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Six Trends Driving Change in Government: Examples of Agencies Leveraging Change

Since the creation of the IBM Center for The Business of Government over 15 years ago, it has been our goal to help public sector leaders and managers address real-world problems by sponsoring independent, third-party research from top minds in academe and the nonprofit sector.

We aim to produce research and analysis that help government leaders respond more effectively to their mission and management challenges. The IBM Center is named "The Business of Government" because we focus on the management and operation of government, not the policies of government. Public sector leaders and managers need the best, most practical advice available when it comes to delivering the business of government. We seek to bridge the gap between research and practice by helping to stimulate and accelerate the production of research that points to actionable recommendations.

Over the past several months, the Center for the Business of Government has been examining trends in six different areas that are driving government to approach mission and business challenges differently, pointing to the need for further analysis and recommendations on how to effect change across these six areas. The Center reviewed these trends and released a special report, *Six Trends Driving Change in Government*. The Forum in this edition offers a primer on each of the six trends and the insights that can help government executives respond more effectively to their mission and management challenges. The Center's research agenda is informed by these trends, but some federal agencies have already started down a positive path of change in each trend area, and their ideas can serve as models for others to adapt as appropriate.

Such examples include:

Performance. The Department of Education has created a What Works Clearinghouse of successful policies, programs, and practices that provide educators in the field with the best information available so they can make evidence-based decisions regarding curriculum and other education-based initiatives.

Risk. The Internal Revenue Service established a new Chief Risk Officer to help agency leaders understand risks in advance, and develop strategies that support the delivery of taxpayer services that account for, communicate, and mitigate risks.

Innovation. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) has introduced a portal called the Project Catalyst, through which they achieve three of the goals laid out in this section. The CFPB allows visitors to the site to (1) "Pitch a Pilot," (2) "Run a Disclosure Trial," and (3) "Use Our Data." They are doing so in order to "engage with the innovator community; participate in initiatives that inform our policy work; and stay on top of emerging trends to remain a forward-looking organization."

Efficiency. The General Services Administration has saved over $1 billion through actions taken by its Information Technology Service to create a marketplace that will provide agencies with buying options, access to data and information, access to expertise, and an improved buying experience.

Mission and Leadership. Mission support chiefs within the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Agriculture convene on a regular basis to share their progress on various initiatives and to identify ways to work together, for example on telework strategies and reducing their real estate footprints. Success in any of these initiatives often involves leaders collaborating with multiple mission-support organizations in order to be successful.

This issue highlights successful actions being taken throughout government to meet challenges of ever-increasing complexity, and sparks thinking among government leaders and stakeholders about how best to forge new paths forward. ◘