

# Transforming Federal Workforce Through Training: Three Strategies for a Cost-Effective Approach

The federal workforce is undergoing rapid demographic changes, leading to significant capability gaps that are expected to widen as retirement rates accelerate. Federal agencies will need to update and enhance their training and development programs to adapt to these evolving needs.

## IS THIS A FUNDING PROBLEM?

In response to growing calls for employee upskilling, learning and development efforts in the United States have intensified, with total expenditures across all sectors reaching \$101.8 billion in 2023.<sup>1</sup> However, despite these substantial investments, there remain systemic challenges within the realm of training and development.

Many traditional "check-the-box" training programs are ineffective, consuming billions of dollars annually but failing to yield desired results due to misaligned success metrics and uninspiring outcomes. These learning models focus on passive knowledge transfer rather than active skill development and overlook the principles of adult learning (andragogy). Further exacerbating the issue are time-based, compliance-based legacy training models that fail to change behavior on the job or attend to the neuroscience of learning.

Established industry providers are hindered by their size and often struggle to adapt their offerings. This inflexibility, combined with a reliance on traditional profit models and existing partnerships, turns previous assets like extensive content libraries and familiar training methods into liabilities. These providers are unable to move away from ineffective, one-size-fits-all training models, which are increasingly being recognized as inadequate in meeting the dynamic needs of today's workforce. In essence, their size impedes their success, preventing them from supporting everybody effectively and ensuring each dollar is utilized responsibly.

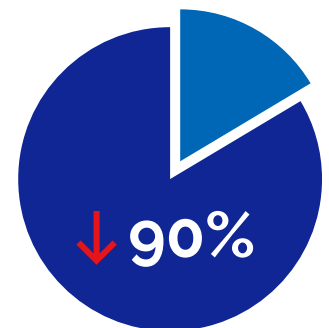
As emerging technologies like generative AI reshape global employment and labor markets, federal employees will need to hone their skills in areas like program management, data analytics, and systems thinking. Simply increasing funding will not resolve the challenges facing federal workforce training.

<sup>1</sup> [Total Training Expenditures in the United States from 2012 to 2023](#)



**By 2028, nearly 50% of all employees will face skillset disruption in their appointed positions.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> [Evolution of Federal Financial Management Reforms: FedScope - Federal Workforce Data](#)



**90% of learned material is forgotten within two weeks if not reinforced with clear, relevant, and practical applications.<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> [What Is the Forgetting Curve \(and How Do You Combat It\)?](#)

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## TRANSFORMING LEARNING: THREE STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTING MODERN TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

In the realm of modern training and development, social learning is paramount. This approach utilizes an organization's existing talent ecosystem for knowledge sharing between peers and from experts to novices. It also seeks to overcome structural barriers and outdated work models that fail to support a skill-centric development strategy.

By adopting a "three-pronged force-multiplier approach", organizations can expedite their transformation and provide a competitive edge over those who persist with outdated training methods.

1

### FORCE MULTIPLIER 1: EMBRACE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING (70/20/10 MODEL):

**Principle:** This model posits that effective learning comprises 70% on-the-job experience, 20% through collaboration, and 10% via formal training.

**Implementation:** By aligning training with this model, organizations can fully utilize their workforce's collective knowledge and skills, ensuring learning is directly applicable and relevant to their roles.

**Outcomes:** Such a shift promises enhanced engagement, skill development, talent retention, and a maximized return on investment (ROI). It also aligns with best practices in adult learning, ensuring training is both efficient and effective.

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### FORCE MULTIPLIER 2: INTEGRATE TECHNOLOGY FOR SCALABLE TALENT DEVELOPMENT:

**Cohort Learning:** Implement group-based learning modules to build community and shared learning objectives among employees.

**Collaborative and Iterative Approach:** Utilize behavioral economics principles to foster intrinsic motivation through idea exchange. Implement short, iterative training cycles with continuous, relevant feedback for agile learning and development.

**Expert Alignment:** Collaborate with Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to ensure training is authoritative, credible, and up-to-date, equipping learners with practical and accurate knowledge.

3

### FORCE MULTIPLIER 3: FOCUS ON EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE ENGAGEMENT:

**Gap Analysis and Targeted Learning:** Identify and address capability gaps, aligning learning experiences with employee needs and emerging trends.

**Outcome-Oriented Metrics:** Transition from traditional credit-based metrics to evaluating the impact of training on business outcomes.

**Collaboration with Training Providers:** Engage actively with training providers to align learning objectives with specific business results, ensuring a more effective and relevant training experience.

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## MDC-BUSINESS UNIVERSITY

In 2022, MDC acknowledged challenges across the federal workforce and utilized its expertise in resource management and leadership to establish MDC-Business University. This initiative spearheaded an innovative, research-based approach, specifically designed to meet the evolving needs of the workforce, with a focus on developing human capital. By adopting best practices in adult learning, MDC-Business University has successfully fostered a shift in mindsets, skill sets, and job performance behaviors, all underpinned by trust and proven credibility.

At MDC-Business University, our mission is to build lifelong partnerships with public sector professionals through the development and enhancement of new and existing skillsets across the entire spectrum of management disciplines. Our collaborative learning model provides a holistic education and training platform that partners with and empowers learners by leveraging the tenets of adult learning theory and incorporating agency-specific competencies in the development, delivery, and sustainment of training and development events.

Our training and development events are fully accredited by the International Accreditors for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and are facilitated by industry-leading professional faculty who have decades of federal experience in leadership and management disciplines.

## OUR CAPABILITIES

- **Collaborative Professional Development Workshops:**

Professional workshops that foster collaborative learning among professionals. These can cover topics like leadership and communication, where participants engage in group activities, peer-to-peer learning, and shared problem-solving.

- **Industry-Specific Training Seminars:** Seminars (webinars) that focus on specific industries, such as IT, healthcare, finance, or education. These seminars, led by industry experts, can provide insights into the latest trends, best practices, and emerging technologies in various fields. Seminars utilize best practices in collaborative learning. Support to host existing seminars through the full gamut of live or web-based event formats can be provided.

- **Certification Programs with Peer Learning:** Holistic certification preparation training and hosting of group-level events for individual certifications such as CDFM/ PMP. These programs will emphasize group projects, study groups, and peer-led sessions, highlighting the benefits of learning from and with fellow professionals. These programs are essential for professionals looking to advance in their careers or shift to a new field.

- **Interactive Online Learning Modules and Courses:**

Tailored online courses designed for group interaction and collaborative learning that focus on specific industries, such as IT, healthcare, finance, or education. These might include forums, group projects, and peer reviews.

- **Continuing Education and Training (CE/T) and Continuing Educational Units (CEUs):** Certificate issuance and document management are critical components of professional development and lifelong learning. They play a vital role in recognizing and validating the learning achievements of individuals, while also ensuring that these achievements are accurately recorded and easily accessible for future reference.

## WHO WE ARE

Our faculty and facilitators are experts in their respective fields, bringing years of leadership and financial management expertise from top-tier federal service positions. They are thoroughly trained in the methodologies of adult education, ensuring they deliver content effectively. Additionally, our team includes skilled instructional design professionals who collaborate closely with our subject matter experts to develop all courses and materials. This partnership ensures our educational offerings are grounded in the most current adult learning theories.



## HIGHLIGHTED SME FACILITATORS:



**Colonel (Retired) Virgil L. Scott** has amassed decades of financial management experience within the Military Health System. In his last role, he served as the Principle to the Deputy Assistant Director, Financial Operations Directorate, and Deputy Chief Financial Officer for the Defense Health Agency. In this capacity, he provided strategic and operational oversight of all planning, programming, budgeting & execution activities of the Department's \$300B Unified Medical Budget. Colonel Scott's career is saturated with successes. He earned a direct commission into the Medical Service Corps and graduated Commissioned Officer Training School. He is board certificated by the Healthcare Financial Management Association. Colonel Scott aced multiple Fellowships in Health Plans (Operations) and Financial Management. Other key roles include the Chief, AFMS Budget Execution, Command (Squadron level) as well as MTF Administrator roles in both the Expeditionary and Peacetime environments.



**Mr. Mark E. Cleveland** has decades of leadership and financial management experience impacting multibillion dollar budgets in the Military Health System. After many leadership positions throughout his career, his last role was as the Chief Financial Officer for the Air Force Medical Service before retirement. He is a fiscal strategist who can plan, program and allocate budgets that meet stakeholder needs and organizational objectives without sacrificing mission success. Dedicated to continuous process improvements, innovative solutions and always creating an environment of trust where failure is allowed to cultivate even greater organizational level change.

Former Board of Directors member for Davis County Hospital in Utah. Holds a Master's in Business Administration from Webster University and a Master's in National Resource Strategy from the National Defense University.

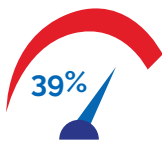


**JP Hicks** is a management consulting executive with substantial experience designing, leading, and implementing a broad range of multibillion dollar program and budget negotiations, resource allocation and program management strategies, and policy-influencing campaigns across the DOD. He brings 20 years of expertise in Operational Planning and Strategy; DOD Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE); Operations Research and Statistical Analysis (ORSA); and Executive Management Consulting. In the last decade, JP executed multibillion dollar program and budget review negotiations as the Primary Medical Analyst at every echelon in the DOD, including OSD CAPE, HQDA G-8 PA&E, and OTSG/MEDCOM.

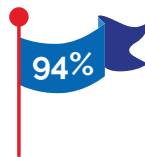
A skilled speaker, JP was hand selected to routinely advise, red-team, and prepare three Deputy Secretaries of the Army and two Vice-Chiefs on Congressional medical reform, negotiations to secure critical medical equities, and strategies to influence SECDEF control of the Military Health System. JP enjoys coaching and mentoring others to strengthen their ability to communicate novel solutions to complex issues with candor, brevity, and humor.

## OUR RESULTS

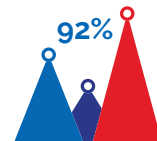
Courses with summative assessments for the prior 18 months indicate:



Learners increased their knowledge of assessed content by an average of **39.11%** pre-test to post-test.



Learners' overall satisfaction with the learning events exceeded **94%**.



In a multi-cohort assessment (financial, admin, technical, and other professionals) **92%** of learners reported the learning event would significantly improve their ability to perform in their jobs.

For additional information on our services or to begin a partnership opportunity that aligns with your organization's modernization objectives, contact [businessdevelopment@mdc-llc.com](mailto:businessdevelopment@mdc-llc.com). MDC-Business University is an IACET-accredited provider.