



## **Strategic Plan for 2004 and Beyond**

**New York State Office of General Services  
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**~ Connecting people, ideas, actions, results ~**

**Message from Commissioner Ringler**

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Dear Colleagues:

With the leadership and support of Governor Pataki, and the outstanding efforts of our work force at all levels, the Office of General Services has gained a reputation as a well-run state agency. We systematically create plans. We get the job done, we check our results, and we make improvements.

As well, OGS is always looking toward tomorrow. We have recently updated and refocused our OGS Tomorrow Strategic Plan because these plans need to remain fresh and responsive to the changing context in which the agency operates.

In 2003, OGS lost about 12% of its staff during a retirement incentive program, and many others are approaching retirement eligibility. Thus, the composition of our staff is undergoing rapid change. Budgetary constraints are also a significant factor in our present operating environment.

I feel this is our most promising plan yet because it grew primarily out of the voices and views of our work force. An employee survey and a series of employee discussion groups helped direct our attention toward certain strategic issues, and greatly influenced the choice of key initiatives as well as the specific strategies selected.

OGS has a well-established understanding of our mission, goals and objectives. We have proven we can be counted on to perform well under normal and emergency situations. Our current greatest challenge is to sustain and nurture our organizational strengths and capacity in relation to customer expectations and, while we do so, ensure that OGS offers satisfying and rewarding work experiences for all members of our organization.

The strong commitment of our management and employees to learn, share, and innovate is the asset that matters most in enabling us to adapt in the manner envisioned in this plan. I look forward to working with you all as we implement our overall OGS Tomorrow strategy.

Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Ringler, Jr., Commissioner of General Services

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**PREAMBLE:**

**The Key Word Is Connected**

The Office of General Services' strategic plan contains several important ideas and agendas. This is because our agency encompasses many different programs and we have many ambitious things we want to accomplish. Yet, one word captures the vision and spirit of OGS' plan as a whole, and can serve as your key to this document. That word is: "*Connected.*"

OGS strives to *connect* with our customer agencies, business partners and suppliers, public employee organizations, and public audiences – through understanding their issues and requirements, staying in touch with their changing needs, and collecting their reactions after providing services or concluding a project.

OGS program areas strive to *connect* with one another through integrated strategic and annual business planning, participation on project teams, constant communication, technology linkages, information sharing, and day-to-day cooperation. Yes, we are organized into business units, each of which has its own mission. But we must never underestimate the interdependence between our business units, and the need to coordinate our efforts.

OGS staff members strive to *connect* with the individuals they interact with on the job – bosses, staff, colleagues, customers, vendors, and members of the general public. This is where one-to-one outreach, taking care to tune in to the objectives of each party, and respect for each other's dignity enable us all to remain motivated and productive.

Connecting doesn't always come naturally. It takes extra effort to pass on information and explore ideas with each other and then follow up appropriately. Technology is one tool we can use to connect better. Use of project planning methods is another. Appreciating diversity, rearranging our resources, forming new partnerships – these are all ways to create the connectedness that will power the results that OGS aspires to achieve.

As one agency working together, we can best fulfill the goals conveyed in our plan.

Keep "connected" in mind.

## INTRODUCTION

### What are strategic plans for?

- √ *Strategic plans are guides to strengthening and sustaining organizational achievement.*

They reflect fundamental decisions about what an organization does, why it does it, and what is most critical to focus on during the plan's life cycle.

Strategic plans respond to, and create, change. Organizations that want to survive and prosper must continually find better ways to do what they do, and to make important shifts in their focus and action when needed. The strategic plan documents the strategy selected and tells stakeholders about it. It also gives us a backdrop for measuring progress.

Many employees wonder why we bother with this. We bother because it works. OGS is more effective today in part because the management and staff have committed to and followed a distinct plan. We have designed and pursued strategies that have brought about measurable improvements. With your help, we intend to keep it up.

#### *Consider this:*

- Strategic plans are a normal part of running an organization well.
- Strategic plans are never “the only” answer to providing good direction, but they are an important component because they provide an official, unified guiding document.
- Strategic planning can't succeed as a one-shot or isolated activity – something you do once and forget about, or something that is done instead of other work. It must be integrated into the fabric of the operating organization.
- The work of strategic planning may take different forms, but the basic process is universal. This includes reviewing how your organization is faring, determining its current strengths and weaknesses given its role in the economy and society, and making choices about goals and appropriate strategies.
- Strategic plans that are stagnant are useless. They must be revisited and reshaped as time goes on.

## **Why is the OGS Tomorrow Plan changing?**

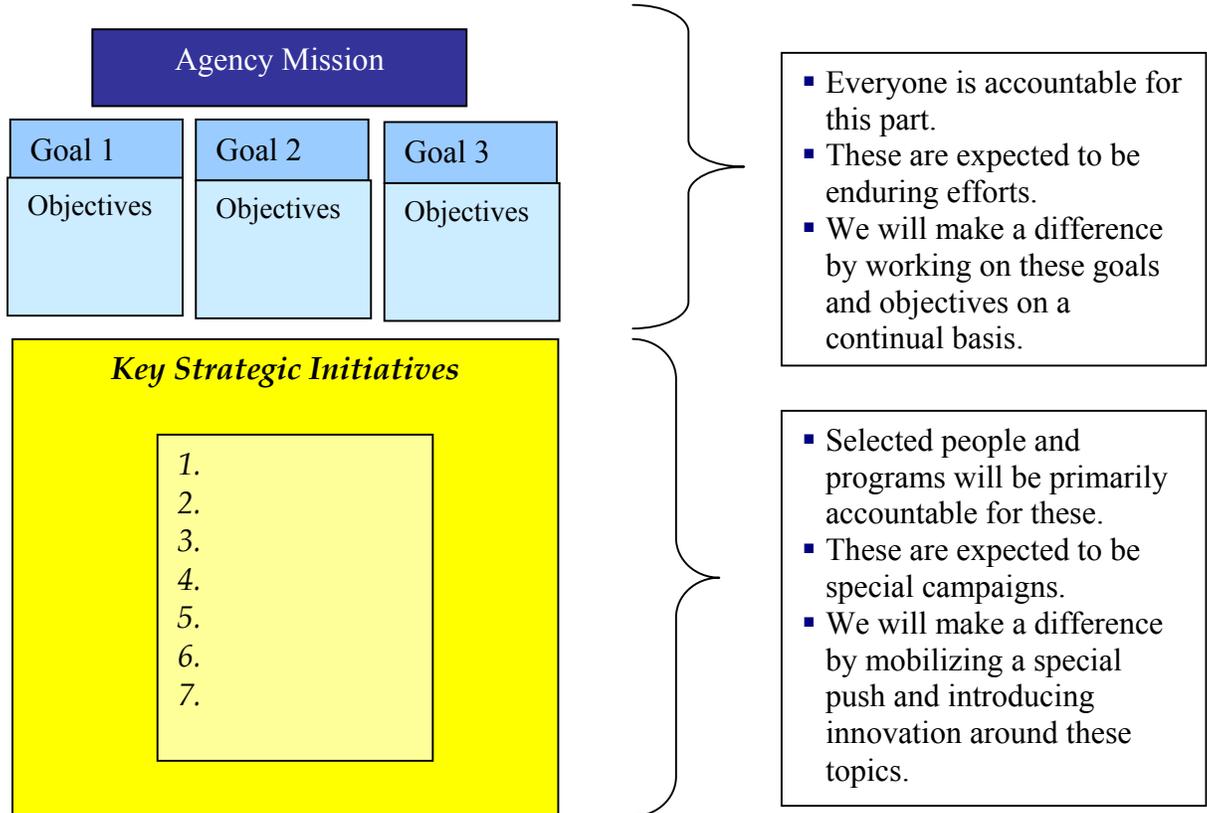
- √ **Many specific strategies that OGS put into its 2002 plan were implemented, while some new issues have arisen. Therefore, to push onward we need a revised plan.**

Also, a lot has changed in the OGS environment in the past couple of years. OGS needs a strategic plan that reflects its efforts to adapt to new circumstances. We also need a plan that inspires us to tackle as an entire organization the most difficult issues that lie before us as we look to secure a successful future for OGS.

## **How was this new plan developed?**

- √ **The planning activities that resulted in this document occurred from approximately December 2003 – April 2004. They included:**
  - A review was conducted of the accomplishments from the previous OGS Tomorrow plan. This included identification and discussion of “unfinished business.”
  - A survey was conducted of the entire OGS work force. This survey asked employees to identify positive and negative changes in the agency, key challenges the agency faces, and ideas for addressing these challenges. A summary of findings was compiled and shared with the work force.
  - A survey was conducted of OGS top management staff, following their review of the survey data. This helped further identify and focus the key challenges facing OGS and began the discussion and prioritization of strategies.
  - Employees were invited from throughout OGS to participate in extensive discussions about the challenges. The task was to react to and validate the challenges based on their experiences, and to brainstorm ways to address them. Seven sessions were held. In all more than 100 people participated in this phase.
  - A small committee took the input from all of the previous steps and developed a draft plan.
  - The draft plan was vetted with senior management, employee union representatives, and the participants from the strategic planning discussion groups, and their suggestions were incorporated. The Commissioner then determined the plan to be complete.

## What does the new plan consist of?



## AGENCY MISSION - WHAT WE DO

*The New York State Office of General Services manages and leases real property, designs and builds facilities, contracts for goods, services and technology, and delivers a wide array of support services. We provide government and nonprofit agencies with innovative solutions, integrated service, and best value, enabling the State of New York to function optimally.*

## OUR CUSTOMERS

INSIDE STATE GOVERNMENT	OUTSIDE STATE GOVERNMENT
<b>STATE AGENCIES</b>	<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENTS</b>
<b>Operating Agencies</b>	Counties
Agency officials	Cities and towns
Administrative directors	Fire districts
Facilities managers and planners	
Fiscal officers	<b>BUSINESS COMMUNITY</b>
Information management directors	Architecture and engineering firms
Purchasing directors	Contractors
	Consultants
<b>Control Agencies</b>	Construction managers
Division of the Budget	Vendors and suppliers
Office of the State Comptroller	Landlords
Attorney General's Office	Chambers of commerce
Department of Civil Service	
Office for Technology	<b>NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS</b>
	School districts
<b>EXECUTIVE CHAMBER</b>	Educational institutions
	Child care centers
<b>OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS</b>	Health care providers
Authorities	Food banks
Commissions	Summer food service programs for children
State University of New York	Summer camps
State Legislature	Museums and libraries
Judiciary	NYS Industry for the Disabled
	<b>GENERAL PUBLIC</b>
<b>STATE EMPLOYEES</b>	Consumers of government services
	State citizens
<b>OGS</b>	School children
Executives	Tourists
Business Units	
Employees	

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – WHAT WE STRIVE FOR

### **Goal 1. Public Benefits from Outstanding Performance**

Our first goal is to contribute to the public good by using our specialized talents to achieve outstanding performance in the pursuit of efficient and effective government. We will keep the physical and operational infrastructure for state government in optimal condition. The economic and societal benefits stemming from our programs and projects will be as significant as possible.

#### **Key Objectives**

- (1) Meeting the current and future office space needs of state agency tenants, while helping to meet downtown revitalization goals.
- (2) Ensuring the safety and security of people using state properties, as well as protecting the facilities themselves.
- (3) Conserving energy use while contributing to environmental quality.
- (4) Preserving, renewing and redeveloping where appropriate the state's buildings and properties.
- (5) Providing contracting mechanisms that are easy for purchasers, vendors, and contractors to use and that support cost efficiencies.
- (6) Delivering seamless, cost-competitive publication and distribution services for state agencies.
- (7) Enabling the general public to use and enjoy our unique government facilities in many different capacities.
- (8) Providing cost-effective administrative support services for other agencies.

#### **Assessing Results**

OGS will continue to measure its success in contributing to the public benefit by examining such key indicators as:

- Operational cost efficiency
- Financial management results

- Incidence and costs of emergencies, malfunctions, accidents and other adverse situations
- Facility condition assessment results
- Comparison of preventive maintenance expenses with repair and remediation expenses
- Percentage of on-time, on-budget projects
- Various energy usage indicators
- Degree of compliance with relevant standards and guidelines
- Contract utilization
- Competitiveness of prices
- Public participation in OGS programs and events

## **Goal 2. Cost-effective Products and Unparalleled Customer Service**

Our second goal is to provide each OGS customer with high quality work products and customer service superior to other organizations competing for the work we do. Our service efforts will be well coordinated and responsive to changing needs.

### **Key Objectives**

- (1) Making it easy and pleasant to do business with OGS, regardless of what part of our agency is involved.
- (2) Communicating clearly with our customers and suppliers.
- (3) Delivering our products and services in as timely and reliable a manner as possible.
- (4) Promoting constant innovation in our products and services.
- (5) Using public/private alliances effectively to extend our product and service capabilities.

### **Assessing Results**

OGS will continue to measure its success in achieving quality products and customer service by examining such key indicators as:

- Customer satisfaction ratings, customer retention, and growth in customer base
- Customer complaints
- Time and cost to deliver services
- Adherence to schedule and budget commitments for deliverables
- Number of product and service innovations
- Rates of defects, errors, omissions
- Number of partnerships

### **Goal 3. An Excellent Place To Work**

Our third goal is to provide our employees with a workplace where we all share in a sense of challenge, opportunity, and success. Along with clear, dynamic leadership, our work force will also have the necessary skills, information, work environment, tools, flexibility, and motivation to get the job done for the customer. This will enable us to excel as individuals and as a team.

#### **Key Objectives**

- (1) Providing effective leadership, management, and supervision.
- (2) Ensuring that employees and management have the right information, technology, and equipment to do their jobs well.
- (3) Sustaining a broad range of staff expertise.
- (4) Maintaining individual and program accountability, and recognizing people's contributions to excellence.
- (5) Achieving coordination among program areas.

#### **Assessing Results**

OGS will continue to measure its success in creating and sustaining an excellent place to work by examining such key indicators as:

- Range, quantity, and participation rates in employee development opportunities
- Percentage of employees with individual development plans and employees receiving career planning assistance
- Percentage of employees receiving annual performance evaluations with useful feedback
- Job and career mobility indicators
- Amount of investments in new technology and equipment
- Range and impact of communication activities
- Employee satisfaction ratings on key quality of work life variables
- Number of awards and recognition events

## KEY STRATEGIC CHANGE INITIATIVES

This section of our plan frames seven broad initiatives that OGS will pursue during the life cycle of this plan. These have been formulated expressly in response to the many voices of the OGS work force that were heard during the formal planning process. As a reminder, these voices included both staff and management. The voices told of some dramatic progress on the part of OGS. But they also spoke honestly about places or ways in which we are at risk of falling short on our goals and objectives. When all the input was distilled, certain topics emerged as focal points. We will attempt to address these topics with a fresh approach.

A good portion of the efforts outlined here will concentrate on human resource matters. In that regard, this section of our Strategic Plan may appear to be skewed toward OGS' Goal Three. This is not by accident. The people of this organization will carry it through to wherever it needs to go. Directing our focus toward our personnel, and their continuous development, is the best strategy for steering through a time during which total resources will remain tight while expectations of OGS customers will remain high.

### *Key Strategic Change Initiatives for 2004 - 2006*

- *Reinventing the Management and Supervisory Culture*
- *Focus on Front Line Needs - Communication, Computer Skills, & Growth Opportunity*
- *Talent Pool Replenishment*
- *Best Management of Consultants & Contractors*
- *Information Integration & Knowledge Management*
- *Simplification and Streamlining of Contract Development, Administration and Use*
- *Enhancing the Visitor Experience in Government Sites - Balancing Access with Security*

● **Initiative: Reinventing the Management and Supervisory Culture**

**The Challenge:**

Our agency is staffed more leanly today than it has been for many years. Yet the customer expectations are great, and our internal performance standards have increased. Many members of our work force, in their sincere efforts to cope with changes and sustain excellence, are concerned about work overload and increasing stress. These conditions warrant a rethinking of OGS' management and supervisory culture.

On the one hand, OGS has made progress in establishing shared goals throughout the agency, pushing out more information from the top, and promoting collaborative methods. Managers are spending more time in formal planning and in matching resources to objectives. On the other hand, the management and supervisory culture retains certain vestiges of command and control and territorial values and styles. For example, in too many situations we overlook opportunities for internal and inter-business unit dialogue that could be productive. Such approaches may have worked under different circumstances but they run counter to the best interests of our agency and its stakeholders today.

The challenge faced in this initiative is to help our managers and supervisors to engage employees and foster collaborative planning and problem solving. The challenge is also to reduce even further, if we can, the place that "firefighting" plays in our daily work lives in favor of more orderly business processes and accomplishment of projects. And, we need to enable more effective balancing and management of the workload.

**Where we are now:**

- OGS made various changes to the organization's management structure at the time of the 2003 Retirement Incentive Program that addressed reduced staffing levels.
- We have made adjustments *within programs* to shrinking resources and have sought and obtained waivers to fill certain positions. One result is that many of the incumbents in management and supervisory positions have changed in the past twelve months.
- All new promotions within the past year included an Individual Development Plan. To the extent that these plans are written to include some development work in the skills of managing and supervising, they are a step toward addressing this challenge.
- Within the past year, training has been made available on IDP development, Counseling and Discipline methods and procedures, foundational Supervisory

Skills, Sexual Harassment Prevention and Diversity Awareness, among other topics. All these programs offer information useful to supervisors.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- We will have improved the alignment between the expectations of the Commissioner's Office and the management/supervisory styles and practices found at all levels.
- We will have created more accountability for effective management and supervision.
- We will have developed and put into place new techniques for managing workload and reducing stress levels within the agency.
- We will have ensured, through careful reexamination and adjustments where warranted, that the distribution of financial and staff resources represents the best possible match to production requirements.

**Strategies to get us there:**

**1. Set Clear Expectations for Managers/Supervisors and Create Accountability**

- Define in understandable, behavioral terms what are the expected standards for management /supervisory roles. Build standards into all managers' performance programs and use for evaluations.
- Provide clear, direct and individualized feedback on the extent to which managers/supervisors are meeting expectations and establish specific, individualized plans to foster growth and change where needed.

**2. Clarify and Strengthen Requirements for Promotion into Management/Supervisory Roles**

- Increase the weight that interpersonal and communication skills have in the selection of candidates for management and supervisory positions.
- Explore and experiment with ways to broaden selection process for management/supervisory titles. For example, explore use of "assessment center methods" for consideration of candidates.
- Use objective and quantifiable assessment criteria in making selections for permanent appointments.
- Require that learning efforts be sustained after appointments

**3. Invest in Development of Management/Supervisory Skills**

- Provide tools for managers and supervisors to assess their skills relative to the expected standards and styles.
- Provide a structured developmental program in core management/supervision skills for people who serve in these roles in OGS. This will include learning about:
  - all of the work OGS does, to provide a broader perspective
  - engaging employees in planning, problem-solving and process improvement

- accepting ideas from staff how to provide recognition that matters
  - using staff meetings effectively
  - providing guidance to staff on ongoing basis
  - the importance of positive reinforcement so that people feel good about their jobs
- Establish a cadre of expert practitioners of project management within OGS.

#### **4. Increase Managers/Supervisors' Communication Activities**

- Emphasize spending time visiting staff work areas within and outside of the manager's scope of responsibility.
- Use oral communication to convey important messages backed up with written material.
- Promote more listening and less telling.
- Coach managers in creating a collaborative atmosphere that enables their staff to participate in dialogue without fear.
- Encourage managers to provide staff with the context and background pertinent to their work assignment, and keep them informed about agency and business unit activities that could bear on their work.
- Increase feedback and follow-up provided to program units from senior management
- Expect meetings to be documented and share the key decisions
- Strengthen the communication flow between regional and central offices.

#### **5. Adjust How We Allocate and Manage Work in OGS**

- Develop and experiment with new approaches to workload management to improve coordination and reduce stress.
- Provide new tools to management and supervisors for identifying and energizing employees who are unmotivated and/or low-producers, reducing tolerance for non-productivity.
- Strengthen project and portfolio management practices in support of more efficient use of resources and consistent, well defined work efforts.
- Confront and inhibit instances where managers/supervisors reinforce the silo effect (i.e., the tendency to think and act within the boundaries of a particular program without regard for the interests of, or impact on, other programs) between business units.
- Ensure only "value-added" administrative and management process by identifying and eliminating unproductive steps.
- Reassess OGS program capabilities and the potential for organizational consolidations.
- Restructure OGS programs, budget and position allocations where practicable.

#### **6. Make Planning and Results Assessment A More Inclusive Process**

- Use open forums with people drawn from throughout the agency to share important information and create a common culture.
- Devote more management time to helping the work force know the agency direction; make this effort more ongoing

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- Use the annual business planning process as a means for engaging employees in the planning of work and the evaluation and improvement of work results.
- Expect managers to involve their staff in the process of assessing and managing organizational performance. Educate, explain, and involve staff in the development and use of performance measurement data. Broaden the audience for business unit performance reviews to include BU staff as well as interested people from other units.

● **Initiative: Focus on Frontline Needs – Communication, Skills, and Growth Opportunity**

**The Challenge:**

OGS has a substantial frontline work force. We have numerous employees in these roles who have long carried out their duties responsibly for the agency and yet feel that they have little access to information, support, and growth opportunities. As we look at these jobs today, we can see the requirements changing: higher skills in written and oral communication, tracking and understanding data, and particularly in using computers, are necessary for successful performance. Ability to move up on the career ladders is also increasingly dependent on development/expansion of such skills. OGS has created programs to give opportunities for motivated front line workers. However, we now plan to take on the challenge *comprehensively* to strengthen our frontline staff's capabilities and increase the job advancement potential for this segment of our work force. How can we do this?

**Where we are now:**

- OGS has offered apprenticeship and certification programs for various skill trades including mason/plasterer, electrician, and plant utilities engineers.
- Many Building Administration staff are in the process of being introduced to Computerized Maintenance Management System and Leave and Attendance Tracking System, which are exposing them, perhaps for the first time, to computer use skills on the job.
- OGS offers various skills enhancement courses designed expressly for those in lower-graded positions.
- OGS is expanding its computer-based skills development programs available to employees through a contract with a new source.
- Frontline staff who are being recommended for promotion must have and follow an Individual Development Plan.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- OGS will have motivated employees on the front line who are well informed and actively expanding their skills and preparing themselves to compete successfully for promotional opportunities.
- There will be access to a broader range of job growth opportunities, and fewer dead-end positions.
- Employees on the front line will experience greater job satisfaction and know that their efforts can produce results for them personally as well as for OGS' customers.

**Strategies to get us there:**

- 1. Make Changes To Improve The Job Mobility For Motivated Frontline Employees**
  - Identify and reduce the practical and psychological barriers that are placed between employees and learning opportunities.
  - Encourage and assist employees to assess and systematically enhance their basic skills (basic reading, writing, math and communication) so they are prepared for higher-level tasks.
  - Create in-house one-on-one job/career advisement support, through HR, and have this staff partner with supervisors in efforts to support and direct the development of individual employees.
  - Create more flexibility for employees in competing for job opportunities throughout the agency through helping the employee build skills.
  - Implement meaningful individualized development plans for employees. Use employee panels to assist in IDP development and review.
  - Analyze how OGS can create more upward mobility options within our existing job mix. Study to what extent true career ladders exist or could exist within OGS employment and work to modify the title structure where appropriate, working with Civil Service.
  - Evaluate where people may be performing above title work and determine how to better align positions held with responsibilities.
  - Identify certification programs and expand Apprenticeship Programs, to enable employees to become qualified for more jobs. Encourage/enable participation in these programs.
  - Give people opportunities to expand their skills by placing them on special projects and providing job enrichment assignments
  - Expand apprenticeship model
  - Partner closely with labor unions (LEAP services, etc) to take full advantage of joint state-union funded programs.
  
- 2. Demonstrate Greater Respect for Employees' Abilities, Ideas and Judgment**
  - Teach employees how to express their ideas effectively so that the ideas are more likely to be heard and used.
  - Teach middle management and supervisors how to foster communication (see first initiative) and strengthen accountability of supervisors.
  - Evaluate effectiveness of work group meetings and provide hands-on coaching for work groups in how to make such meetings more worthwhile.
  - Explore development of guidelines so that staff can act independently under many circumstances.
  - Establish a common practice of asking staff "what do you need" in order to do their job or meet the assignments given to them.

**3. Provide Proper Tools, Equipment, Supplies and Especially Training**

- Within work groups, collect information from staff about gaps in tools, equipment, supplies and training, and develop plans for filling the gaps.
- Expand frontline staff members' competencies in the use of information technology. Ensure employees acquire fundamental computer skills. Provide training in use of computers, with continual building of skills from windows and keyboard fundamentals to use of complex software.
- When introducing new work methods, systems and tools, ensure a well-thought out and adaptable training effort is part of the project scope.
- Develop a budgeting plan for employee development to help meet training requirements across the agency.
- Develop a mentor/protégée mechanism for people in front-line jobs.

**4. Increase Recognition Provided to Individual Frontline Staff**

- Study and implement ways to make our current employee recognition programs more meaningful to staff. Consider ways to restructure these programs such that employees can have additional, direct input to nominations and selection. Better inform staff about opportunities to participate in the process.
- Encourage managers and peers to communicate regularly about work well done.

● **Initiative: Talent Pool Replenishment**

**The Challenge:**

Like many public agencies, OGS is concerned about being able to replenish its talent pool in a smooth and steady manner as we undergo the anticipated retirement bubble of the next few years. The rate of new hiring into OGS during the last several years has been relatively low as a combined effect of several factors -- ongoing hiring freezes, strict item ceilings, a preference toward redeployment from within the state employee pool, and the operation of Civil Service system rules in general. In particular, OGS has had few opportunities to bring in people who are in the early stages of their career now, except into hourly positions. Thus, OGS's work force is predominantly composed of people in the later stages of their working years. Recently educated people who could conceivably become the knowledgeable core of our future work force five, ten or fifteen years hence are exceedingly scarce within OGS today. The cohort of employees age 40 and under is disproportionately small. Moreover, OGS has begun to develop gaps in its current skill base – skills that are needed now. Left unaddressed, this situation will increasingly weaken the agency's capacity to meet customer expectations.

**Where we are now:**

- Many years of the hiring freeze, topped off with retirement incentive programs, have meant a net outflow of knowledge.
- In response to the 2003 Retirement Incentive Program, OGS assessed the impacts, developed a plan and was successful in obtaining waivers to refill critical positions.
- While necessary and significant, these waivers did not allow for acquisition of “new blood” as much as they enabled some movements within the current OGS and state work force.
- The agency has brought in very few people from outside state government.
- The median age and average age of OGS work force are unusually high.
- There have been virtually no organized efforts to assess needs and recruit outside of a very restricted pool.
- There have been very few people in their early working years hired into position vacancies.
- In early 2004 OGS began a new round of succession management planning on a business unit by business unit basis, building on work done in 2001 through 2003.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- OGS will be moving toward a better balanced distribution of its work force so that there will always be sufficient people in training to carry on the knowledge and work of the agency as veteran staff move on.
- OGS will have established ongoing succession management.

**Strategies to get us there:**

**1. Assess and Take Action To Retain Institutional Knowledge**

- Take stock of the current talent areas in OGS, determine the skills and professions that are most needed and/or at risk of depletion.
- Create and use a systematic transition planning process whenever a position incumbent is known to be leaving the position. This would include documentation of key knowledge areas and duties, mentoring those with potential to take over the function, and conducting an exit discussion.
- Identify talent pool development approaches that can cross business unit lines, viewing technical and managerial skills as agency assets rather than business unit-specific.
- Employ recently retired technical experts for work on specific project assignments while teaching their practical skills at the same time.

**2. Create Opportunities To Hire That Will Address OGS' Unique Needs**

- Negotiate and or invent new mechanisms to support "new hiring" specific to identified OGS needs. Work with Civil Service and Budget to introduce new approaches.
- Use cost benefit analysis to identify where the agency might be better served in long run by establishing permanent items rather than using contractors for new work.
- Reexamine organizational structure to provide places to grow talent in preparation for assuming higher-level functions in the future and ensure sufficient capacity is maintained at the front line.
- Strengthen administrative support capacity so that technical and management workers are not spending disproportionate amount of time on clerical tasks.
- Establish more analytical / planning capacity at the business unit level.

**3. Take A Fresh Approach To Attracting Talent Into OGS**

- Analyze the attractiveness/competitiveness of critical OGS titles in comparison to similar functions in other places of employment. Pursue changes in the job packages where analysis shows the terms of the jobs are not sufficient to attract top quality candidates.
- Change examination approach to generate better pool for specific talent needs.
- Where practicable, conduct selective recruitment to take advantage of new hiring mechanisms.

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- Looking beyond the current hiring limitations, develop tools with which to market OGS as an attractive employer and place to work, in order to build a stronger, more diverse work force for the future.
- Develop better-articulated career paths within OGS such that potential employees will be more easily attracted and retained.

● **Initiative: Best Management of Consultants and Contractors**

**The Challenge:**

OGS, like virtually all government agencies, accomplishes its work through a combination of in-house staff and purchase of services from private firms. Several of our business units with specialized work to accomplish use consultants and contractors to supplement in-house staff. There are various business reasons why this strategy has been pursued and it has undoubtedly worked satisfactorily in a variety of instances, enabling us to produce more and satisfy more of our customers' expectations in a timely and effective way. However, staff have reported that the contractors' work is sometimes substandard and, in their view, the model may not always make the best business sense. The challenge that OGS will address through this initiative is how to get the best results from our "extended" work force and how to make sure that we keep the best balance in using such supplemental staff.

**Where we are now:**

- OGS relies on contracted workers in a variety of its programs, such as D&C, IRM and RPMD. Many individuals have been working for OGS in this status for prolonged periods and work side-by-side with state staff on an ongoing basis.
- Our employees perceive the contractors' work is often more expensive and less satisfactory than that of state employees.
- Many employees have seen the nature of their role change from technical production to oversight of contracted producers, and they do not always feel they have the right preparation for this changed role.
- Our outsourcing contracts typically contain clauses that specify performance standards and how compliance with these standards will be ascertained.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- OGS state staff will be more comfortable with and effective in managing contracted projects and work efforts.
- Contracted work will meet our expectations for quality with little or no rework.
- OGS' use of contract employees will be tied to the need for specialized skills and a benefit-to-cost justification.

**Strategies to get us there:**

**1. Assess and Explain the Appropriate Use Of Contractors/Consultants**

- Conduct reviews of OGS' recent outsourcing experiences for comprehensive lessons learned; costs/benefits analysis in retrospect. Derive criteria to be applied in future contracting decisions, such that the criteria will prompt consideration of both short- and long-term impacts to service and product delivery.
- Educate the OGS work force about the scope of OGS's use of contractors and the business factors that make it the right solution in some situations.
- Evaluate where contracted work could be done with in-house staff; engage staff when making decisions to outsource tasks/projects; provide rationale to staff when decision to contract is made.
- Study and improve the relationship to, and impact on, in-house staff.

**2. Improve Our Techniques For Getting Good Value From Contractors/Consultants**

- Establish adequate performance and quality assurance standards for all contracted labor and projects; strengthen the accountability controls for work assigned to consultants/contractors; document problems encountered.
- Develop and provide contract management procedures and training for OGS employees who oversee contract projects and/or contract personnel.
- Use proven project management practices to ensure that adequate coordination occurs among OGS business units and third parties working on projects.
- When using contractors for projects, set up teams with contractor and state staff working together so that contractor expertise is transferred during the project.

● **Initiative: Information Integration & Knowledge Management**

**The Challenge:**

The total quantity of data – electronic as well as in traditional formats -- that OGS uses for its work is vast. It is increasingly difficult to manipulate and share because it hasn't been sufficiently organized as "integrated information." Organizing our data in ways that will best facilitate appropriate access and exchange (among business units as well as with external entities) constitutes both a tremendous opportunity and a daunting challenge. Meanwhile, in keeping with the State Office of Cyber Security's direction, OGS must ensure that our information assets are sufficiently safeguarded. A related challenge is that institutional knowledge is, in many instances, too narrowly held. When critical business intelligence is narrowly held, it increases the risk to the organization. The individual with the knowledge may become unavailable, diminishing agency effectiveness. Thus, OGS must find ways to manage its information holdings and knowledge better.

**Where we are now:**

- OGS information holdings are still largely managed within business units rather than being streamlined across the agency.
- OGS developed an IT Strategic Plan during 2003, which concluded that business information architecture is an important next step in our evolution.
- OGS has recently initiated a project addressing the agency's employee data that currently exists in multiple business applications.
- OGS lost a lot of institutional knowledge within the past year when retirements occurred without an information transfer plan. We remain vulnerable now because a significant portion of our work force are retirement eligible or will be soon.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- Electronic storage and retrieval of agency documents will be practical and efficient.
- There will be optimal integration of data used, stored, and exchanged here in the agency.
- Data security will be significantly strengthened and will represent an acceptable balancing of effort and risk.
- OGS will make widespread use of imaging technology.
- Systematic and ongoing knowledge exchanges will minimize the impact of staff changes.

- Critical agency information will be identified and available should a disaster occur.

**Strategies to get us there:**

**1. Identify and Organize the Agency's Data**

- Create an OGS business information map
- Implement an information management strategy, including data identification
- Transfer critical hard copy information to digital formats
- Introduce content management systems

**2. Identify and Implement Incremental Steps To Make Agency Data and Information More Useful and Accessible**

- Develop authorized self-service methods by which users can access needed data
- Implement collaborative tools facilitated by technology
- Use the IT Governance process as forum for identifying and closing gaps in our agency's overall electronic data management
- Promote more consistent use of project management tools and techniques for the handling of project information

**3. Introduce Additional Safeguards For the Agency's Information and Knowledge Assets**

- Implement information security policies
- Explore knowledge transfer and knowledge back-up techniques and put into practice
- Encourage documentation of procedures

● **Initiative: Enhancing the Visitor Experience in State Government Sites: Balancing Access with Security**

**The Challenge:**

In the post 9/11 era, there are compelling justifications for tightening the security of State government facilities and operations. At the same time, the facilities must continue to support and serve the spectrum of public uses that are integral to open government and cultural enrichment. The challenge we face is planning and implementing solutions that can optimize public convenience, value and enjoyment while also achieving necessary levels of protection.

**Where we are now:**

- OGS is in the middle of a major security upgrade program in its buildings, working closely with the Division of State Police and other entities.
- Throughout the year, OGS supports a rich array of family and tourism opportunities – memorials, visitor tours, fairs and festivals, farmers markets, and music programs – at the Empire State Plaza. Other OGS-managed properties host similar programs, on a smaller scale.
- On daily basis, we serve as host to a wide assortment of visitors such as business representatives, merchants and crafters, exhibition participants, convention goers, and private individuals doing business with the state.
- In 2001-2004 timeframe, we implemented many new security related devices such as electronic parking controls, security checking equipment at building entrances, and new ID smart cards. All have a direct or indirect impact on visitors. Initial perceptions are mixed: many appreciate the added security, but there are concerns that physical and psychological barriers are being put between people and their government facilities.
- We have just begun introducing a variety of tools to help visitors understand and adapt to the building access changes and other security measures they will encounter in OGS-managed government sites.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- We will have established the “right” balance between security measures and public access.
- New safety and security measures will have minimum inconvenience to building users.

**Strategies to get there:**

**1. Implement Adjustments That Help To Balance Security With Accessibility**

- Take steps to reduce the public perception of security installations and procedures as “barriers.”
- Develop public and state employee understanding of the function/necessity of the security systems.
- Explore opportunities to pilot cutting-edge security technologies that minimize inconvenience.
- Identify locations where security remains insufficient and develop remedies.
- Streamline processing time for security checkpoints and increase the consistency of security procedures being applied.
- Introduce innovative ways to accommodate people coming to do business here.
- Increase advance communication among business units and with tenants about special security arrangements.

**2. Introduce Enhancements To The Visitor Experience**

- Develop tools such as signage, maps and brochures to facilitate visitor understanding of how to navigate the public building complexes.
- Introduce innovations in the programs, events and exhibits offered to provide new stimulation for employees, local communities, and tourists. Emphasize partnerships with other organizations to enhance the creative possibilities.

● **Initiative: Simplification and Streamlining of Contract Development, Management, and Use**

**The Challenge:**

A substantial portion of our agency resources is devoted to the establishment of contracts of various types. We have streamlined some aspects already. For example, we now notify vendors of bidding opportunities in our procurement-contracting program electronically, saving considerable time and effort. But, overall, contracting processes are acknowledged by many parties to be cumbersome. Public procurement laws, rules, guidelines, and interpretive documents are a contributing factor. Furthermore, various procedures have been introduced and used for many years without major overhaul to take advantage of technology tools or eliminate non-value-added parts of the process. Our challenge is to expedite change and make our contracting activities less protracted and more cost-effective.

**Where we are now:**

- OGS successfully implemented means to notify vendors electronically of bid opportunities, replacing traditional mailing methods.
- OGS successfully implemented means to notify purchasers electronically about new or amended procurement contracts.
- OGS and the State Procurement Council envisioned a streamlined procurement process through a strategic plan developed in 2002.
- OGS has improved the efficiency of the lease development process by using a tenant broker for many of its major leasing efforts.
- OGS eliminated the Empire State Builder, a monthly publication used to notify potential contractors about project opportunities, by posting the information on OGS' public website, thereby providing efficient access and eliminating time and costs.
- In many respects, the development and use of contracts produced by OGS remains a slow, cumbersome and idiosyncratic process.

**Where we want to be within the next 2-3 years:**

- The business processes used for contract establishment and administration will be measurably less burdensome and less time consuming.
- The workflow entailed in contracting will be supported by automation as much as possible.
- Unnecessary variation in contract development projects will be reduced.

- Vendors, contractors, and contract users will experience new efficiencies and the contracts will be more user friendly than they are today.
- Potential bidders on contracts for design and construction projects will be able to access an electronic plan file room to assist in preparation of bids (instead of receiving printed sets of plans).

**Strategies to get us there:**

**1. Implement Change In The Contracting Procedures Used In OGS**

- Involve customers and businesses in identifying specific opportunities to improve the contracting processes.
- Continue outreach with control agencies to strengthen relationship and promote timely and effective contracting.
- Expand the effort to standardize contract development steps and contract components where practicable.
- Design and implement an automated work flow management system to support efficient contract development.
- Analyze the proliferation of forms in use in OGS contracting activities and streamline where possible.
- Identify and implement ways to leverage investments we have made in streamlining to support other agencies conducting contracting activities.
- Pursue a business process reengineering effort encompassing all phases of procurement contracting.
- Explore better methods for tracking and evaluating contract processing and utilization.

**2. Broaden Staff Knowledge of Contracting Processes As Well As The Structure and Content of Contracts In OGS' Portfolio**

- Cross train on provisions of specific contracts to improve customer service and reduce risks.
- Educate contracting staff on the rationale behind contract language changes.
- Seek education from OSC to OGS staff in their requirements for contract approvals to reduce contract processing delays and setbacks.

## CONCLUSION ~ THE OGS WE WANT TO BECOME

The many members of our work force who helped develop this plan hope to see clear differences in the agency two to three years hence. The most prominent images are:

- √ A clear understanding on the part of all personnel of the agency's goals, an understanding of how their work contributes, and a feeling of being connected with the whole.
- √ More thorough and effective communication flowing throughout the agency.
- √ Strong working partnerships among OGS business units, absent of turf concerns.
- √ Greater staff involvement and input, increased personal stake demonstrated in the agency's future.
- √ Movement toward a better demographic distribution in our work force.
- √ A pervasive sense of opportunities and support for career growth.
- √ Expanded individualized development focus for employees, accompanied with thoughtful performance feedback.
- √ A sustained succession management effort ensuring we are able to provide quality services on a continuing basis.
- √ Better management of OGS knowledge and information.
- √ Use of consultants/contractors only where it yields quality, cost effective results.
- √ Confidence in the safety and security provisions taken to protect our people and properties, coupled with assurances of a satisfactory visitor experience in these government sites.
- √ Greater accountability to stated expectations for employees at all levels.

The foregoing plan represents top management's commitment to a strategy aimed at bringing about these and other changes to enhance the Office of General Services' overall success. The Commissioner and his staff will closely monitor the progress in fulfilling the plan, using formal measurement and accountability practices.