

Strategic Performance Plan  
for  
The Georgia Department of Labor

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E-Learning Strategy (TRDV 432)  
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## **Strategic Performance Plan Part 1: Analysis of Current Situation**

The Georgia Department of Labor provides a wide range of services to job seekers and employers. These services include administration of Georgia's unemployment insurance, employment service, and vocational rehabilitation programs; provision of workforce information to the public and private sectors; inspection of elevators, boilers, pressure vessels, amusement park rides; and oversight of child labor issues. The Department of Labor is the state agency designated by the governor to lead the state's implementation of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. Our mission is to work with public and private partners in building a world-class workforce system that contributes to Georgia's economic prosperity. We accomplish this by:

- Helping individuals attain their work goals and increase self-sufficiency through employment, training, comprehensive rehabilitation, and support services.
- Helping employers meet their business needs through employee recruitment and selection services, workforce information, and technical support.

Two of the key drivers impacting the current direction of our department include the implementation of technology to support efficient and effective service delivery, and the execution of succession planning to develop new organizational leadership. A significant portion of our current staff is rapidly reaching retirement age, and the technical skills of many employees are underdeveloped. Meeting the capacity and just-in-time training needs for over 4,500 staff, is going to require a new organizational learning strategy.

The department is committed to the overall goal of promoting individual and organizational growth and development, however, the challenge is to achieve a balanced and

unified approach regarding the effective administration of learning programs. Historically, there have been two simultaneous competing approaches to staff development. One half of the agency has been promoting consistency, centralization, and the utilization of internal training design and delivery resources. In this sense, learning is perceived to be very specific and skill-based, with outcomes tied directly to performance. The responsibility for employees acquiring new or enhanced competencies falls on the immediate supervisor or manager. Management identifies performance gaps, initiates internal training nominations (or request), ensures that employees receive the appropriate course, and finally, follow up to determine whether job performance has improved.

Other parts of the agency have approached staff development with an emphasis on customization, decentralization, and the coordination of external training design and delivery resources. Learning is perceived to be more generalized, including a wide range of self-directed personal and professional development goals. The responsibility for new knowledge or skills is placed on the individual employee. Staff assess their own learning needs, and are empowered to “self-nominate” for the type of learning that would be most helpful. Ultimately, it is up to individual employees to develop the competencies they need to be successful.

In an effort to unify fragmented training operations, the department secured a grant to implement an enterprise-wide Learning Management System. The Learning Management System, purchased from SumTotal, is designated for the following purposes:

- As an enterprise-wide, web-based facility for maintaining course catalogs; course scheduling; student enrollment; course approvals; employee training history; certification requirements; course evaluations; as well as budget tracking and reporting.

- As a repository and delivery mechanism for e-learning, including blended and synchronous methodologies, as well as a portal to third-party training offerings.

Although training nominations will be initiated at both the manager and individual employee level, two levels of management approval will still be required. Employees will access the LMS through the department-wide Intranet, which is administered through a central IT Division. IT will house and maintain the LMS server, however, the Office of Staff Development will own and administer the system statewide via the following security profiles: Two System Managers (super-users), six System Administrators, and up to twenty Assistant Administrators. These access levels will be granted across all of the department's major program areas to ensure a broad and balanced approach. All employees currently have access to a computer with T1 Intranet/Internet access, XP, Microsoft Office Suite, and sound cards/speakers. The IT Solution Center Helpdesk provides central support for all hardware and software issues.

Since internal security is a high priority for our department in general, the Helpdesk also handles User ID and password authentication for multiple department systems. Other than the staff supported Helpdesk, there is currently not any type of Electronic Performance Support System (EPSS) in place for online assistance. The agency also does not have a specific process or enterprise solution for the recording, sharing, or archiving of knowledge.

Within the next year, there will be a variety of funding sources available to begin implementing e-learning, performance support, and knowledge management. As the fragmented systems of the past are unified through one system of delivery, potential inequity of access will no longer be an issue. As long as there is universal access, senior management is very supportive of e-learning delivery. Although some Microsoft Office and Spanish course are available online through third party vendors, the majority of training delivery is instructor-led and developed in-

house. Beyond LMS administration and web development, internal staff knowledge and talent for developing e-learning is very limited. Several areas for consideration regarding an agency e-learning strategy include the following: determination of online content priority, a decision regarding in-house versus outsourced e-learning development, and evaluation of e-learning outcomes.

### **Strategic Performance Plan Part 2: Description of Desired Situation and Vision**

The Mission of the Georgia Department of Labor is to work with public and private partners in building a world-class workforce system that contributes to Georgia's economic prosperity.

We will accomplish this by creating opportunities and providing services that:

- Assist individuals to attain their work goals and increase self-sufficiency through employment, training, comprehensive rehabilitation, and support services, and
- Assist employers to meet their business needs through employee recruitment and selection services, workforce information, and technical support.

The Georgia Department of Labor's strategic goals are to:

- Provide high quality, responsive and universally accessible services that accommodate customer choice and exceed customer expectations.
- Promote and facilitate partnerships at all levels for effective program and service outcomes.
- Support and develop individual and organizational growth and effectiveness.
- Market service delivery capabilities in an active and effective manner.
- Utilize state-of-the-art technology that supports effective and efficient service delivery.

As the Department of Labor progresses toward developing a seamless, customer-focused workforce development delivery system, it is the responsibility of The Office of Staff Development to provide GDOL employees at all levels with the resources they need in order to maximize performance in their roles. We help the agency achieve its mission and strategic goals by providing world-class workforce performance solutions. The Office of Staff Development is dedicated to enhancing the Department of Labor's ability to meet the challenges of the future by further developing the knowledge, skills, and competencies of the workforce. We accomplish this by creating opportunities and providing services that:

- Assist employees to attain their work goals and increase productivity through continuous, customized individual development, and
- Assist teams to meet their business needs through enhanced communication, talent diversification, and performance support.

The Office of Staff Development's strategic support goals are to:

- Develop and deliver high quality, universally accessible learning programs and resources that meet unanticipated employee performance needs.
- Diversify human assets to build a skilled, cross-functional talent pool for agency succession planning.
- Implement and utilize innovative learning delivery methods that support just-in-time organizational need.

While formal learning is still a worthwhile component of individual development, industry research supports the inclusion of new approaches to build and leverage informal workplace

learning. For example, last year, the department's significant investment in learning and development resulted in an average of four days of training per employee. Although the results were valuable in terms of meeting mandatory industry regulations and agency policies, there were numerous staff changes that required new competencies and knowledge. Some of these unanticipated agency needs were met in a variety of "band-aid" approaches from the field, which were conducted in pockets of isolation. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to strategically respond to knowledge, skill, and performance gaps that are not currently addressed in formalized types of learning.

In order to continue meeting the expanding and continuously changing performance demands of a world-class employee workforce, the Office of Staff Development is functioning under a learning governance structure to "balance the efficiencies of central control and the effectiveness of making decisions close to the business units" (Beckstrom, 2006 p. 29). Learning governance focuses on the following: "1.) Managing learning as a strategic business process; 2.) Building a shared future vision for workforce development; 3.) Co-creating programs linked to strategic objectives; and 4.) Enabling employees to fulfill the organization's promise to customers" (Beckstrom, 2006 p. 29). The Office of Staff Development achieves these areas of focus as a strategic partner of a Learning and Performance Architecture (LPA).

The LPA design and development occurs at an enterprise level, with the sponsorship and support of Senior Leadership, as well as an intensive partnership between Staff Development and the Information Technology Advisory Board. The vision is to create an expanded, systematic integration of approaches to workplace learning, leveraging both formal and informal components to enhance performance. The new architecture design includes the addition of three key components beyond classroom and online training:

- Knowledge Management resources (*Information Repositories, Communities and Networks, Experts and Expertise*)
- Performance Support (*Tool or system providing instant electronic task guidance and support*)
- Mentoring and Coaching (*Real-time personal communication, role modeling, and feedback to guide performance*)

By adding informal resources into the overall learning equation, the organization taps into demand-driven learning (pull) and increases self-directed, unrestricted learning opportunities that are embedded in the workflow process. New learning industry standards, known as Simplified Deployment Architecture (SDA), allow the LMS to support the Learning and Performance Architecture by providing: “Backward compatibility of all existing content; solutions regarding Internet security and tracking; and new types of media, applications, and data sources (Cohen, 2006 p. 50). The learning culture promotes “knowledge acquisition and collaboration and then leverage[s] that knowledge management framework to develop best practices—it bridges the gap between employees and free-flowing knowledge within the organization” (Dalton, 2006, p. 75).

### **Strategic Performance Plan Part 3: Gap Analysis**

The IBM Center for the Business of Government in Washington, D.C. recently published a synthesis of fifty (50) reports researching the overall forces driving and enabling changes in government. According to Mark Abramson, one of the publication’s authors, “Government now has the potential to substantially transform itself in the decade ahead—there are a series of trends all coming together, which will give government a transformative opportunity, including the use of technology and government’s own willingness to experiment and innovate in delivering services” (2006). In order for the Department of Labor to be a key part of this transformation

process, issues impacting the development of a Learning and Performance Architecture, have been identified according to gaps between the current situation and desired state:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Current Situation</b>	<b>Desired State</b>	<b>Gap</b>	<b>Probable Root Cause</b>
1. Sponsorship of Learning & Performance Architecture	Senior Leadership sponsors are inconsistent in support actions toward creation of “on-demand” workplace	Unified support & commitment from sponsors regarding their participation  Sponsorship agreement on project priority level for agency	Varying degrees of follow through for meeting attendance, high-level decision-making and ownership of enterprise-wide strategy	Unclear reporting structure at senior levels  Political dynamics of historical power relationships  Differing levels of technology savvy among sponsors
2. Technology infrastructure capacity	Insufficient bandwidth available to meet online enterprise business needs	Significant expansion of bandwidth capacity to accommodate current and future online needs	IT “band-aid” approaches to handling system bandwidth demands  Current solution is to restrict system usage & access	Political lobbying of individual program areas for IT project priority  Resources split between multiple business units all vying for priority
3. Availability of internal staff expertise to develop & implement learning and performance architecture	Severe project overload for current IT staff  Eighty agency-wide projects with no process or criteria for prioritization	Agreement on criteria and process for prioritizing IT projects  Reasonable and fair distribution of project work among IT resources	Perpetual chaotic juggling of agency-wide projects  Resources spread so thin that projects don’t reach completion	Multiple layers of complicated IT management bureaucracy  No objective central source of decision making authority
4. Allocation of Learning & Performance Architecture project funds	Budget is determined by fiscal year—no current allocation for project funds	Partnership approach to funding project from both IT and Staff Dev. discretionary budgets	Time-delayed budgetary processes for creating new project line items	Multiple layers of approval and sign-off from Commissioner’s Office, Finance, and Assist. Commissioners

5. Ownership of Learning & Performance Architecture	History of IT, Staff Dev., and key business units creating and maintaining multiple intranet sites in isolation	Strategic partnership between IT, Staff Dev., and key business units to merge knowledge into one portal	Inconsistency in design, development, & deployment of information resources  Information and communication is random and not organized for employee benefit	Agency tradition of each division doing business in isolation  No incentives or accountability for working in “team” coordination with other departments
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A SWOT Analysis of the internal and external dynamics currently impacting the department is organized into the following four areas:

<b>Internal Strengths</b>	<b>Internal Weaknesses</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agency is anchored by mandatory federal and state laws protecting ADA, Disability Adjudication, Veteran’s Affairs—emphasis on universal access for persons with disabilities is driving utilization of new learning technologies</li> <li>2. Division leadership is changing due to massive retirements and traditionally static positions are being filled with managers who more readily embrace the use of technology to support staff productivity</li> <li>3. Organizational culture is committed to altruistic mission &amp; vision of helping people remove barriers to employment and find jobs—agency pride drives higher employee commitment levels to self-development and career growth</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizational priority for distribution of funding is impacted by political agendas and competing interest groups</li> <li>2. Agency turn-over rate is soaring to almost 20% within first year for newly hired employees</li> <li>3. Varying degrees of true performance accountability due to political appointee relationships and influence</li> <li>4. Agency IT networks are fragmented into six systems separated by firewalls</li> <li>5. The average employee has seven different log-on ID’s and passwords to access internal department services (<i>GroupWise email, CICS Time System, PeopleSoft Payroll System, HR Benefit/ Bulletin Board, Staff Development LMS, Project Work Request System</i>)</li> <li>6. Internet/Intranet bandwidth capacity limited due to contract sourcing requirements through GA Technology Authority</li> </ol>

External Opportunities	External Threats
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trends in Government Business to move toward an outcome orientation that places emphasis on results that matter to citizens</li> <li>2. Workforce Development System is continually growing in scope and creating more networks and collaborations to leverage government resources (i.e. Rehab Services South Eastern E-learning Consortium)</li> <li>3. The “Commission for a New GA” is supporting the reinvention of Leadership Development and State Succession Planning with an emphasis on innovation &amp; the use of technology in learning</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This is an election year for Labor Commissioner bringing possibility for party and administration change—result would be at least one year halt on project progress due to changes in staff and new position alignment</li> <li>2. Depending on election results of party alignment in Governor’s office, legislation and administrative funding and direction of funds could be significantly impacted</li> <li>3. A few Department of Labor agencies in the United States have been reorganized and outsourced according to specific program functionality (i.e. Florida &amp; Texas)</li> </ol>

These SWOT Analysis considerations are in alignment with the “Six Trends Transforming Government”, ultimately shifting toward more effective use of performance management, partnership networks, and performance on demand. In this context, On Demand is defined as “the horizontal integration of processes and infrastructure that enable day-to-day interactions across an entire enterprise—and with key partners, suppliers, and customers — thus enabling government to respond with speed and agility to demands and challenges” (Abramson, Bruel, & Kamensky 2006, p. 4)

#### **Strategic Performance Plan Part 4: Learning & Performance Architecture**

Architectural Component	Products/Initiatives	Target Audiences*		
		A	B	C
Training				
Overall Staff Development Division	Creation of high-level Focus Group to recommend resource re-allocation of in-house instructor-led training based on agency needs. Reduce quantity of	X		

Architectural Component	Products/Initiatives	Target Audiences*		
		A	B	C
Training				
	formal courses currently developed/instructed by Staff Development and increase exploration of alternative learning strategies ( <i>online and informal approaches</i> )			
Classroom Training	Utilize strategic partnerships with Georgia State University and GA Merit System for outsourced delivery of specialized, targeted Management Development curriculums.		X	
	Implement internal “Train-the-Trainer” certifications for decentralized course delivery of core soft skill curriculums ( <i>i.e. Customer Service, Communication Skills, Team Building, Conflict Resolution, Servant Leadership, etc.</i> )			X
Online Training	Provide mandatory HR policy training modules online ( <i>i.e. Manager versions of Sexual Harassment Prevention, HIPAA Compliance, Government Ethics, etc.</i> )	X	X	
	Restructure current online delivery of computer courses and language training into flexible, dynamic levels. ( <i>Consider elimination of pre-requisites and job-class restriction</i> )	X	X	X
	Submit formal recommendation of increase in agency bandwidth capacity to accommodate future online training needs	X		
<b>Knowledge Management</b>				
Information Repositories	Work with IT Advisory Board Document Management committee to evaluate proposed enterprise-wide vendor solutions ( <i>Priority IR business need areas include Unemployment Insurance, Employer Accounts, and Adjudication</i> )	X	X	
	Submit formal recommendation to IT Web Committee to standardize Intranet homepage design ( <i>branding, style, etc.</i> )	X	X	X
Communities and Networks	Develop private “Community of Practice” to share best practices and information regarding agency staff development and HR issues			X
Experts and Expertise	Develop online “Performance Improvement” network portal identifying email and IM contact information for agency experts in the areas of goal expectations/measurement criteria, performance management evaluation, employee development	X	X	

Architectural Component	Products/Initiatives	Target Audiences*		
		A	B	C
Training				
	planning, and employee management relations <i>(Including variety of experts from HR, Staff Development, and Vocational Rehabilitation)</i>			
Performance Support				
	Propose contracted development of EPSS, online reference and “help” feature, for administrative record keeping functions <i>(i.e. attendance/leave records, travel reimbursement, statewide purchasing cards, and personnel action requests)</i>		X	
Mentoring and Coaching				
	Create program that provides retiring department managers contract work to be virtually available (by email and telephone) as “on demand” coaches for real-time issues that emerge for new managers/supervisors		X	
	Contract with University of GA, Carl Vinson Institute of Government to implement formal mentoring program for developing “high-potential” leadership	X	X	

\* A = Assistant Commissioners, Division Directors, District Directors  
 B = Middle Managers, Supervisors  
 C = Statewide Training Administrators, Regional Human Resource Specialists

### Part V: Change Management Plan

According to a 2005 *Journal of Workplace Learning* article, “Strategizing for Workplace E-learning: Some Critical Considerations”, e-learning initiatives must balance economic and technology considerations with potential consequences for learners and organizational culture. Servage advises that organizations may fall prey to “assembly line thinking” unless all stakeholders and expertise is included in a comprehensive change management plan. In order to

promote “creativity, conversation, teamwork and empowerment” (p. 316), the following table lists thirteen success factors, and the methods of how they will be included:

<b>Success Factor</b>	<b>Method(s)</b>	<b>Stakeholders Targeted</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>*Time-frame</b>
1. Get Leadership Onboard Early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present Strategic Performance Plan at Senior Staff Meeting</li> <li>Establish working Committee through IT Advisory Board</li> </ul>	CIO, Deputy & Assistant Commissioners Division Directors	Director and Assoc. Director of Staff Dev., Director of IT Project Management	P
2. Tout Success Stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share articles of interest, bench marking examples from Private &amp; Public Sector, and Prototype samples at management forums and briefings</li> </ul>	District Directors, Middle Managers	Staff Dev. Senior Consultants, LMS System Manager, Designated IT Project Manager	O
3. Focus on Early- and Second-Wave Adopters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit volunteer representatives from key Divisions to serve on Project Focus Group (provide input &amp; give feedback)</li> </ul>	Field Rep. from Central Office, Rep from Web Committee, Marketing, Five Rehabilitation Programs, Career Dev., WI&A, Internal Security, HR, & Adjudication	Assoc. Director of Staff Dev. & Assoc. Director of IT Project Management LMS System Manager	P, I, O
4. Avoid Consequences, and Build Incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include learning curve of LMS and KM on all agency Employee Development Plan: Section 9 of Performance Management Form (Section is documented/ however, not rated)</li> </ul>	Division Directors, Middle Managers, Frontline Supervisors, Employees	Agency-wide Decision from Director of HR, and Director of Staff Dev,	I, O
5. Build a Solid Value Proposition Based on a Clear Vision and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow review/edit of SPP vision statement from IT Advisory Board Working Committee (Established in #1)</li> <li>Review the SPP with</li> </ul>	CIO, IT Senior Management, Key Division Reps	Director and Assoc. Director of Staff Dev., Assoc. Director of IT Project Management	P, I

Success Factor	Method(s)	Stakeholders Targeted	Responsibility	*Time-frame
Attainable Benefits	Focus Group Reps. (Established in #3)			
6. Involve Stakeholders & Constituents Throughout the Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(See #5)</li> <li>Hold Monthly Learning Consortium meetings to review and evaluate SPP progress</li> </ul>	All Staff Dev. Consultants, Statewide Training Administrators, Regional HR Reps	Assoc. Director of Staff Dev., LMS System Manager	P, I, O
7. Avoid a “This Won’t Work” Message	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide influential testimonials of e-learning, KM, and performance support successes. Post on LMS, IT, &amp; Bulletin Board portals.</li> </ul>	CIO, Assistant Commissioner of Rehab. Svc., Field Svc., and Career Dev. (High-visibility leaders)	Assoc. Director of IT Project Management, LMS System Manager, IT Web Master	O
8. Set Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Parts 1-4 with IT Advisory Board Working Committee</li> <li>Review Parts 1-4 with Learning Consortium to recommend stages for pilots and rollouts</li> </ul>	IT Advisory Board Reps. All Staff Dev. Consultants, State Training Administrators, Regional HR Reps	Assoc. Director of Staff Dev., Assoc. Director of IT Project Management	P
9. Dispel Fears of Technology 9. (Continued) Dispel Fears of Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide on-going Web-X demos on learning technologies available</li> <li>Provide learning technology “demo’s” at Staff Dev. Booth at all major Department Events &amp; Conferences (15-20 per year)</li> </ul>	All employees  All employees	LMS System Manager  Staff Dev. Consultants	P, I, O  P, I, O
10. Give People Time to Adapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roll out changes in stages. (See #8.)</li> </ul>	All employees	IT Advisory Board, Learning Consortium	I, O
11. Don’t Forget Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide online through LMS (or optional instructor-led), as well as support, prior to rollouts and after.</li> </ul>	All employees	LMS System Manager Staff Dev. Senior Consultants	P, I, O
12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post “snap shot” job aid</li> </ul>	All employees	LMS System	I, O

Success Factor	Method(s)	Stakeholders Targeted	Responsibility	*Time-frame
Provide Ongoing Support	references for all learning technologies w/ links from LMS, IT, & Bulletin Board portals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create “help” request email account through IT Solution Center</li> </ul>		Manager, IT Web Master, IT Solution Center Techs	
13. Don't Confuse “I Can't” with “I Won't”	See #11.			

\*Timeframe: P=Pre-Implementation; I=Implementation; O=Ongoing (post-implementation)

Inclusion of stakeholders in all phases of the change management process will help ensure that the "human" part of our organization's “human capital” is leveraged, rather than marginalized.

The overall strategic process requires “multiple perspectives and interests if a common vision for workplace learning is to be realized” (Servage, p. 317).

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