culture of USGS to treat the costs associated with employee development as an investment in our future versus an expenditure. But as with any investment, we should expect to see a tangible return on our investment--that the USGS remains a world leader in the natural sciences.

## Enhancing Workforce Skills

Action	Priority	Time Frame	Resources	Resp Party
<b>Policy</b>				
Establish & communicate continuous learning policy that employees take responsibility for their career development and that supervisors/managers take responsibility for participating with employees in ED planning & nurturing ED.	High	09-30-00	No additional resources	Chief, OHR Chief, OED
<b>Workforce Planning</b>				
Implement workforce planning as a comprehensive approach to addressing Strategic Change Team's mandate on enhancing workforce skills.	High	See Appendix 2	See Appendix 2	See Appendix 2
<b>Employee Development (ED) Program</b>				
Initiate bureauwide scientific and technical training for a employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reach bureauwide consensus on process for setting integrated science and common training and education requirements.</li> <li>• Develop bureauwide ED program for scientific and technical training where needs cannot be met by outside sources.</li> <li>• Augment formal training courses with instructional technologies to maximize employee access/reduce travel.</li> </ul>	High	FY 01	\$1.4m annually to conduct training	Chief, OHR Chief, OED
	High	FY 02		
	Medium	FY 03		
Develop & implement a USGS leadership development program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop comprehensive bureauwide leadership development program.</li> <li>• Implement leadership development program for GS-12/13's &amp; GS-14/15's (first priority).</li> <li>• Implement leadership development program for GS-9/11's and GS-1/7's (second priority).</li> </ul>	High	FY 00	\$750k over 3 year period for GS 12-15. To be determined for GS 9-11 & GS 1-7.	Chief, OHR Chief, OED LDP Mgr
	High	FY 01		
	Medium	FY 02		
Initiate a USGS supervisory/management development program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design supervisory/management development program based on program developed by HR team.</li> <li>• Begin delivery of training to 400-500 supervisors &amp; managers.</li> </ul>	High	FY 01	\$2m over 3 year period for supvy/mgt training	Chief, OHR Chief, OED LDP Mgr
	High	FY 02		
Initiate bureauwide training in areas other than scientific/technical and leadership/management. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop bureauwide ED Program for mandatory or other training not covered in scientific/technical, leadership/management, or orientation categories.</li> <li>• Augment formal training courses with instructional technologies to maximize employee access/reduce travel.</li> </ul>	Medium	FY 03	To be determined	Chief, OHR Chief, OED
	Medium	FY 04		

Action	Priority	Time Frame	Resources	Resp Party
Expand USGS mentoring program nationwide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand mentoring program bureauwide for new employees.</li> <li>Expand mentoring program bureauwide for leaders.</li> <li>Expand mentoring program bureauwide for career development.</li> </ul>	High High Medium	FY 01 FY 01 FY 03	\$60-\$90k/yr to expand mentoring program	Chief, OHR Chief, OED LDP Mgr
Complete development of and implement USGS Orientation Program for new employees bureauwide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete development of Orientation Program.</li> <li>Implement Orientation Program.</li> </ul>	High	FY00 FY01	\$10k-\$15k annually to update and deliver training	Chief, OHR Chief, OED LDP Mgr Orientation Team
Initiate an employee development planning process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a bureauwide Employee Development Needs Assessment.</li> <li>Develop &amp; implement an Individual Development Plan process.</li> </ul>	Medium Medium	FY 01 FY 02	To be determined	Chief, OHR EDP Mgr
<b>ED Infrastructure</b>				
Establish Office of Employee Development (OED). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select a Chief, OED.</li> </ul>	High	10-1-00	To be determined	Chief, OHR with AD for Operations
Consolidate bureau training facilities.	High	10-1-00	To be determined	Chief, OED with Chief, OHR & AD for Operations
<b>Measures</b>				
Use skills and employee development measures developed for the Skills long-term goal and the Workforce Skills Strategic Change Theme to monitor, evaluate, and report on USGS performance in skills and employee development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize skills &amp; employee development measures.</li> <li>Evaluate &amp; report on USGS performance in skills &amp; employee development as part of annual Strategic Plan report.</li> <li>Assess skills &amp; employee development measures to ensure they provide a complete picture of skills &amp; employee development.</li> </ul>	High	7-31-00 12-31-00  3-1-01	No additional resources	Chief, OHR

Legend: Chief, OHR = Chief, Office of Human Resources  
Chief, OED = Chief, Office of Employee Development  
LDP Mgr = Leadership Development Program Manager

**DoD Joint- and Service-Specific Training Model**  
**Success Story (Transition from Service (Associate Director) Functional Control to DoD (Bureau))**

Note: Where I see parallels between the USGS and the DoD situation, I've noted them in red text.

In June 1992, the Deputy Secretary of Defense (DEPSECDEF) transferred functional control of Public Affairs (PA) and Visual Information (VI) training (*scientific and technical training*) from each of the Services (*Associate Director(s) or ADs*) to the American Forces Information Service (AFIS) (*Bureau level Office of Employee Development or OED*), a DoD (*Bureau*) level organization. The mission of AFIS then expanded to include “trains public affairs, broadcast and visual information professionals...”. Part of the rationale for this decision was that each Service’s mission was to train (combat skills), equip, and man the force. Their mission **was not** to train public affairs and visual information or any other non-combat skill/occupation. Major reasons for the decision to transfer functional control to AFIS and to consolidate were:

- the need to function better operationally during joint deployments (which was increasingly the way all deployments were executed) so the philosophy was “you perform the way you’re trained,”
- Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions affecting Lowry AFB and Ft. Ben Harrison,
- And, the need to save money and reduce redundancy/duplication of effort due to DoD downsizing and budget cuts.

At the time of the decision to transfer functional control and consolidate training, the Navy had its own school in Pensacola, Florida, the Air Force had its own school at Lowry AFB, Colorado, and the Army had its own school at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Indiana. Each Service established their own PA/VI training requirements, funded to support implementation of those training requirements and staffed their respective schools. These schools taught basic, intermediate and advanced level courses. Some courses resulted in the granting of a military occupational specialty (enlisted) or officer career field classification. Each school was staffed primarily with military personnel on three-year assignments with a smaller cadre of civilian personnel to provide continuity. Both military and civilian personnel worked as course designers/developers, instructors, and served in support positions.

The same 1992 directive from the DEPSECDEF directed consolidation of the three schools into a single, joint-Service training facility. The school was built at Ft. Meade, Maryland and each Service-specific school moved in a phased approach with the dedication of the new joint-training facility in June 1998.

Results of the consolidation (approximately the same annual student throughput):

- Courses reduced from 54 to 29 (most going from Service-specific to joint)

- Personnel reduced by 82
- \$5.2M saved annually by reducing overhead of three schools to one
- 9 buildings reduced to 1
- 350,000 sq feet reduced to 232,000
- Operationally there were major improvements as the two cultures (PA & VI) (or four cultures - Water, Biology, Geology, Mapping) began to work better together and more effectively as a result of training together (learning each other's languages/terms, etc., PA running a Joint Information Bureau, photo folks documenting the exercise/contingency, graphics folks supporting the commanders with briefings, etc.).

AFIS (USGS), the DoD organization that inherited functional control of the training from the Services, was responsible to provide oversight of planning, development, consolidation, and evaluation of training programs provided by the joint school (training center, regional/district training, alternate delivery through technology) or through contract sources. AFIS formulated and maintained current policies and procedures necessary to identify and develop education and training programs to meet joint-Service professional and military occupational specialty requirements (OED relationship to ADs). It also functioned as the principal interface between the joint school (training center, etc.) and the Services (ADs) on training policy, procedures, basic and advanced-level training requirements, scheduling, coordination and chairing of training requirement boards, and implementation of training standards. AFIS provided the expertise on its staff and the forum whereby the Services came together to reach consensus on joint-training (multidiscipline) requirements. Service-specific (discipline specific) requirements were the responsibility of the requiring Service (instructors and budgeting for any additional equipment requirements) but were established at the same forum and taught at the joint-Service school.

In a nutshell, the Services established the “what” and AFIS/school figured out the “how.”

**Responsibility for Scientific/Technical Training**  
**AD Led; Bureau Managed**

Who should have responsibility for scientific/technical training? Can the responsibility be effectively shared between the ADs and the HR-OED? What would be the functions/responsibilities of the AD and the HR-OED in this scenario?

This model meets all the major criteria for strategic change of the USGS. It:

- complements the USGS vision of “One Bureau, One Mission, One Message” by ensuring that the scientific, technical, leadership, management/supervisory, and all other training is coordinated, integrated, and cohesive,
- meets the Director’s overarching goal to “build a stronger sense of bureau identity and commitment to bureauwide goals among USGS leaders and staff” by building a cohesive employee development program that promotes “collaboration across the divisions and disciplines to enhance integrated science,”
- “integrates people, resources, and programs,” stated in the Vision of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as a principal role of USGS managers,
- helps make the “shift from that of a loosely linked confederation of organizational units into that of an interactive community that is even more coordinated, responsive, timely, innovative, and integrated in providing excellent science and information” by centralizing the employee development/training program but keeping the science/technical training requirements/direction where it belongs – in the hands of the ADs, and
- is consistent with the “Plan for Enhancing Workforce Skills” Strategic Change Team’s recommended actions for integrating and consolidating all training/employee development programs and facilities within the Bureau.

To reiterate, while meeting all the above criteria, the model also places responsibility squarely in the hands of the ADs to establish and continuously update the science and technical training requirements and priorities. It places the responsibility for most of the support (conducting the training boards/committees, assisting in the design/development of training and the most appropriate and cost-effective delivery mechanisms, building/converting curriculum to web-based or other technology-enabled delivery, logistics, scheduling, marketing, needs assessments, evaluation, tracking, etc.) of the AD-directed science and technical training requirements and priorities on the HR OED.

In this model, the ADs establish the “what” and the HR OED figures out the “how.”

**RESPONSIBILITY FOR SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL TRAINING**  
**FUNCTIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADS AND THE HR-OED**

<b>Function/Responsibility</b>	<b>ADs</b>	<b>OED</b>
Establish the vision for scientific/technical multi-discipline and discipline-specific training for the USGS with the goal of promoting discipline-specific and integrated science excellence.	x	
Establish scientific/technical multi-discipline and discipline-specific training requirements (knowledge/performance requirements).	x	
Establish scientific/technical training priorities and provide guidelines to the cost centers regarding high priority science needs (ties into employee development needs assessment process).	x	
Establish target audience & prerequisites.	x	
Establish process by which scientific/technical training (& leadership, management/supervisory, etc.,) training requirements are established and regularly reviewed.	x	x
Primary voting membership on Board to establish and review multi-discipline and discipline-specific scientific/technical training requirements.	x	
Coordinate/chair (facilitate) Board to establish/review multi-discipline and discipline-specific scientific/technical training requirements(non-voting)		x
Provide content subject matter experts for design/development of scientific/technical training content (based on AD-established knowledge/performance requirements)	x	
Provide instructional systems design experts to assist content experts in design/development of scientific/technical training content		x
Provide instructional systems design experts to assist content subject matter experts in delivery (classroom and technology-enabled) of scientific/technical training	x	
Provide capability (in-house or contracted or combo) to augment traditionally delivered classroom scientific/technical curriculum with technology-enabled delivery (web-based, CD-ROM, cyber seminar, etc.)		x
Develop visual training aids to support instruction (Power Point presentations, charts, etc.)		x
Provide instructors for scientific/technical training	x	
Coordinate, schedule, and market courses conducted at central training facility, within Regions, or on-line		x
Provide instructor and basic instructional systems design training		x
Conduct annual scientific/technical training needs assessment	x	x
Develop/implement automated tracking system for training & investment		x
Maintain facility for scientific/technical training		x
Budget and fund for classroom and technology-enabled delivery of scientific and technical training		x
Evaluate performance outcomes	x	x
Review and modify training based on evaluation of performance outcomes	x	

ADs = Water, Biology, Geology & Mapping; OED = Office of Employee Development

The information in the table briefly describes the present state of the training and employee development function within the USGS and the desired future state of an integrated Bureau-wide training and development function. The challenge is to develop a plan, process, procedure, outline, etc., to answer the questions that follow the table.

ADs=Associate Directors; RDs=Regional Directors; OED=Office of Employee Dev.

Present State	Future (Target) State (Outcomes)
No centralized lead or integrater on Bureau-wide training and employee development programs and functions.	Integrated and coordinated Bureau-wide (with leadership at Bureau level) training and employee development function.
Training and development programs, efforts, resources, and manpower duplicated in some/all disciplines.	The OED is responsible for administration of a Bureau-wide training and development program, setting up Bureau-wide processes, establishing Bureau-wide training and employee development policy, and managing logistics and training facilities for all training and employee development programs.
Training requirements established randomly - no Bureau-wide systematic process to establish, validate, and update training and employee development requirements.	Training requirements (front-end analyses) are established by appropriate parties, i.e., scientific/technical training requirements will be established by the ADs and RDs; leadership, supervisory/ management training by OED/HR personnel with AD/RD input; etc. This is where the "what" is established. A "what" task statement example might be: "collect surface water samples using appropriate technology."

Present State	Future (Target) State (Outcomes)
<p>Each discipline, down to the cost center level, develops own training, and most don't do any form of leadership, supervisory, management, or orientation training. A Bureau-wide leadership development program has been active for over a year - currently targeting GS-12 through GS-15.</p>	<p>New Employee Orientation, Supervisory/ Management, Leadership, and other non-scientific/technical training programs use common curriculum and common implementation strategies across all the disciplines. Responsibility for program design, development, implementation, evaluation and funding resides at the Bureau level. A mechanism exists for input from Bureau science, technical, and administrative perspectives.</p>
<p>Interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary scientific training is virtually nonexistent. No systematic process/mechanism exist to promote and build interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary scientific/technical training.</p>	<p>Interdisciplinary/Multidisciplinary scientific/technical training is developed and implemented, continuously reviewed, and funded at the Bureau level. Discipline specific training is funded by discipline.</p>
<p>Training &amp; employee development not linked to performance.</p>	<p>Training and employee development directly linked to performance.</p>
<p>No central automated process for administering or capturing and tracking training and development investment data.</p>	<p>Automated training management system to clearly track individual development and calculate training and development investment.</p>

## Million Dollar Questions...

- How do we institute and leverage a systematic process for establishing and updating training requirements within a strong, matrix managed, region/discipline organization? What kind of Bureau processes and mechanisms can realistically be established to allow for systematic and formal establishment of training requirements, review and update? What will this process look like? How often should the process occur?
- Should the above process focus only on interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary science training and Bureau-wide training programs (leadership, orientation, supervisory/management, etc) or should it also include discipline-specific scientific training? Should discipline-specific scientific training be totally the responsibility of each discipline (without training facilitation expertise by Bureau-level OED personnel)? Or, should the discipline-specific process mirror the multidisciplinary process with OED office providing training facilitation expertise ?
- Assuming the front-end analysis phase takes place similar to the above statements (where subject matter requirements are established/updated in a systematic fashion), how then can we systematically move on to design, develop, and implement training with subject matter experts (SMEs) and OED training experts partnering? How do you envision this process?
- What will be the role of the Bureau EDC? What will the EDC look like? How does the Bureau EDC have comprehensive representation yet keep the group to a manageable size (no more than 10 to 12)?
- In addition to a Bureau EDC, should each discipline also have its own discipline-specific EDC? If so, what will be its role? What will be the relationship between the Bureau and discipline-specific EDCs? Likewise, between/among the discipline-specific EDCs?