U.S. General Services Administration

CASE STUDY

Organizational Transformation:
Low-Value to High-Value Services

General Services Administration

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

The President's Management Agenda (PMA), **Cross Agency Priority (CAP) Goal 6** emphasizes **Shifting from Low-Value to High-Value Work**. Agencies should develop and implement reforms to eliminate unnecessary or obsolete compliance requirements and reduce the cost of mission-support operations. This includes streamlining or eliminating unnecessary reporting requirements, consolidating processes and functions across offices, using shared services, and introducing new technologies like robotics process automation.

The Office of the Chief Financial Officer in the General Services Administration has made exemplary progress in implementing the objectives of CAP Goal 6. With a comprehensive approach, the organization has improved its structure, business management and processes, operations, and culture.

INTRODUCTION

During FY 15-17, GSA's Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO), enacted a bold transformation initiative that sought to rapidly increase the value of services and to strengthen financial controls, while concurrently meeting resource efficiency targets. As part of the transformation effort, OCFO:

- Reorganized its headquarters staff into functional Centers of Excellence aligned with its most critical services (budgeting, financial management, analytics, and regional finance).
- Outsourced most financial transactional services and systems (250 FTE) to a SSP to increase the GSA OCFO's focus on high-value services and achieve efficiencies.
- Restructured regional finance operations into a nationally-consistent zonal model that improved performance and achieved a 17% staffing reduction (strategies included a nearly two year hiring freeze, consolidation of supervisors, and two rounds of VERA/VSIP). Reorganization included a functional reallocation of staff based on workload, and the consolidation and competitive selection of the top 3 tiers of management by senior leaders within the regional organization.
- Completed a process standardization initiative that implemented 45 process improvements in six months, and ensured consistent, high quality financial advisory services across the country (transitioning from 11 regional processes to 1 national).
- Launched an Eliminate, Optimize and Automate (EOA) initiative to further business process improvements, identify emerging customer needs, and implement innovative technologies like robotics process automation (RPA) at GSA.

At a strategic level, OCFO identified four principles that would be most beneficial to other government agencies:

1. **DO NOT WAIT FOR THE PERFECT PLAN TO GET STARTED.** Implementing high-value service offerings does not require a perfect organizational structure or set of business processes to get started. Incremental, rapid improvements in service value can be achieved simultaneously with broad-scale transformation. For example, GSA OCFO was able to introduce new audit management services, as well as improve existing audit services immediately, without any changes to the organizational structure.

EMPLOYEE-FOCUSED TRANSFORMATION

Gerard Badorrek GSA CFO

Coming from a career spent entirely in the private sector, I arrived at GSA with an admittedly limited understanding of the federal government. I needed to better understand the organizational culture – and determine how to best use our resources to drive increased value.

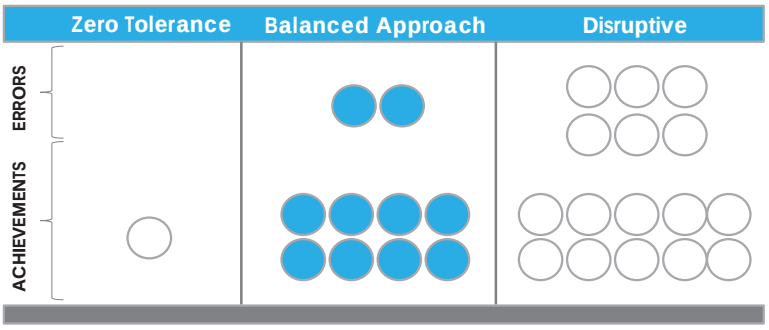
We instituted what I call employee-focused transformation, wherein employees play an important role in developing a high-value, and high-performing organization.

The critical challenge in employee-focused transformation is identifying the best opportunities for staff to participate in either designing or implementing strategic outcomes. In OCFO's transformation, leadership set the ground rules, made high-level decisions on organizational structure and direction, and communicated expectations clearly to staff. Mid-level managers and SMEs, fully engaged and accountable, then had the flexibility to implement many of the changes in OCFO.

I have quickly learned that public sector employees have a unique and enduring commitment to the organizations they work for – and this became our greatest asset through the transformation. We needed rapid improvement across all areas of operations, and my strong leadership team and the talented OCFO staff delivered on every initiative.

2. **STRIVE FOR CONSENSUS NOT 100% AGREEMENT.** Large transformations require close coordination, collaboration, and communication with many employees, partners, and customers. Waiting for approval and unanimous buy-in among so many disparate groups could make initiating a successful transformation nearly impossible. The leadership team of the transforming organization has to be receptive to informed feedback from partners, customers, and staff, and then must take accountability and own management decisions.

3. **MAKE PEACE WITH UNCERTAINTY.** It is important to accept some degree of ambiguity about the transformation, and plan effectively to actively manage implementation and recalibrate strategy. There will always be one more factor to analyze, and all possible outcomes and eventualities cannot be mitigated during the planning stage.



The leadership team's tolerance for and management of risk is critical to the success of the transformation effort.

4. **SET AGGRESSIVE GOALS AND TIMELINES.** Establish and communicate ambitious goals to drive the organization toward its most impactful outcomes. 80% success on a target of 100, is always better than 100% success on a target of 25. The leadership team should drive the organization towards goals that set a high bar for performance, and reward employees for taking risks and making progress, even if 100% of the aggressive goal is not achieved.

This document lays out an approach for organizational transformation based on lessons learned by GSA OCFO. Like any transformation effort, GSA OCFO faced significant challenges, changes in leadership, and changes in strategy. Sometimes they made wrong decisions. But through a strategy they coined "employee-focused transformation," the organization made significant strides in operational performance, value to customers, employee engagement, and organizational efficiency in a short period of time.

TRANSFORMATION TO HIGH-VALUE SERVICES

GSA OCFO had a clear impetus for change; a mandate to reorganize financial services to improve the value and performance of the organization. After all finance staff were consolidated under the OCFO in FY 15, the organization had almost 500 new financial analysts, unique regional business processes, opportunities to strengthen financial controls and processes, and executive pressure to make rapid improvements.

The organization began the transformation with an assessment period that sought to identify the current level of operations (e.g., are we getting the basics right?), review the effectiveness of existing structures and leadership, and evaluate the culture and change readiness. Once the results of the assessment were compiled, steps were taken to immediately improve operational performance, while long-term planning was required for changes to structure, leadership, and cross-cutting or shared business processes. Culture change was stressed throughout the transformation.

The sections below detail the steps GSA OCFO took to complete its transformation and drive high-value services for partners and customers.

1

RAPID ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

An assessment of the current level of operations and the organizational challenges that are preventing the implementation of high-value services.

2

SHORT-TERM WINS AND LONG-TERM STRATEGY

After opportunities are identified in the Rapid Assessment, operational quick wins should be identified and implemented, and long-term strategy should be developed for structural, leadership, and business process improvements.

3

STRUCTURAL AND PROCEDURAL CHANGE

Reorganization and process improvement to implement opportunities identified in the assessment, and to mitigate existing challenges.

4

ELIMINATE, OPTIMIZE, AND AUTOMATE INITIATIVE

Identification and implementation of projects to eliminate unnecessary workload, optimize/automate low-value services, and establish new high-value services.

5

CULTURAL CHANGE AND ENGAGEMENT

Identifying opportunities for all staff to contribute, and transforming organizational culture to one that promotes increased employee engagement and a bias towards action.

1. RAPID ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

GSA CFO launched an assessment in FY 15 to understand current state operational levels, as well as what organizational challenges were preventing OCFO from successfully implementing high-value services. The assessment included the following themes:

CURRENT OPERATIONS REVIEW

- What are the organization's most important outcomes and deliverables? Is the organization on track to deliver them?
- Can the organization successfully deliver on core (basic) requirements (e.g., funds certification, financial transactions, budgeting and obligations)?
- What are the critical services customers and partners require? What are their perceptions of current delivery?
- What other high-value services will enable the organization to best meet its mission?
- What is the gap between what the organization is currently providing, and its vision for the future?

GSA OCFO EXAMPLE

OCFO's assessment of operations identified several opportunities for improving the value of services provided;

- Increased consistency and high performance in financial advisory services (budgeting, financial management, regional finance).
- New services in agency financial analytics, planning, and strategy to align with emerging partner needs.
- Increased process automation to create additional capacity; and
- Outsourcing of most financial transaction processes.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

- Does the organizational structure promote or prevent the organization from providing high-value services? Does the structure promote efficiency and effectiveness?
- Does the organization have the right people with the right skills in the right jobs?
- Is the executive team able to lead the organization to become a high-value, high performer?
- What are the procedural challenges (e.g., customer/oversight requirements, historic expectations / standards, and standardization challenges) that prevent the organization from becoming a high-performer?

CULTURE AND CHANGE READINESS

- What is the culture and morale of the organization?
- What is the willingness and readiness of the organization to embark on a transformation initiative?
- Has analysis already been completed that might illuminate important issues (e.g., customer surveys, staff surveys, staff focus groups)?
- Who are the change champions within the organization that can promote the leadership team's vision? What levels of the organization are ready for change?

After addressing all three theme areas, OCFO documented findings and discussed results within the management team. The assessment took roughly 60 days to complete, and leveraged information sources including customer and employee surveys, existing process documentation, and agency directives.

2. SHORT-TERM WINS AND LONG-TERM STRATEGY

After completing the Rapid Assessment, OCFO identified opportunities and challenges for transitioning the organization to a high-performing finance function. Opportunities were evaluated for quick wins that could immediately be implemented. Examples included elements of the audit management process (Corrective Action Plan (CAP) management), establishing a new financial analytics group, and improvements in the management of the budget process. The goal for these opportunities was to achieve tangible short-term results, and establish momentum among staff to drive larger organizational changes.

In addition to short-term opportunities, the OCFO prioritized long-term opportunities to implement value-added services. Many of these opportunities required significant changes to organizational structure and business processes. The OCFO leadership determined that structural changes would be completed first, followed by process standardization, and finally adjustments to individual business processes and systems. **Culture change, employee engagement, and high performance were stressed throughout each phase, and stood out as the cornerstone of OCFO's employee-driven transformation.**

LESSON LEARNED

How do you know when you have done enough assessment and planning?

One of the most important parts of getting the GSA OCFO transformation off the ground was making peace with some degree of ambiguity. The leadership team agreed that every event could not be planned for, and that issues would inevitably arise during implementation that no one could have foreseen. This approach enabled the group to bust through the classic analysis paralysis (there is always one more factor you could assess), focus on careful, vigilant management of the implementation process, and establish a shared sense of accountability for the outcomes.

These initiatives were defined through a strategic management approach, in which milestones, deliverables, and resources were identified and captured in a formal project management methodology. Throughout the transformation project, monthly operations reviews, and quarterly strategic reviews were conducted by the leadership team to ensure adequate progress on metrics and milestones.

The mix of metrics included in the monthly and quarterly reviews incorporated both short-term operational metrics (examples: dollar value of delinquent RWA bills over 180 days old, % of credit card certifications completed within 24 hours, funds certification for PBS within 3 days); and long-term strategic metrics (examples: employee engagement and satisfaction rates and annual financial statement audit results). **By closely aligning our metrics and milestone management with the project management methodology, our executive leadership team was able to better understand the outcomes associated with the transformation activities.** OCFO had insight into the impact of our strategy on the organization's most important outcomes, and this allowed the organization to make smart investments, course correct, and constantly recalibrate implementation and design.

In addition to the project management plan and metrics monitoring, OCFO worked diligently to establish a communications plan. The plan included key messages, mediums, frequency, and ownership. During the transformation, the leadership team sent out a quarterly newsletter with updates from throughout OCFO, developed regular emails to staff from the CFO briefing them on progress, scheduled regular opportunities for the leadership team to meet with staff members, and regular check-ins with key customer and oversight constituencies.

3. STRUCTURAL AND PROCEDURAL CHANGE

A. Outsourcing Services to an FSSP to Improve Value (Year 1)

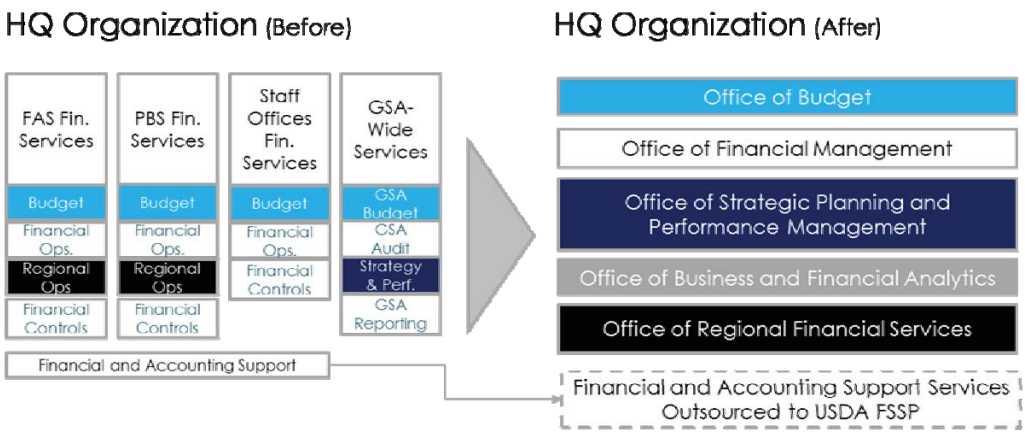
In reviewing workload survey data, and assessing OCFO operations, it was clear to the leadership team that the organization could outsource certain services. The financial management team within OCFO led an expedited, six-month migration of basic financial shared services operations (debt management, accounts receivable, bill paying, invoicing, treasury reporting, and cash reconciliations) to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) totaling a shift of nearly 250 FTEs and contractors.

As part of the outsourcing effort, OCFO's senior leaders worked to develop a relationship of trust and partnership with USDA. While OCFO developed a Memorandum of Understanding that outlined the broad services to be provided by USDA, a Concept of Operations that qualitatively defined service expectations, and SLA metrics that quantitatively defined service expectations, it was the working relationship that was the hallmark of OCFO's success. Finally, OCFO established a new position – the USDA Liaison - to troubleshoot issues for customer groups throughout GSA, and to provide oversight of USDA services. This position, and the immediate access it provided to USDA leadership, gave OCFO's customers confidence that although financial transaction services were being outsourced, they could still achieve rapid issue resolution.

Through outsourcing most financial transaction services, the GSA OCFO has been able to yield significant operational efficiencies. **In the three years since operations fully transferred to USDA, GSA has achieved savings of 16%.** Savings have included financial systems enhancements, reductions in system hosting costs through a migration to a new cloud environment, reductions in staffing, rent reduction, efficiencies in testing support, and targeted outsourcing of specialized services to outside USDA. These resources have allowed OCFO to lower our costs for its business partners, and reallocate existing resources to higher value services in financial reporting, auditing, and analytics.

B. Functional Consolidation into Centers of Excellence (Year 1)

Another strategy OCFO deployed to improve organizational performance was consolidation of offices from customer-based, duplicative organizations to functional organizations. During FY 13-15, financial analysts from across GSA were migrated to the newly formed OCFO to consolidate financial responsibilities under one accountable official (the CFO).



This mandate allowed for an increased focus on financial controls and the ability to radically transform financial advisory services. Before the reorganization, financial analysts joined the organization in stove-piped offices from each customer group, which led to widespread duplication and diffuse ownership of key deliverables including budget submissions, auditing, and financial reports. The result was inaccurate financial data, and a large workload associated with data clean-up, reconciliation, manual data entry, report consolidation, and rework – all of which added limited value to our customers and partners.

Concurrently with the outsourcing of some financial and accounting support services to USDA, GSA OCFO led a reorganization of all staff into four functional groups that mirrored the most important services provide to customers – budgeting, financial management (accounting, audit, and internal controls), financial analytics, and regional financial services. This organizational structure established one SES responsible for each functional area. It also helped organizations immediately realize additional capacities to improve existing services by reducing duplication of effort and streamlining workflow. Organizational metrics also improved rapidly - for example, the number of Notice of Findings and Recommendations (NFRs) on the annual financial statement audit decreased from 51 in FY 14, to 12 in FY 15 (accountability driven through SES ownership).

C. Regional Operations Reorganization (Year 1)

The final structural change in GSA OCFO included a reorganization of nearly 350 staff that provide front-line customer support to the Public Building Service (PBS) in 11 regional offices. In the historic regional model, process ownership was spread across multiple organizations and aligned with unique, local priorities. Over the years, regional financial staff had developed their own approaches to key business processes, which created issues in entity-level financial controls, financial data management, and budgeting.

During a six-month design and implementation phase, OCFO created a new zonal model with identical structures, balanced workload, consolidated leadership positions, and established clear lines of responsibility, while reorganizing from 11 regions to 4 Zones. **The completion of the new model enabled OCFO to significantly reduce staffing (17%), better leverage individual SME expertise across the country, and eliminated the collective action problem of coordinating 11 different regions around one business process.** The new structure also redistributed staff with increased virtual workforce positions and hiring in selected low cost locations, further decreasing operating expenses.

Coalition Building for Impactful Organizational Changes

An important part of shifting the regional finance team to a structure that promoted high value services, was establishing a coalition of customers and staff members to champion the proposed changes. Our strategy for achieving this coalition began by selecting three Public Building Service (PBS) Regional Commissioners to serve as our partners in designing the new Zonal model. This partnership was real and required compromise about staff location, oversight and management approaches, as well as workload (including functional ownership). Although we had to make some compromises, having three leaders within the customer agency fully bought in to the transformation, and actively advocating for the change, led us to a very rapid and successful implementation. To keep the momentum, we established periodic briefings on the transformation for leaders in the customer agency, conducted quarterly customer satisfaction surveys, and shared our communication materials (newsletter, emails from the CFO, updates on leadership changes) with all customer groups.

D. Process Standardization and Improvement (Year 2)

OCFO made a conscious decision to deputize all OCFO staff as process improvement experts, as part of a larger effort to apply "employee-driven transformation," and to keep employees actively involved in organizational changes. We communicated to all staff that instead of using an army of consultants to achieve process standardization – we were creating Communities of Practice (COPs) and empowering all staff to own a piece of the standardization initiative.

GSA OCFO EXAMPLE

How OCFO used some simple workload factors to make significant improvements to its structure.

One of the largest functions in OCFO's regional finance organization is certifying and processing Reimbursable Work Authorizations (RWAs), wherein customer agencies prepay for repairs and alterations to their work spaces. As OCFO's transformation team reviewed this division's operations, it was clear there were extreme variances in productivity. The highest performing region processed 289 RWAs annually per FTE, and the lowest performing region processed only 43.

By itself, this variance in productivity was not enough information to redesign the entire division (totaling roughly 120 FTE). The leadership team sat down with regional SMEs to determine the factors driving low productivity, and learned that a better metric was the number of transactions performed on the RWAs (some RWAs are millions of dollars and require more activity by financial analysts). After rerunning the numbers, productivity variances persisted, with the most productive organization processing 2,025 transactions per FTE, and the least productive processing 869.

Our team used this workload data to establish a desired productivity metric for transactions per FTE (the median regional performer), and reallocated staff across the country based on that metric. The variance in productivity has since decreased dramatically, with the top Zone processing roughly 1,500 transactions per FTE, and the least efficient Zone processing roughly 1,250. Moreover, because of process standardization, Zones are able to provide surge capacity and support, to ensure equitable work share and full utilization of resources.

In total, obtaining the data, performing the analysis, testing initial findings, and designing the future RWA organization took less than 40 hours of work for 1 FTE.

The COPs gave regional OCFO's finance staff the chance to collaborate with their peers from across the country to identify national best practices, which were then defined, documented, posted on an intranet site, and implemented. The new Zonal Model facilitated this process effectively, as ownership of key functional areas was consolidated to a manageable number of SMEs. Executive leadership tracked implementation progress through Google Sheets, enabling regional managers to input status against key milestones.

In the course of six months, OCFO successfully implemented 45 significant projects, accomplishing the lion share of process standardization opportunities within OCFO.

Having a well-designed organization, with all staff performing consistent business processes, established the building blocks necessary to rapidly deploy high-value services. As each process standardization project was completed, OCFO witnessed almost immediate improvement in customer SLAs including funds certification, financial reviews, and timely invoice payments. The process standardization projects also led to more accurate financial information, and allowed managers to think about what information and intelligence customers needed to most effectively run their businesses. OCFO was then able to begin implementing new high-value services, more aligned with the organization's mission to be a trusted strategic and financial advisor.

4. ELIMINATE, OPTIMIZE, & AUTOMATE INITIATIVE (Year 3)

From the solid foundation of the reorganization, consolidation, and standardization work – OCFO is launching a rapid improvement initiative—"Eliminate, Optimize, Automate" (EOA) - to complete the organization's transformation to high-value work. The EOA initiative was borne out of an aggressive goal set by the leadership team for staff to develop and deploy GSA's first robotics applications within 100 days.

When examining the first round of candidates for Robotics Process Automation (RPA) solutions, the leadership team realized some processes could just be eliminated or optimized to reduce workload. The initiative then expanded from solely robotics focused, to a broader look at all GSA financial workload (OCFO and our customers). OCFO defined the terms eliminate, optimize, and automate broadly (see Figure below), as the goal of the initiative is to fine tune all operational processes, identify extraneous workload, and transition all available resources to high-value requirements.

WHAT IS RPA?

Robotics Process Automation:

- Mimics human actions through software tools.
- Frees up organizational capacity for high-value services by increasing efficiency of low-value services.
- Used for rules-based, manual, and repeatable processes, such as invoice processing or cash reconciliation.
- Full implementation can be in as little as 8 weeks. ROI typically 6-18 months, with costs much lower than systems upgrades or enhancements.

ELIMINATE	OPTIMIZE	AUTOMATE
1. Legacy activities, process requirements, and deliverables that are no longer needed or can be done less frequently because of a change in business requirements, technology or Partner needs. 2. Activities, processes, or deliverables that no longer make sense to perform or can be done less frequently and still make objectives. 3. Controls and/or standards that are too stringent and cause OCFO or our Partners additional work, for little return in improved financial accountability for GSA.	1. Processes, requirements, and deliverables that can be done more efficiently, in less time, or more accurately within individual Offices, or organization-wide 2. Additions, modifications, or deletions that would streamline work products to increase efficiencies, or increase the usability by customers. 3. Additions, modifications or deletions that would more closely align workload with customer needs or OCFO's mission/vision.	1. Opportunities to reduce process cycle time. 2. Opportunities to increase the accuracy of reporting, financial transactions, and auditing. 3. Opportunities for reducing labor hours, and freeing more time for high-value activities. 4. Opportunities to accomplish more and absorb greater workload with the same or less resources. (Example: Auditing 100% of transactions with an automated tool rather than a small sample).

As was the case in OCFO's reorganization and transformation work, a key part of ensuring the EOA initiative leads to high value work in OCFO is engaging our SMEs, managers and analysts in the process. All staff received an OCFO Workload Great Ideas Survey, and we collected responses from almost 20% of the workforce, totaling almost 200 ideas for elimination, optimization, and automation. The executive leadership team is currently reviewing all 200 ideas, performing additional research to understand the validity and impact, and developing a final list of approved projects. Once implementation begins, SMEs, managers, and analysts will all play an important role and will share ownership of making these projects successful – a key tenant of OCFO's employee-driven transformation methodology.

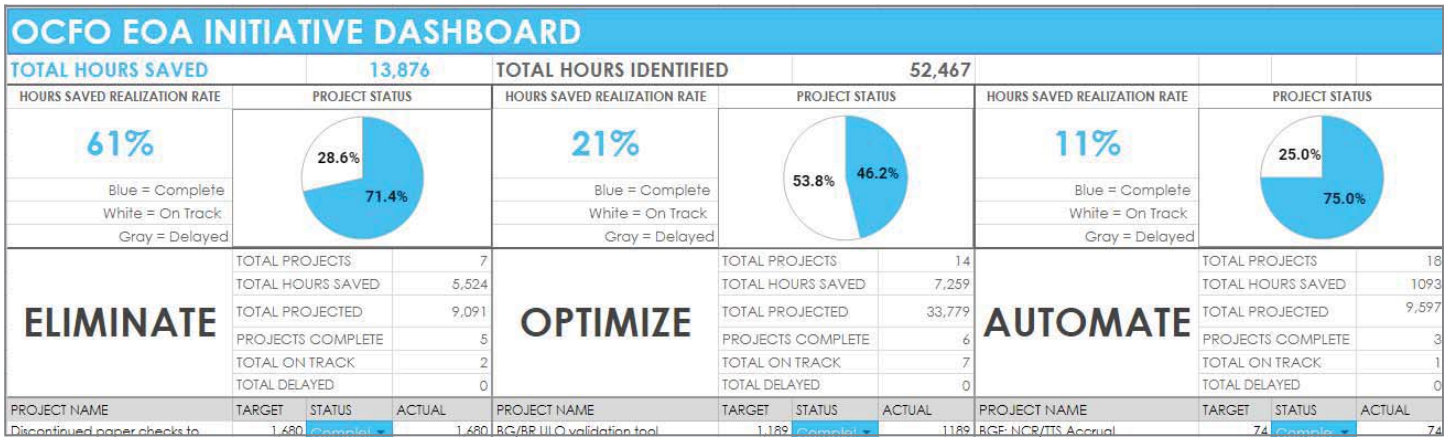
The project plan provided in the figure below lays out the aggressive timeline for the EOA initiative. Within eight weeks, OCFO will launch the initiative, collect input from the entire organization, and plan for the implementation of projects across all three focus areas. From there the organization will use existing project management tools and methodologies from the completed standardization work to monitor implementation and report results back to the executive leadership team.

INITIATIVE TIMELINE

All staff will receive periodic updates from the management team about our progress toward a shared metric of 40,000 annualized hours saved through EOA projects (roughly 5% of total workforce). Each project will have an identified hours savings projection that includes hours saved by OCFO and our business partners. As projects are completed (and new ones are added) the rolling target will be updated to ensure accuracy, and communicated out to staff to maintain organizational momentum and buy-in.

During the initial months of the initiative, OCFO has already achieved a reduction of 13,000 hours through elimination of unnecessary deliverables, requirements, and meetings. OCFO has also identified opportunities for additional elimination and automation totaling well over 50,000 annualized hours for GSA.

To track the ongoing progress and implementation of EOA projects, OCFO developed a quick Google Sheets Dashboard. The screen shots included below show the executive view, which keeps the leadership team apprised of hours saved to date, project status and ownership, and next steps.



OCFO EOA INITIATIVE DASHBOARD

TOTAL HOURS SAVED	13,876	TOTAL HOURS IDENTIFIED	52,467

ELIMINATE		OPTIMIZE		AUTOMATE	
HOURS SAVED REALIZATION RATE	61%	HOURS SAVED REALIZATION RATE	21%	HOURS SAVED REALIZATION RATE	11%
PROJECT STATUS	28.6% / 71.4%	PROJECT STATUS	53.8% / 46.2%	PROJECT STATUS	25.0% / 75.0%
Blue = Complete		Blue = Complete		Blue = Complete	
White = On Track		White = On Track		White = On Track	
Gray = Delayed		Gray = Delayed		Gray = Delayed	
TOTAL PROJECTS	7	TOTAL PROJECTS	14	TOTAL PROJECTS	18
TOTAL HOURS SAVED	5,524	TOTAL HOURS SAVED	7,259	TOTAL HOURS SAVED	1093
TOTAL PROJECTED	9,091	TOTAL PROJECTED	33,779	TOTAL PROJECTED	9,597
PROJECTS COMPLETE	5	PROJECTS COMPLETE	6	PROJECTS COMPLETE	3
TOTAL ON TRACK	2	TOTAL ON TRACK	7	TOTAL ON TRACK	1
TOTAL DELAYED	0	TOTAL DELAYED	0	TOTAL DELAYED	0

PROJECT NAME	TARGET	STATUS	ACTUAL	PROJECT NAME	TARGET	STATUS	ACTUAL	PROJECT NAME	TARGET	STATUS	ACTUAL
Discontinued paper checks to	1,680	Complete	1,680	BG/BR ULO validation tool	1,189	Complete	1189	BGF: NCR/TTS Accrual	74	Complete	74

Note: This is the preliminary dashboard for the EOA initiative. OCFO is still actively vetting projects and updating this live document.

5. CULTURE CHANGE AND ENGAGEMENT

Perhaps the most time and resource intensive aspect of OCFO's transformation to high-value services was in changing the organization's culture, and getting employees engaged and involved in transformation activities. This work is the crux of "Employee-Focused Transformation," and has been the key to GSA OCFO's success to date.

To establish a clear vision for OCFO, the leadership team collaborated in the development of a new GSA OCFO Strategic Plan, and each Office Director held an All-Hands to explain the priorities of the new organization to staff. The strategy included three priority areas of organizational culture – integrity, collaboration, and excellence. For each area, examples were provided to staff that demonstrated the values and how actions (small and large) could further these principles. OCFO also launch a staff recognition program (the ICE Award) for employees that best demonstrated the new organizational values.

In addition to the interpersonal and organizational values, the OCFO leadership team also established strategies that defined **how OCFO would transform to a high-value service provider.**

- ***High-Capability Workforce:*** To serve as a trusted advisor and become a high-performing organization, OCFO recognized the need for a high-capability workforce. Staff must be talented, dedicated, and engaged with the mission and strategic direction.
- ***Bias Toward Action:*** Employees must operate with the mindset that constantly looks to push initiatives forward and empowers staff to make informed, prompt decisions based on appropriate authorities, principles, and practices, and often in consultation with customers. The executive leadership team at OCFO is more interested in a 90% solution in 1 month, versus a 100% solution in 1 year.
- ***Evidence-Based Decision Making:*** OCFO employees must embrace evidence-based decision making, wherein operational and strategic metrics and milestones are collected accurately, and are then leveraged for important organizational decisions. At the same time, the organization must be careful to avoid analysis paralysis, and keep performance metric capture (which is often resource intensive) to the critical few indicators that best describe performance against established outcomes. OCFO must also have transparent performance indicators to foster "friendly competition," wherein no leader wants to arrive at a status meeting and report "red" performance, with no action plan for correction.

- ***Focus on Value Generation:*** OCFO employees must always focus on value generation, and ensure all activities align with operating strategy and positively impact our customers and collaborators.

In addition to setting clear goals and communicating them frequently, OCFO has driven improved employee engagement and satisfaction scores through active staff involvement at all stages of the transformation process. Staff provided feedback during the assessment phase on organizational challenges and opportunities. Mid-level managers helped shape the regional and headquarters consolidation strategies, determining the functional mix in each new Office, as well as the leadership structure. SME's actively led national process standardization initiatives to improve efficiency and quality of key deliverables. And staff at all levels of the organization have submitted ideas, and will be leading projects for the Eliminate, Optimize and Automate Initiative.

As a key metric for the transformation effort, OCFO carefully monitored staff engagement and satisfaction scores. OCFO is very proud to note that in FY 17, scores on the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVs), surged to 78% for the staff engagement index (12% higher than FY15 when the transformation efforts began), and 79% for the staff satisfaction index (16% higher than FY15).

	OCFO Employee Satisfaction	OCFO Employee Engagement
FY 2017	79%	78%
FY 2016	67%	71%
FY 2015	63%	66%

OCFO credits these improvements to its strategy of tapping into the impressive commitment, dedication, and knowledge of our employees to drive the transformation of our organization. OCFO employees felt like they were key contributors to the effort because they were given meaningful opportunities to participate, and good ideas were recognized and implemented. Employee participation and active involvement also enabled OCFO to achieve more significant results in less time, and to complete the transformation well under the original budget.

GSA OCFO TRANSFORMATION TEAM

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