



## Transforming Government Services Delivery in the 21st Century, Together

Monica  
Matthews:

Thanks so much Casey for that kind introduction. I'd like to extend a special recognition to the audience for being with us today. Greetings and great day everyone. As Casey mentioned, I'm Monica Matthews, the Director of Strategic Planning and Management of Human Capital within the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. On behalf of secretary Fudge, and the HUD workforce, I'm honored to be a member of the esteemed government leaders and industry stakeholders connecting with you today.

As we work together to lead the digital imperative, I'm proud to share with you a little of my background, experiences, and what has inspired and continues to anchor me on this transformation journey that we share. I'm sure there's a few of us who recall the days of shared workstations and floppy disks when computers were introduced into the office, when we began that journey 30 or so years ago, we were moving into that employee experience that included the digital environment.

It often looks something like hand-writing our analysis on legal pads of paper, and essentially utilizing that mammoth computer terminal as a glorified typewriter. We then save that document on the disc and toss it into the desk drawer, or burn the information onto microfiche to be archived in a cardboard box only to be retrieved by those data archeologists who wanted to make the time to understand that age old question of how did we get here?

Let's take some leaps back in time to provide some context to how I got here and why I'm speaking with you today. My formative and management years were with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which is part of the Department of Commerce. Over the course of my career in human resources and in human capital management, I served both civilian workforces and uniform service personnel. As I was encouraged to transition into more senior leadership and later executive positions, I can say without hesitation that it was due to my data driven approach, championing of technology solutions, and ever-present focus on the client experience that propelled me.



The words client experience are used intentionally. As from my perspective, there's a difference between that and the customer experience. When I think customer experience, I think customer service, which reminds me of a retail operation, where the customer is considered always right. In the public sector, where we have more regulations for which we take seriously our responsibility to uphold, I see the client's experience as a shared responsibility. So whether HR professional, manager or employee, we're all accountable for adhering to the same rules and directives.

However, it is the HR professionals job, my job, to guide our various stakeholders in successfully navigating the employee life cycle. And doing so transparently, repeatedly and with ease to enable clients to focus on their mission. Throughout my career, technology solutions have played a critical role and drawn back the proverbial HR curtain and expanding access to opportunities for all. I've spent the last 10 years of my career intently focused on human capital transformation, advancing HR service delivery, talent management solutions, and the intersection of people, process, and technology.

At the Department of Commerce, I was part of the team leading the cultural shift in the delivery of administrative services to its 12 bureaus through interdepartmental shared services operations. Commerce was the first cabinet level multi-function shared services delivery department. With communications in great compromise, commerce's project team consolidated agency-wide functions, including HR, IT, and acquisitions. What's now enterprise services leverages a service delivery consolidation that makes sense in a shared way. So that individual bureaus to focus on their unique missions.

These advancements were achieved with the client first approach and technology solutions to improve speed, quality, and transparency while enhancing the performance of administrative services, freeing up the workforce to focus on more value added and strategic responsibilities. My stint at General Services Administration focused on partnering and the development of the federal marketplace, for migrating talent management solutions, for the human capital life cycle, to commercially provided and managed software as a service technology. There coalescing and collaborating



with chief human capital officers, OPM HR line of business and government wide thought leaders was the norm.

What is now office of shared solutions and performance improvement. We exchanged information to improve cross government communications, build partnerships and trust, and then move toward collectively leveraging federal resources to create a balanced marketplace for customer centric, HR systems and service delivery. It took a data-driven approach to identify the current state of the federal shared services ecosystems, define customer demands, and develop that were associated with the HR scope of services in the employee life cycle.

This vision focused on painting the full picture of the natural progression of the employee experience, improvements in the relationship with service providers and the potential for evolution strategy to be achieved with software as a service solutions. A significant part of what was learned, both at the Department of Commerce and General Services Administration that informs the work that I do today is the need for ideation and agility to stay relevant and to adjust to client's needs in this digital age. It also affirmed the benefits of an ecosystem approach and proposing solutions for shared services and self-service capability within platforms that realize a client centric focus rooted in cross-department and ideally cross agency collaboration driven by data, insights and action.

When recruited to join HUD, I was and remain excited to be a member of a department that uniquely touches the American public. HUD is an agency that now consists of approximately 7,300 employees located in 10 regions across the United States. At HUD, our team works tirelessly to assist grantees and recipients of HUD assistance, especially so in response to the pandemic. We help housing owners, housing authorities, and communities provide additional rental assistance and support new efforts to eradicate homelessness. We support the immediate and ongoing needs of homeowners. In short, HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes with our workforce, focusing on getting people into and keeping those homes.



Like so many of you in our department we're constantly seeking new ways to innovate and find efficiencies. We seek those opportunities for convenience and ease of business operations. However, in life, change is also brought about by necessity. The pandemic raised extraordinary challenges for everyone, both personally and professionally. In the face of adversity and hardship, HUD staff in every region of the country, continue to carry out the vital work of meeting the diverse needs and unique challenges of America's communities. In my responsibility as HUD's chief human capital officer throughout the outbreak and height of COVID-19 was to really enable the workforce so they could continue serving the public.

However, this was not done alone. It took the extraordinary leadership and exceptional creativity of many at all levels to address the unprecedented challenges and problem solving in HUD's response to the pandemic. It wasn't ecosystem, a HUD community effort with a 360 degree approach. Now, those who know me understand that I'm an active leader who takes an influence from the middle approach. Now, what I mean by that is in solving challenges, I incorporate agency objectives and direction of leadership one, two, and three levels above. Include subject matter expertise and insight from those that I lead.

Additionally, I reach out and consider guidance from peer organizations, including IT, procurement and legal advice, and then integrate that with stakeholder concerns and ideas. These are the key components of the ecosystem within which vision is developed. Their response to the rapidly evolving circumstances associated with the novel coronavirus thrust my organization not only to drastically rethink HUD human capital service delivery, we also simultaneously confronted the department's people and health and safety challenges. Along with addressing the same concerns, internal to the chief human capital officer organization. I created HUD OIG's pandemic action strategy and executed the response, which included three emphasis areas to meet HUD's enterprise workforce needs.

First, scenario and information planning, brainstorming issues and impacts, and working up and around challenges with a prevent, observe and examine approach to leave program office clients in navigating uncharted human capital waters. Second, stakeholder management. Redefining human resources, programs delivery to



100% virtual environment ramping up to design new and overhauling existing policies and processes, delivering talent management solutions while ensuring accountability. And third, client experience and shared services partnership enhancement leaning into change through increased engagement, communication and information idea exchange.

As an HR community, we took decisive action to identify authorities and flexibilities to guide HUD leadership's decision-making in the transition to mandatory telework. And thereafter, in a manner that addressed continuity of mission operations and the health and safety of the workforce. Active leadership and intent engagement shaped HUD's care and together a part approach which provided resources, enterprise while ensuring employees were able to meet the demands of their personal situations while continuing in their mission responsibilities. HUD's administrative services, organizations collaborated and acted swiftly to anticipate challenges and ensure HUD's workforce provided the necessary guidance and frequently asked questions to co-exist effectively in the evolving circumstances and work from home new normal.

Despite these novel times, our business, our HR business adviser's partners and subject matter experts were mobilized to analyze the abundant OPM and OMB guidance and develop the HUD enterprise human capital course of action, establishing and implementing extensive instructions that enable the advancement of supervisor and employee preparation and transition to the full-time remote work environment. Thereafter, we marshaled the ongoing development and publication of a myriad of user-friendly guides and tip sheets on topics ranging from working successfully from home, health and safety, employee assistance programs, leave options hiring during the pandemic virtual onboarding time and attendance security and offboarding, just to name a few.

We partner with our CIO organization to ensure HUD personnel received access to the lifecycle of information needed to thrive in this remote environment. We conceptualized HUD's enterprise employee communication strategy framework, implemented pulse surveys and champion the design and implementation of both employee supervisors and employee, coronavirus resource pages at the HUD at work intranet.



This continuous flow of information provided a level of confidence for employees and managers in these uncertain times. In their evaluation, our office of inspector general reported HUD experience an easy transition to telework amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In large part due to agency planning, it was the implementation of technology hubs for information and team collaboration tools that integrated people with content and access to be more engaged. It was our employee centered response, coupled with automation that also enabled HUD to accelerate hiring and onboarding during this time of national crisis. Hiring was the department's highest enterprise cross-cutting challenge.

As you can imagine, everyone wants their organization to be number one, but not necessarily in this way. For those HR professionals in the room, we also understand that unless hiring is right in completed correctly, management is hesitant to fully engage in other workforce ideation and improvements. Despite the pandemic, we optimized to effectively implement process re-engineering, develop common solutions, implement job aids, and create transparency for our clients. We also redirected our resources to target both special employment and student recruitment and outreach. In FY 20, I begin hosting job fairs directed at addressing skills gaps and aging workforce concerns while targeting mission-critical occupations. Due to the impressive challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, these job bears were held in 100% virtual environments.

That along with 100% virtual onboarding were tremendous hurdles to overcome during the onset of the pandemic. Although fraught with complications of simultaneously engaging selectees, not yet on HUD's network, a partnership was formed again with CIO to enable the technology and functionality necessary for oath of office onboarding. With the challenges of hiring during COVID-19, also came new recruitment and onboarding gateways to talent I did not previously realize. He hiring objectives, metrics and milestones were identified and HUD's strategic hiring planning instituted to transform by moving from the transactional hiring crisis of the day to the strategic talent acquisition for HUD's feature.

So now how do we do it? In part, it was about technology and data and communicating, hiring information often and at multiple levels.



Extensive changes were put in place to transform HUD OIG's engagement in various forums to build solution orientation with enhanced data sharing and transparency to include adding time to hire red, yellow, and green heat maps and certificate of eligible candidate usage visualizations, the HUD's human capital dashboard. HUD OIG as a community, briefed hiring data in leadership, program specific, and administrative officer meetings.

In partnership with our program offices, HUD personnel onboarding increased to by 42% from FY 19. More hires in a single fiscal year than have been achieved in a decade placing HUD workforce at a 2016 level thereby removing hiring as HUD's top management challenge. Hiring at HUD was course corrected and a solid foundation established upon which the agency's continued to build its workforce. The lesson throughout the pandemic, and now is that we are all one team and we will get through this together. In my new role as the Director of Strategic Planning and Management of Human Capital and HUD's office of Community Planning and Development, our mission is to seek to develop viable communities by promoting integrated approaches that provide decent housing, a suitable living environment and expanded economic opportunities for low and moderate income persons.

My area of emphasis is leadership in the integration of talent acquisition, strategic employee re and up-skilling, leadership development, and workforce optimization. However, before planning, the story of the CPD workforce needed to be fully understood. An agile analytics tool with drill down capability now tells that dynamic comprehensive story of our workforce. This tool goes beyond the essential statistics of personnel composition, including gender, race, and national origin and retirement eligibility to include things like occupational series, promotion, assertion, separation and exit survey data, as well as comparison to HUD wide information.

This tool provides workforce data and enables the transition from anecdote centric to an enhanced data driven approach that facilitates the analysis needed to attract, cultivate and retain a high performing, diverse, and engaged workforce. Secretary Fudge stated, every community faces unique challenges that require its own unique solutions. We all want and deserve the same things, a safe



place to live, and an opportunity to succeed with dignity, with grace, and with hope.

At HUD, we believe the same approach applies as we look internal to our organization in sustaining a safe workplace and increasing access, inclusion, and equity guided by data while providing transparency and diverse opportunities to our workforce. As I reflect upon my career's journey and respond to that, how did I get here question posed at the beginning of this session, it has been an intersection of two critical factors. Am I happy in what I'm doing? And am I making a difference? These factors grounded in a passion for discovery to identify options and possibilities along with a client centric, data-driven, solution oriented approach, have positively propelled the agency serve of which technology innovation has been an integral component of those successes.

.We each have a window of opportunity to evolve and do so in a way that creates value over the long-term. I strive to be a trusted service provider, problem solver, an agent for useful and user friendly innovative solutions. I contend that is what we also seek to achieve in the implementation of our technology solutions

So in closing, I'll leave you with 10 things to consider in pursuing your HR transformation objectives. Number 10, be brave, bold, and strategic. And this digital world change is constant. So embrace it. Number nine, maintain a sense of comfort in that uncomfortable space of innovation. Eight, value transformation, and meaningful change as a means to improve the client experience. Seven, balance change and organizational growth while optimizing your resources to maximize technology. Six, being nimble, flexible, and versatile. Five, measure progress and effectiveness.

Number four, continue asking questions, listen to understand and take actions that develop trust. Number three, dream big and strive for excellence. Two, take care of the workforce we serve. Inspired employees, inspire our customers. And most important, number one, continue your dedication and vision for the future of our work while having fun achieving those goals. Thank you for your time and participation today as there's so much to learn and do as we work together to lead the digital imperative. It was my pleasure connecting with you and sharing my learning experiences along [inaudible] we're



working on at HUD. Your commitment to public service and public sector transformation is lauded and appreciated. With that, I'll now turn it back over Casey. God bless and have a productive rest of your day.