



Engaging, Recognizing, and Developing the MTA Workforce



MTA faced several workforce challenges

- Lack of an MTA-wide culture
- Limited workforce interaction prevents common experience and sharing of best practices
- Reduced employee recognition and reward due to budget constraints
- Need for succession planning on an agency and interagency basis
- Challenge in employee availability (e.g., FMLA, unscheduled absences)

The MTA needed to respond to these challenges with workforce development

- Keeping pace with the evolving needs of our customers, new technology, and a changing environment requires a workforce that is prepared to perform work and eager to do so
- Continuous development of the workforce is the most efficient and cost-effective way to address these needs, and it demonstrates a commitment to strengthening the essence of the organization: its people

The strategy to improve began with a Blue Ribbon Panel in 2007

- Blue Ribbon Panel on Workforce Development established to help identify ways to improve efficiency and address workforce issues
- Members of the Panel were drawn from diverse backgrounds along the expected dimensions of diversity – gender, race, public sector, private sector, corporate, academia, organized labor, and MTA Board– and with relevant expertise

Now, we are further improving succession planning, development, and recruiting

- **Formal interagency succession planning** for mission critical senior level positions
 - Consistent processes across agencies that covers senior managers, ensures smooth transitions, and provides clear growth opportunities
 - Ongoing pilots in each agency are generating ‘lessons learned’
- **Reenergizing workforce development** starting with identification of core competencies and focus on consistent interagency professional development
 - Pilot program provides consistent interagency professional development to first line supervisors
 - Created by leveraging the more than 275 existing development programs, and identifying the best-in-class
- **Improvements in recruitment** practices with emphasis on efforts to increase diversity

Four factors are critical to success

- **Board buy-in**
 - A Board Member championing Workforce Development is critical to gaining the support of other Members and Board approval of funding for training / tools
- **Executive sponsorship**
 - Chair and Agency President promotion and support of initiatives is essential
 - Senior management engagement provides the focus and energy for implementation
 - We have established a Strategic Initiatives Steering Committee consisting of all Agency Presidents, COO, CFO and Managing Director (Chair)
- **Collaboration across silos**
 - Working as cross-MTA teams to standardize approaches and HR policies, share best practices, and implement common solutions
 - For example, we have set up an HR Leadership Team, a Recruitment Roundtable, and Talent Management Task Force
- **MTA strategic priority**
 - Workforce Development is a key strategic priority reinforced regularly both internally and externally

Gaining Board buy-in

Board Members must understand that workforce development:

- Impacts the bottom line
- Costs money and takes time
- Is a long term investment that appreciates, not depreciates, with time

Benefits and pitfalls of involving Board members in workforce development

Benefits

- Champion of workforce development in the Boardroom
- Diverse viewpoint
- Experience in challenging orthodoxy
- Well positioned to demand accountability and evidence

Pitfalls to avoid

- Accustomed to running organizations, there is potential to micromanage
 - Board members can be most helpful when they Observe, Reflect, and Report

Vision

“An MTA workforce that is engaged, empowered, and valued as an integral part of each organizational success and prepared to meet the challenges of the future”