



# The Guide

*Helping the New Administration  
Succeed in Washington*



IBM Center for  
The Business of Government

**Cover Photo:** Win McNamee/Getty Images News/Getty Images

*“Washington is a policy town. If you are focused on politics or policy, ‘management’ is often ignored or simply left for someone else to figure out.”*

## Introduction: Helping the Next Administration Succeed in Washington

The 44th president of the United States took the oath of office on January 20, 2009. Throughout the rest of the year, 1,200 presidentially appointed and Senate-confirmed officials, 1,400 Schedule C appointees, and 800 non-career Senior Executive Service appointees (not to mention another 3,000 appointees to boards and commissions) will join the 6,500 career senior executives in managing the federal government.

### Management Matters

The transition from campaign to governing requires that presidential policies be transformed from rhetoric into an actionable agenda and then into concrete results. Neither good policies nor sound investments are likely to work, let alone succeed, if undermined by poor implementation. Too often, however, federal management issues are considered somewhere between “uninteresting” and “a waste of time.” The reason: Washington is a policy town. If you are focused on politics or policy, “management” is often ignored or simply left for someone else to figure out.

Managing the federal government remains a complex and difficult assignment, both technically and politically. Numerous failures in recent years—such as the response to Hurricane Katrina, veterans’ care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, regulatory lapses, and bungled contracts in Iraq—underscore the need to pay attention not only to policy but also to whether and how policies and programs are actually executed.

### What Is ‘Management’?

Management includes not only administrative management functions (such as financial management, personnel, and IT), but also program and policy management (for example, program delivery and “outcomes”). It encompasses leadership and oversight of how agencies devise, obtain enactment of, implement, manage, evaluate, and then, if necessary, modify the statutory programs and policies for which they are responsible, consistent with the policies of the incumbent administration.

### Why Is Managing in the Federal Government So Difficult?

So why, then, does managing the federal government prove to be so difficult? First, the extraordinary size of the federal government makes it hard to manage. There must, of necessity, be substantial delegation of authority. And delegation in any organization poses risks. These risks can be reduced by appropriate oversight and control systems. But, for a variety of reasons, such systems have suffered from an ironic combination of underattention (producing laxity) and overattention (producing confused accountability and micromanagement).

Second, the political leadership, in both the executive branch and Congress, tends not to be interested in management. The conspicuous exception to this general observation concerns pinpointing blame for scandals. The political system rewards this behavior. There is the related problem of expectations in the selection of top-level policy and program leaders. Heads of agencies, deputy heads of agencies, and program directors are

rarely chosen for, explicitly charged with, or generally held accountable for “management and performance” in the nuts-and-bolts sense.

Third, short-term budget objectives tend to override interest in the management effectiveness of longer-term investments, whether in physical or human capital.

Fourth is the problem of the short tenure of political appointees. Their average term in office remains all too brief. New administrations want to make their mark, develop their own programs, and advance initiatives of their own in relatively short time frames. There is little building across successive waves of leadership, and less attention to the invisible returns from which successors might benefit.

## Two Books to Help the New Administration Succeed

This Guide highlights core insights from two recently published books by the IBM Center, which seek to help the new administration succeed in Washington: ***Getting It Done: A Guide for Government Executives*** and ***The Operator’s Manual for the New Administration***.

The first book, *Getting It Done*, describes how to successfully operate in the political environment of Washington. It begins by spelling out an insider’s view of “Six ‘To Dos’” to succeed in the federal government. It follows with key insights and advice from 14 wellrespected “veterans” from key stakeholder groups, such as the White House, Congress, citizens, interest groups, the media, and others. In each case, these authors explain how to successfully deal with their particular organization in order to advance “your agenda.”

*Getting It Done’s* “Six ‘To Dos’” raise a number of interesting issues and highlight pitfalls confronting government executives. The IBM Center’s Presidential Transition website offers you an opportunity to comment or provide your own illustration of how previous officials may have successfully, or not so successfully, dealt with such issues. Take a look at [www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008](http://www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008) to share your thoughts or examples with others.

The second book, *The Operator’s Manual for the New Administration*, is an instruction guide on how to operate the “machinery” of government. It too is written for newly appointed agency heads—those who lead departments, bureaus, or programs, and their senior management teams, consisting of both political and career executives. *The Operator’s Manual* describes how new agency heads and their management teams can use eight important “tools” (such as performance, money, contracting, etc.) to help them implement their policy and program objectives. Rather than looking at the operation and management of government from just one perspective (for example, people or IT), this book examines a full set of operational tools with the aim of showing how they can help achieve your goals.

In the Foreword, *Government Executive* Editor in Chief Tim Clark describes *The Operator’s Manual* “as a primer ... on techniques leaders can use to achieve better results, and as a guide to deeper research.” This is because much of the content is drawn from over 200 of the IBM Center’s research reports produced by the likes of the Urban Institute’s Harry Hatry, Harvard’s Bob Behn, and the University of Maryland’s Jacques Gansler.

For those who would rather go online than thumb through the book, the IBM Center’s Presidential Transition website has an easy set of pull-down windows highlighting the eight operational tools, a two-page memo providing succinct, practical advice on the topic to department and agency heads, followed by a series of questions and answers addressing key issues. Check it out for yourself at [www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008](http://www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008). ■

# Getting It Done: Advice for Government Executives

By Mark A. Abramson, Jonathan D. Breul, John M. Kamensky, and G. Martin Wagner

*The insights presented focus on the environment in which you work. We identify six “to dos” necessary to “getting it done” in Washington, D.C. Along with these six “to dos,” we have gathered together insights from those who have been in the trenches, who have worked in this environment, and have insights into how it works and what you need to get things done. You can find a more in-depth discussion of these insights in chapters 7–20 of *Getting It Done: A Guide for Government Executives*. Each chapter is written by a recognized leader with firsthand experience working with or being the actual stakeholder. Each author offers a compelling perspective rooted in experience and knowledge. We have distilled their insights in this guide.*

## Six ‘To Dos’

This section presents a straightforward to-do list to guide you in your new leadership position.

### 1. Before Confirmation, Be Careful

Congratulations on your appointment in the new administration. You are taking on more than a job; as you know, it is an opportunity to have an important impact on our society and the world. You are here to deliver on the new administration’s programs, but you are answering to a higher calling as well. The oath you swear upon your appointment is not to the president you serve. The oath is to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States.” You are part of the administration, but you are part of something greater as well.

Unfortunately, the period of time between your nomination and confirmation (when you can actually start your job) will likely be a long one—perhaps several months. It is not uncommon for delays due to factors that have nothing to do with either you or your agency. Frequently, a group of nominations may get “bundled” together and require negotiations between the White House and Congress to resolve specific issues that may or may not be related to your agency.

While waiting for confirmation, you may be tempted to start getting engaged

in the work of your agency. This is almost always a bad idea as it tends to incur congressional displeasure and can compromise your being confirmed at all. Better to use this time to get to know your future agency and the issues it faces. Many agency decisions can be deferred until you are confirmed.

While waiting to get started “officially,” time learning more about your future agency and its environment will be time well spent. Being effective in Washington begins with understanding how Washington works. Everyone understands the importance of politics, but it is also important to understand how the political and programmatic interact. The roles of stakeholders, the bureaucracy, and process are critical. Washington tends to have large numbers of stakeholders influencing outcomes around your programs in ways that may be difficult to discern. Effective strategies are built on understanding and leveraging the many competing interests you will find, including those that are not supportive. A good beginning is critical.

### Takeaways

- Stay away from your future agency during the confirmation process.
- Learn who in Congress affects your agency, how they affect it, and their points of view.
- Start to build good relations with the Hill, but don’t make commitments too soon.
- Limit your endorsement of previous agency positions on issues until you have had time to assess them.
- Start to get to know your agency, but avoid the briefing book trap.

### 2. Learn How Things Work

Your agency is a large bureaucracy with a large number of career employees and relatively few political appointees. Most of the programs are managed by career executives who will typically have been with the agency longer than you will be there. The bureaucracy is both the means by which you will achieve program success and a separate culture that will both support your agenda and give continuity between administrations.

## Myths (and Realities) About Career Civil Servants

Myth	Reality
Careerists are loyal to the previous administration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most careerists check their politics at the door and define their role in terms of the policy process, not the administration's political agenda.</li> <li>Most careerists see their role as technical, not partisan.</li> </ul>
Careerists don't work hard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most careerists work extremely hard under tight deadlines and often stressful conditions.</li> <li>Careerists are "running a marathon"; political appointees are "running a sprint."</li> </ul>
Careerists are mostly interested in job security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most careerists are motivated by a strong sense of public service, mission dedication, participation in the policy process, and intellectual challenge.</li> </ul>
Careerists always say no to new ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most careerists are not "against" new policy ideas but are sensitive to the various implementation challenges.</li> <li>Careerists' many years of experience have conditioned them to see change in very pragmatic terms.</li> </ul>
Careerists want their political bosses to fail.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most careerists want their political executives to succeed because they believe in the system and because they want their agencies to succeed.</li> </ul>

From "Getting to Know You: Rules of Engagement for Political Appointees and Career Executives" by Joseph A. Ferrara and Lynn C. Ross. In *Learning the Ropes: Insights for Political Appointees*, Mark A. Abramson and Paul R. Lawrence, editors (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).

**4** You will learn that process is king, so learn about the process. How you make a decision can be as important as the decision itself. There are processes to buy, to hire, to regulate, and to solicit advice. There are even processes to speed up the process. Successfully implementing your agency programs will depend, in part, on mastering these processes rather than letting the processes master you.

Being successful will require the ability to maneuver among and leverage the various competing interests, while overseeing a complex bureaucracy and using existing processes that can stand scrutiny. You must focus on the important few priorities while keeping the less important ones from occupying all your time or, worse, blowing up into a full-fledged crisis that thwarts your agenda and tarnishes your legacy.

To get things done, you will need to understand your customers. You will also need to understand your stakeholders, what they want and don't want, and how they influence outcomes. You will need to understand the tools your agency has available and their limitations. You will need to understand enough about how your agency operates to be able to use those tools effectively.

### Takeaways

- Learn what your agency's customers want.
- Develop an understanding of your agency's programs and how they achieve the outcomes you want.
- Learn what stakeholders want and how they affect your programs.
- Learn how the media affect your programs.
- Get out of your office.
- Learn the flash points and opportunities.
- Begin to assess your senior career staff, but defer judgment.
- Avoid the appearance of unethical behavior.
- Learn the politics.

### 3. Act Quickly on What Can't Wait

Developing an understanding of how things work will be one of your early priorities, but you will also need to take some near-term actions. The fastest way to learn is asking questions of your agency's career staff, your agency's customers, your key stakeholders, and your fellow political appointees. Use them all.

Depending on the size of your agency, you may never meet most of your employees, but they will be critical to your success. One of your first acts should be to communicate with them so you can start the relationship on the right foot. You may not know everything you want to do at the beginning, but you still have things to say. Give them a broad-brush picture of what you want to accomplish. Tell them you value their mission and you value their contribution to it. Tell them that part of your approach will be to listen to them to get their insights. Convey a sense of urgency. Don't say what they have been doing is wrong and they need to change, but don't promise that there won't be changes, either.

These early messages are the foundation for future communications which will get into specifics that may involve change or overruling staff recommendations. Use memos, e-mails, videos, town meetings, blogs, or some combination of these communication vehicles. Use whatever feels most comfortable for you. The key is conveying a positive message at the beginning.

### ***Takeaways***

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- Start to communicate immediately with a short positive message to the staff of your new agency.
- Start to communicate immediately with agency customers and stakeholders as well.
- Start to build relationships with customers and stakeholders.

- Find people in your agency who can help you master processes to meet your needs.
- Find and fix the “ticking bombs.”
- Get control of key budget and key agency actions.
- Make sure agency operations are running effectively.
- Make sure your early political hires are aligned with you.
- Get started.

## **4. Develop a Vision and a Focused Agenda**

You may have come to your agency to manage an ongoing operation that is working reasonably well following traditional processes. You may have come to help your agency deliver new programs. You may have the goal of completely transforming your agency and redefining its mission.

Your efforts at your agency may be an integral part of the administration's core agenda with regular senior-level direction from the White House. Or, you may find that it is almost completely up to you to decide what your agency priorities should be. Whatever your situation, you will want to convey your overall vision but concentrate on a few key priorities.

### ***Takeaways***

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- Develop your vision for your agency with input from your political and career staff, but make sure it is your own.

## **The Role of the Careerist**

Careerists want to feel like they are contributing to the mission of their organizations. If political managers cut them out of processes or if their advice is rarely sought, they suffer from a sort of professional identity crisis. Such an identity crisis negatively affects their job satisfaction and motivation. Ultimately, the productivity and the effectiveness of the organization will be negatively affected, too.

Careerists are the institutional memory of American public administration . . . They draw the policy maps that connect the past, present, and future. They are the keepers of the institutional “lore” and can tell political appointees the stories that explain what has and hasn't worked before. As Richard Neustadt once wrote, “What makes lore invaluable is the sad fact that no institutional sources of memory exist as substitutes, save patchily, by happenstance, at higher executive levels of American government. Lore is almost all there is. Without it, available documentation tends to be ambiguous, misleading, or perverse.”

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## Rules of Engagement for Political Appointees

Rule	Illustration
Engage the career staff and listen to their advice—even if you don't heed it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Involve the career staff in agency deliberations.</li> <li>■ Actively solicit their analysis and recommendations.</li> </ul>
Show the career staff that you respect them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Read your careerists' résumés.</li> <li>■ Understand their skills and what they bring to the table.</li> <li>■ Make it clear that you are the decision maker, but treat them as a partner.</li> </ul>
Spend some time learning the details.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ask lots of questions—particularly as you enter office.</li> <li>■ Find out why some initiatives have worked and others haven't.</li> <li>■ Knowing the details gives you stronger credibility within the agency and improves your chances of achieving your agenda.</li> </ul>
Have a clear and limited set of objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Motivate the career staff with ambitious but achievable objectives.</li> <li>■ Make sure the careerists know where you're going.</li> <li>■ Make sure you know where you're going.</li> </ul>
Be willing to compromise and admit mistakes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Realize that sometimes you have to give a little to gain a little.</li> <li>■ Be strong but pragmatic.</li> <li>■ Take responsibility for your mistakes.</li> </ul>
Don't forget about the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Pay attention to organizational stewardship.</li> <li>■ Take on bureaucratic and administrative problems within the agency.</li> <li>■ Make an effort to attend job fairs and new employee orientation events.</li> <li>■ Don't shy away from tough human resource management issues.</li> </ul>
Communicate, communicate, communicate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Constantly communicate your goals.</li> <li>■ Constantly give the career staff feedback about ongoing agency deliberations.</li> <li>■ Make sure that the staff understands why decisions have been made the way they were.</li> <li>■ Give the staff feedback on their performance.</li> </ul>

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- Convey a sense of urgency.
- Communicate the vision.
- Harness agency plans to your new vision.
- Focus on no more than three priorities where you can personally make a difference.
- Develop a strategy for your top three priorities in consultation with both political and career staff.
- Make sure there is a person accountable for implementing each of your priorities.
- Make sure there is an effective governance framework for your top three priorities.
- Relentlessly follow up.

## 5. Assemble Your Leadership Team

Your team needs to be able to effectively develop and implement all your agency's programs, not just your "top three." Your programs will cross many interests. The team will need to work effectively with multiple stakeholders on both the programmatic and political dimensions. The team will need to address a complex external environment, a complex internal environment, tight resource constraints, and cumbersome processes.

Agencies are too complicated to be managed at a distance by a small cadre of political appointees developing a strategy and then directing a larger body of career staff to execute against that strategy. Such an approach will run into obstacles that could have been avoided with a wider initial conversation between your political staff and career staff. It needs to be a joint effort.

### *Takeaways*

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- Leverage the senior career staff: Find whom to listen to and on what.
- Hire senior political staff with the right political talents.
- Blend political and career: Leverage their different strengths.
- Recognize that political appointees and careerists have different roles and responsibilities.
- Be careful how you blend the political and career jobs.
- Keep political-appointees-only meetings rare and reserve them for political matters.
- Put it all together, decide whom to depend on and for what.
- Don't reorganize your agency.

## 6. Manage Your Environment

First, pace yourself. You can't do it all in the first 100 days. Your agency needs leadership more than it needs you to work long hours. You will find that your biggest impact will come about through your ability to maintain a focus on your vision for your agency and on your stakeholders, to keep your agency focused on your top three priorities, and to manage crises that are sure to come up during your tenure.

Second, your vision needs constant repetition. The relationship with key stakeholders needs to be maintained so there is a good foundation for resolving the inevitable issues. You cannot allow the many urgent crises to

push your program priorities to the back burner. You need to keep crises from taking all of your time and the agency's.

Third, you must constantly be aware of all your stakeholders and proactively manage your environment.

### *Takeaways*

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- Manage the politics.
- Manage the stakeholder relationships, but save your personal time for the most important ones.
- Meet regularly with your senior political/career management team on agency programs.
- Don't take too long to fill important jobs or let key decisions slip.
- Don't manage your agency's operations on a day-to-day basis, but make sure someone with the right skills is doing it for you.
- Empower your team, stay current with what they are doing, and focus on the big picture.
- Maintain a results-oriented climate and a sense of urgency.
- Reward innovation, collaboration, and success.
- Make sure your mission-support executives are focused on program results, not their fiefdoms.
- Keep the discussion on measurable results.
- Manage the crises. Plan for unpleasant surprises, act quickly when they happen.
- Take steps to minimize leaks, but expect them to happen anyway.
- Manage yourself. Don't let your calendar manage you.
- Find people who will tell you the truth. Listen to them.
- Embed your legacy in the career bureaucracy, not your political subordinates.
- Maintain a sense of proportion.
- Do the job, don't be the position.
- Don't burn your bridges.

## Differences Between Political Appointees and Career Civil Servants

Factor	Political Appointees	Careerists
Role perception	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ “Determine the nation’s business”</li> <li>■ Focused on achieving policy outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ “Do the nation’s business”</li> <li>■ Focused on ensuring a fair, open, and sound decision process</li> </ul>
Partisanship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Affiliated with a political party</li> <li>■ Serve a particular president</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Nonpartisan on the job</li> <li>■ Serve various presidents</li> </ul>
Professional experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Often a mix of government, academic, and private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Government has been their main career</li> </ul>
Tenure of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Come in and go out</li> <li>■ Average about two years in their positions, about four years in their agency, and about nine years of government service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In for the long term</li> <li>■ Senior executives average four years in their positions, 19 years in their agency, and more than 25 years of government service</li> </ul>
Time perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tend to have a shorter-term outlook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tend to have a longer-term outlook</li> </ul>

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## 8 Stakeholder Groups

This section highlights the 14 stakeholder groups you will most frequently encounter while in government. We grouped these stakeholders into four clusters: your bosses, your colleagues, your constituencies, and your overseers.

While some groups might appear in two categories (Congress is your boss and oversees your organization), this framework is useful to understanding your relationship with each one.

### Your ‘Bosses’

It is often said that one of the major differences between the public and private sectors is that you have many bosses in government. While the assertion that you have 535 bosses in Congress might be slightly overstated, there is much truth to it. In Washington, any one of the 535 members of Congress (or any of their 29,400 staff) can make your life easier by supporting your agency—or more difficult by providing your agency with a directive or a new piece of legislation placing restrictions or limitations on what your agency can do.

Closer to home, however, are three distinct parts of the White House on which your job literally depends. First, there is the White House itself. While you will see the president infrequently, you will often encounter a variety of special assistants to the president, each of whom works in a different White House office. They can be enormously helpful and supportive to you once you develop a good working relationship with them. Second, we focus on the four White House Policy Councils (the National Security Council, the National Economic Council, the Domestic Policy Council, and the Homeland Security Council). These councils have become increasingly important in recent years as the White House has assumed a greater leadership and coordinative role in new policy initiatives.

Last, but by no means least, is the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), which coordinates the development of administration policies and decides on how much funding your agency can request from Congress. In addition, OMB will be involved in many other aspects of your position, such as reviewing proposed legislation or your testimony before Congress, as well as overseeing regulations you might propose. As in all organizations, working with your bosses is essential to your success in government.

## Your Colleagues

While you will constantly be working “upward” with your bosses, you might not be as aware of the importance of working “sideways” with your colleagues. In government, the importance of your colleagues cannot be underestimated. There are likely to be few instances in which you and your agency can make a decision solely by yourselves (even after consultation with your bosses). More common is the scenario in which your bosses will actively seek the opinion and concurrence of your colleagues in other agencies across government.

Regarding interagency collaborators, we recommend that you set the right tone in creating the expectation that your management team will work closely with other departments and agencies. You should participate actively on interagency councils that invite you to become a member. You must, however, assume a different role in your participation on interagency councils. Instead of being the “boss” of your organization, you become a peer and colleague working on government-wide issues.

While it has an oversight function, we have placed the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in the colleague grouping. We recommend that you reach out to OPM to help you and your agency seek human capital flexibilities that can assist you in better accomplishing your agency’s mission. While OPM provides specific services to your agency, you can also work with them as colleagues to achieve your mission.

## Your Constituencies

Each agency will have its own unique set of constituencies. In the Six ‘To Dos,’ we note that different constituency groups cluster around your agency. We have not attempted to “map” the specific groups that will have an interest in your particular agency. Your staff will be able to describe these groups to you, and you will soon be meeting with them to get acquainted and to begin building effective partnership relationships.

Instead, we have focused on a crosscutting set of constituencies. First, there are the citizens. You will interact with citizens in two ways. First, some citizens will be your customers, and we recommend that you meet with customers to assess their satisfaction with your agency and whether the delivery of services to them can be improved. Second, citizens are in fact the ultimate “bosses” of government and indeed have major stakes in the policies and programs of government. Regarding citizens, we recommend

that you use the latest approaches (including technology) to engage citizens on new policies or programs you are considering.

Turning to the internal side of your organization, we discuss the importance of unions as a constituency. If your agency is represented by one or more unions, develop a collaborative working relationship with them. In *The Operator’s Manual for the New Administration*, we discuss the importance of working closely with all your employees, with specific attention to union representatives.

While government executives are becoming increasingly attuned to the importance of collaborating with other federal agencies, the next major challenge is for the federal government to develop more effective working relationships with state and local governments. Federal spending will become much tighter in the next four years. As a consequence, government leaders will need to find new ways to accomplish national objectives through partnerships with states, localities, and nonprofit organizations.

Finally, there are the traditional interest groups and associations. As noted above, you will quickly get to know the organizations interested in your agency. We stress the importance of interest groups and associations as a valuable information resource for you. There will clearly be differences of opinions between you and these groups, but the key to a successful relationship will not be agreement on all issues, but instead your ability to create an ongoing dialogue with them and to maintain a constant exchange of information between you and the organizations.

## Your Overseers

In addition to looking upward to your bosses and sideways to your colleagues and constituencies, you will also need to “look over your shoulder” at your overseers. Oversight organizations are a fact of life in government. With the spending of public funds, ongoing scrutiny of those expenses will become a daily part of your life. While it is all too easy to fall into an adversarial relationship with your overseers, you should work hard to develop an effective working relationship with them.

The most well-known oversight, or watchdog, organization is the Government Accountability Office (GAO), previously known as the General Accounting Office. We emphasize using GAO as a valuable information resource. While your staff, including your GAO liaison, will be busy working

## Fourteen Stakeholders for Getting it Done



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with GAO on specific GAO reviews under way in your agency, you can use information contained in prior and ongoing GAO studies to identify problem areas that Congress is likely to ask you about and areas that your agency will need to work on.

The second watchdog organization you will encounter is the independent Office of the Inspector General in your department or agency. Past relationships between IGs and agency heads have ranged from outright hostility to a cooperative partnership relationship. Like GAO, IGs can identify problem areas that your agency needs to focus on.

Third, you will encounter the media. The Washington media are unique. You will have an able press staff to assist you in both your proactive and

reactive relationships with the media. Like all the stakeholders discussed here, the media can assist you greatly in getting your message out and communicating your vision to those both inside and outside of government. As with all the stakeholders discussed, time spent with the media will be a good investment.

### A Final Word

Simply put, Washington is a tough town. Succeeding in Washington requires not only hard work (which is clearly needed), but also a highly sensitive antenna about the environment surrounding your agency. We have not attempted to “rank order” the stakeholders. Instead, we have provided groupings as way for you to organize your approach to each of the stakeholders.

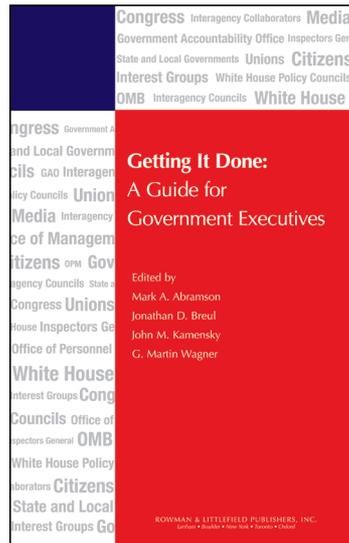
Unlike baseball, where you don't have to get a hit every time at bat to be a success, government actually does require you to bat 1.000. You must succeed with all 14 of the stakeholder groups. Any one of them can cause problems for you. Conversely, every one of them can serve as a key leverage point for you to succeed in Washington. Assisting you in effectively using these levers is our goal. ■

### To Learn More

**Getting It Done: A Guide for Government Executives** edited by Mark A. Abramson, Jonathan D. Breul, John M. Kamensky, and G. Martin Wagner

The book is available at bookstores, online booksellers, and from the publisher at [www.rowmanlittlefield.com](http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com), or by calling (800) 462-6420.

To find out more about the presidential transition and how the IBM Center for The Business of Government is dedicated to improving public management, visit [www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008/](http://www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008/).



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 Gaston L. Gianni (*Inspectors General*)  
 Lawrence J. Haas (*Media*)  
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# Eight Essential Tools for Achieving Your Goals: Insights for the New Administration

By Mark A. Abramson, Jonathan D. Breul, John M. Kamensky, and G. Martin Wagner

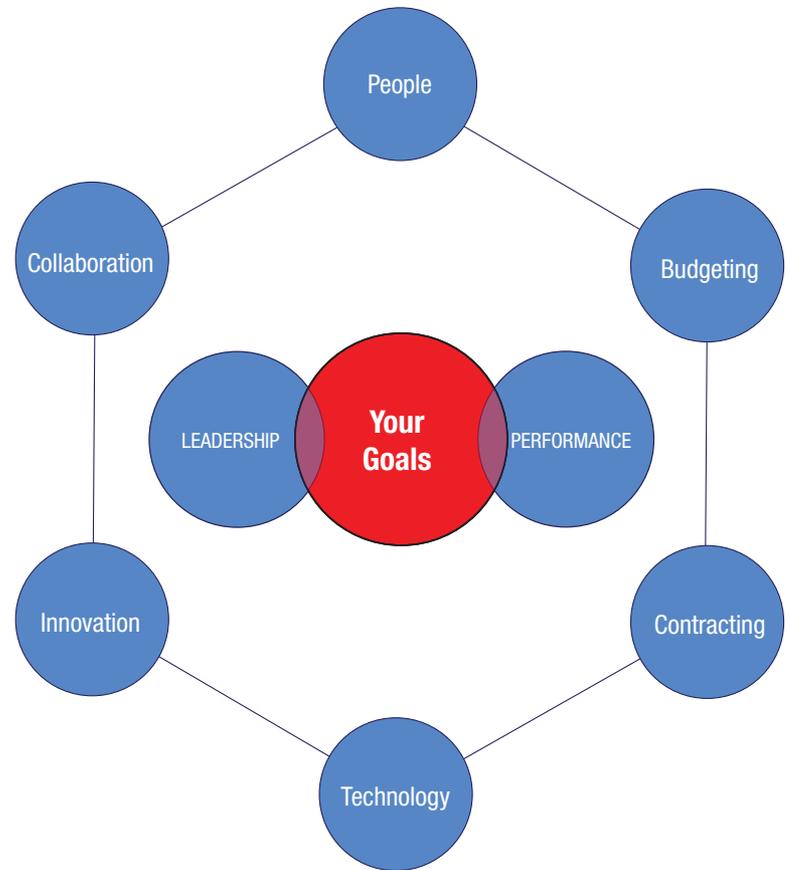
*The insights outlined in this section are drawn from Mark A. Abramson, Jonathan D. Breul, John M. Kamensky, and G. Martin Wagner, *The Operator's Manual for the New Administration* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008).*

The advice offered and drawn from *The Operator's Manual*, is written for newly appointed agency heads—those who lead departments, bureaus, or programs—and their senior management teams, consisting of both political and career executives. These teams, augmented by an experienced career staff, must navigate the seemingly endless rules and procedures of government.

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We are presenting insights into how government works and, more important from the standpoint of executives, how to make it work to advance policy goals and objectives. We offer, in brief and simple terms, descriptions of the most important tools and levers that executives can use to advance agency goals and the president's agenda. Mastering these important tools will help executives accomplish their objectives. It will help them better understand the terrain of government, become familiar with the terms and lingo used inside agencies, and know how to effectively use the tools of government.

Like an automobile, the machinery of government exists to fulfill a purpose beyond itself. In the case of government, it is to implement public policy and programs. The machinery of government is a set of systems by which action is undertaken and results are obtained. The parts in a machine move and mesh, and can be replaced or improved. Government executives need to have a basic understanding of these systems. However, today's federal government operates quite differently from the past. Executives now need an effective set of tools to manage successfully in the 21st century. The insights are aimed at helping executives understand the tools and know how to leverage them to achieve their goals. It is also geared to introducing executives to new tools, such as collaboration, which we think will be increasingly used in the years ahead.



We provide key information on eight important tools—leadership, performance, people, money, contracting, technology, innovation, and collaboration—for operating in government today. We selected these tools after extensive discussions to assess the essential background information that government executives need to know. By understanding these tools, government executives can use each one effectively to accomplish their agency's goals and objectives.

# 1. Leadership

Your leadership can make all the difference in determining whether you accomplish your goals and objectives. Effective leaders first gain an understanding of the context of their organization. Understanding the context of your organization includes knowing your mission, stakeholders, constraints, and the political environment facing you.

**Use different leadership styles.** There is no single leadership style on which to rely. You should adjust your own leadership style to the specific situation and environment confronting your organization. You might also find that your style will need to change as the organization evolves and your external environment changes due to either an anticipated or unanticipated chain of events.

**Define and focus on your goals and objectives.** In other words, you must define and then tell people what you want to get accomplished. A key to successfully accomplishing your goals and objectives will be clearly communicating them to a variety of audiences, including both political appointees and civil servants in your own organization.

**Articulate a strategy for moving forward.** Everybody will be looking to you for how to act on the organization’s mission and vision. A clear strategy provides a map of how you and your leadership team get to where you want to go, given constraints within your operating environment and the resources available.

**Engage employees.** Employees have much to offer the organization via their ideas, including innovations, to improve the performance of the agency’s programs and activities. You will be able to learn much about your agency by going out and listening and engaging with people, especially those on the front lines.

**Put customers first.** Your agency serves the public. Get out and talk with your agency’s customers. Ensure all customers have a voice and that every voice is heard.

**Involve key stakeholders.** In a similar approach to engaging employees, you must launch an active outreach program to meet with the stakeholders of your organization—interest groups, congressional staff members, and

partners (such as nonprofit and private sector companies) with whom your organization collaborates. Include both your advocates and adversaries. The more time spent on outreach will make your job easier.

**Seize the moment.** The simple fact about serving as a political appointee is that you do not know from the outset how long you will have the opportunity to serve. Thus, an essential lesson from leaders is that you must “seize the moment” and take full advantage of the environment now surrounding your organization.

## Key Questions for Newly Appointed Agency Heads

On Leadership	On Contracting
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What can you learn about leadership and transformation from the successes of previous government leaders? (See the IBM Center book: Transforming Organizations.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What are alternative sourcing strategies? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is performance-based contracting? What has been the experience of other public sector organizations in using it?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How do you develop future leaders?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is the procurement partnership model? How does it differ from the traditional procurement model?
On Performance	On Technology
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How do you get started on improving performance in your organization?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What are public-private partnerships? Should you consider them for your organization?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What are the steps you need to take to ensure successful implementation of performance management in your organization?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What questions should you ask at the start of an IT project?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How can you use programs such as CompStat and CitiStat in your organization?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How do you monitor ongoing IT projects?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is Lean Six Sigma and how should you use it?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What do you need to do to address security and privacy concerns?
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How can shared services help you achieve your mission?
On People	On Innovation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is workforce planning and should you pay attention to it?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Why innovate?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is paybanding? How will it help your organization and how do you go about it?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Are there specific actions you can take to increase the chances of successful innovation?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is pay for performance and should you consider it for your organization?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What can be learned from successful innovations?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Does government have unions and do you need to spend time on labor relations in your organization?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What is collaborative innovation and can you use this approach in your agency?
On Money	On Collaboration
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Is there a way to inject performance information into the budget process?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How will you benefit from a collaborative partnership?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Your agency, like many other government agencies, is going to have to control its spending more tightly over the next several years. How might you better control costs?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What has been learned about successful collaboration between organizations to accomplish large inter-organizational outcomes?
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> How do you create a “cost management” culture?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What are the different ways in which you can engage citizens?

### **On Leadership:**

*“A key to successfully accomplishing your goals and objectives will be clearly communicating them to a variety of audiences, including both political appointees and civil servants in your own organization.”*

**Communicate, communicate, and communicate.** Leaders emphasize the importance of placing a high priority on communication from day one of their tenure. As in advertising, repetition is crucial to getting your message out.

**Create alignment.** A key element of leadership is “putting it all together.” The accomplishment of your goals and objectives will depend on your ability to align the people in your organization around effective business practices, technology, and organizational structure.

**Expect the unexpected.** You will need to be resilient in your capacity to overcome obstacles and unexpected problems as they arise.

**“Stick with it.”** None of the above will be easy. You are likely to face opposition that may disagree with your goals and objectives. You must plan for the long term and persevere in your quest for the transformation of your organization.

## **2. Performance**

One of the many myths about government that you have probably encountered is that “government doesn’t have a bottom line.” By this, folks usually mean that government doesn’t make a profit.

You do have a bottom line and will have to manage to it. However, your bottom line is different; it’s the results of your organization. Former government executive Chris Wye writes, “Political leaders are triply vested—as American citizens, appointed public servants, and members of an incumbent political party—with bottom line responsibility for the

performance of the policies, programs, and activities entrusted to their care.”

### **Assess Your Performance Framework**

Much of your first year in office should be devoted to understanding the performance framework of your organization so that you can track progress on your organization’s performance and results. You won’t be starting from scratch. Your job is now to make sure that the information currently being collected by your organization is useful to you in both your decision-making capacity and performance manager role.

Each federal agency is required to develop both multi-year strategic and annual performance plans that include agency goals and measures. Over the next year, you may need to revise the strategic plan to link to the president’s priorities.

### **Implement Your Performance Framework**

Harvard University Professor Bob Behn describes three components of performance management that you should put in place to ratchet up your organization’s performance:

- Create or enhance the performance framework: What would it mean to do a better job?
- Drive performance improvement: How can you mobilize your people?
- Learn to enhance performance: How will your organization change to do better?

You should:

- **Clarify and articulate your organization’s mission.** A key to your success will be ensuring that you “get the mission right” and then articulate it.
- **Identify your organization’s most consequential performance deficit.** Your task here is to “determine what key failure is keeping the organization from achieving its mission.”
- **Establish a specific performance target.** This involves specifying what new level of success you desire for your organization.
- **Clarify the link between target and mission.** This involves clearly articulating how meeting the performance targets you establish will help your organization accomplish its mission.

**On Performance:**

*“You do have a bottom line and will have to manage to it. However, your bottom line is different; it’s the results of your organization.”*

**Use Performance Information**

After your performance framework is in place and you are comfortable with the information your organization is producing, you will find that you can use performance information in many ways.

There is an old saying that “if you don’t know where you are going, you will never get there.” This is truly the case of managing in government. If you do not have a performance framework (which includes your goals and objectives) in place, you will not be able to track where you are heading and agency progress toward achievement of your goals.

**3. People**

Achieving your goals will depend on the hundreds, if not thousands, of people in your organization. While it has become a cliché to say that an organization’s most valuable resource is its people, the statement is true.

As you begin to address the people dimension of your job, you will be working in two distinct time frames: the near term, meaning your first six months or so, and the longer term.

**Focus on Near-Term Activities**

You have an important job to do and you need to get action quickly on the president’s agenda. To succeed, you will need to rely on the career civil service to help you accomplish your goals.

Your near-term people agenda will be to assess the “state” of the career service in your organization by asking two crucial questions:

- Do you have people with the right skills in place within your organization to get the job done?
- What do your organization’s annual employee surveys tell you about your organization? Are your employees engaged in their work? Is there trust and confidence between your employees and their supervisors?

The answers provided to the first question should reflect the status of your organization’s workforce. If the answers are not to your satisfaction, there are many immediate steps you can take to remedy this situation. Your answers to the second question are something you can act upon immediately. Having your employees committed and engaged in the work of your organization is critical to your success as a leader.

**Invest in Long-Term Initiatives**

You can then turn to more complex people issues that typically face every agency. These are crucial to the longer-term effectiveness of your organization and its ability to sustain the president’s agenda.

- **Managing workforce planning.** Given the anticipated retirement of many “baby boomers” during your tenure, you will have the unique opportunity to reshape the skill mix of your organization to better fit its mission and strategy for the next decade.
- **Managing talent strategically.** You will need to develop and implement strategies to recruit, retain, develop, and manage your employees. Agencies currently have a number of hiring strategies under way including the use of hiring flexibilities such as recruitment, retention, and relocation bonuses; re-employed annuitants; student hiring programs; and direct hire authority. You should aggressively use these hiring flexibilities. Your chief human capital officer will be able to brief you on current strategies, as well as how well these strategies are working.
- **Managing for better performance.** Your agency should have a performance management system that is designed to link employee performance plans with the agency strategic plan. A pay-for-performance system could serve as an effective complement to your initiatives to drive performance and accountability.

**Develop Effective Relationships**

You will need to create an effective working relationship with a variety of different groups, including individuals inside and outside your own organization. It is crucial that you develop a good working relationship with

your own employees. Your chief human capital officer (CHCO) should be able to tell you how many unions and union members are in your organization, as well as the extent of their influence and the “state” of labor relations in your organization. You will also need to work closely with key government staff outside of your own organization.

## 4. Money

In the federal government, the budget process is not simply a bean-counting game. The budget process shapes policy—and it inevitably reduces all decisions down to a dollar denomination. The process, including upfront strategic and long-range planning and performance targets, is where policy and strategic decisions are made in the federal government.

### Obtain Resources in a Challenging Environment

Resources will be scarce, and the way in which they are allocated and used is crucial to you and your organization’s overall effectiveness. A solid financial strategy can no longer be an afterthought, if at all. Understanding costs and measuring program performance are critical to effective decision making and need to be part of the policy and program development process. One of the secrets that only the initiated know is that budget numbers are the keys to the doors of everything.

### Manage the Resources You Receive

Managing money in government is serious business. Managing resources means more than simply keeping the books straight and helping to ensure that funds are not misspent.

Resources need to be invested and deployed strategically based on reliable, timely, high-quality information that helps policy makers and program officials make difficult choices in a highly complex environment. While legislation has been put into place to strengthen the role of the federal chief financial officer (CFO), there is a lack of clarity for federal CFO roles and responsibilities.

### Show Results from What You Spend

You and your organization will be under increasing pressure to produce—and to demonstrate—results in terms of your goals and mission. Integrating performance and results with decision making for budget resources has long been a goal of the U.S. federal government. During the past decade,

### **On Money:**

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Congress and the executive branch have increased their emphasis on improving management across all departments and agencies.

George Washington University’s Philip G. Joyce writes, “The federal government has never been in a better position to make its budget decisions more informed by considerations of performance.” A focus on results and outcomes can help enhance government’s capacity to assess competing claims for budgetary resources by arming decision makers with better information both on the results of individual programs as well as on entire portfolios of policies and programs addressing common goals.

## 5. Contracting

Government today depends more on contractors than at any time in its history. This increase stems from several factors: limits on the number of government employees, a difficult process to hire government workers, and the need for government to frequently ramp up quickly to solve immediate problems. Given this history, you will likely find that your agency now has a large contingent of contractors working to support your agency’s operations and mission. As a consequence, you will face a series of challenges.

### Align Contracting Practices with Your Agency Goals and Objectives

Your first step should be to take a strategic look at contracting and align your agency’s use of contracting and contractors to support your agency’s goals and objectives.

As part of your strategic assessment of your organization, you will have to work to align roles and responsibilities for both your government employees and your government contractors.

## Align Contracting with the Appropriate Number of Government Staff

At the same time that government contracts have gotten more complex and the number of contracts and contractors has grown, the number of government employees to manage contractors has decreased. The government now spends less to manage its contracts (on a percentage basis) than at any point in history. In some cases, this has created poor contract oversight, which has resulted in ineffective and costly contracts.

There are specific actions that you can take to strengthen the acquisition cadre in your organization:

- Establish sound career ladders for acquisition professionals.
- Get direct hire authority for your agency so it can recruit and acquire staff in a timely fashion.
- Put in place intern, mentoring, and coaching programs.
- Design recruiting programs to bring in mid-career acquisition specialists from outside of government.
- Offer joint program and contracting staff training programs to promote a collaborative working environment.
- Establish effective succession planning to respond to impending retirements.

## Align Contracting with Industry Best Practices

There is little doubt that government will continue to contract many activities in the future and will continue to work closely with contractors and their staffs. Because of this, you must align your contracting activities with industry best practices. The work of government contractors has substantially changed in recent years, as well as the relationship between government and contractors. These changes are, in part, responsible for some of the recent challenges. Government and contractors are moving into new terrain, and both will need to learn how to deal with changing expectations and new relationships.

In recent years, three major shifts have occurred in the government

contracting arena. Shifts one and two are clearly related. The “buying” of services (shift one) will require a new partnership relationship (shift two). Shift three reflects technology as an enabler to provide faster, more cost effective services.

## Align Your Expectations with Contracting Realities

Finally, it will be crucial for you to align your expectations in this area. Contracting presents special challenges. Specifically, challenges include:

- **Dealing with a cumbersome, process-bound system.** For legitimate reasons, there are no “shortcuts” in the world of contracting. You will have to be patient and rely heavily on the advice of your contracting experts. Their job will be to keep your agency procurements moving along while in full compliance with the rules of the system.
- **Dealing in a highly contentious area.** Over the past decade, the pendulum has continued to swing back and forth from flexibility-driven to rule-tightening contracting reforms. You can expect the pendulum to continue to swing; in recent years, it has been moving toward rule tightening reforms.

## 6. Technology

While you may not have come to Washington to manage information technology (IT), you should pay attention to it for two reasons. First, if you leverage IT effectively, it will help you achieve your goals. Second, if IT is managed poorly in your agency, it has the potential to thwart your agenda, tarnish your legacy, become a major distraction, and take up a large amount of your time and energy.

While IT is an area which is subject to hype, over-promises, and significant risks, it also has great potential. You have more flexibility with technology than in changing the amount of funds your agency now has. IT can be a tool to change the way your agency does business, to redesign work processes, and to eliminate inefficient ways of working. Technology also increases economies of scale.

There are five elements to successfully managing information technology in your organization:

**Begin with your policy and program objectives.** Begin with what you want to accomplish. Then, and only then, bring in the technology experts

### ***On Technology:***

*“IT can be a tool to change the way your agency does business, to redesign work processes, and to eliminate inefficient ways of working.”*

to assess how technology can help you reach those goals. Get them to frame the technology agenda in terms of the mission to be achieved or the customers to be served. The technology agenda might include better service delivery, lower costs, or more transparency. The technology agenda linked to your mission is not faster processors, more bandwidth, or infrastructure.

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Technology can be the enabler of new ways of doing business or can be used to make your existing business model more effective or efficient. Your vision can embrace either or both. Look to similar organizations for lessons on how best to pursue this strategy.

#### **Get a handle on your ongoing IT projects before there is a crisis.**

Large IT projects often fail. In the federal government they fail publicly. It is important for you to get a handle on these projects early in your tenure. You should consider bringing in outside experts to do a quick independent review of the projects and give you a sense of the risks the projects face. You should act on their recommendations.

You should also ensure that your chief information officer (CIO) has a process for reviewing progress on an ongoing basis. You should request that projects provide incremental deliverables every few months. Have a contingency plan.

**Make sure you have a capable, qualified, and effective chief information officer.** An effective CIO will be critical to your success and must be able to deal effectively with both technology and the agency mission it supports. Your CIO must have strong program, technical, management, and people skills, and will be the person who translates mission needs into technology solutions.

**Empower your CIO but have a process for reconciling IT and other imperatives.** Making programs work depends on combining money, people, technology, and contracts. The CIO must have the power to enforce technology decisions. You also will need to ensure that you have a process that reconciles the interests of key players in your department, such as your chief financial officer, and have mechanisms for balancing the very real issues that will arise. Expect conflict, but ensure there is a process for resolving it.

**Make sure security and privacy concerns are a priority for program managers.** It is a near certainty that during your tenure, your agency will lose a laptop full of sensitive information, have a security breach that affects service delivery, or have some other public crisis involving security.

Make sure that your senior managers take security and privacy seriously as an operational matter. Your program managers should be regularly testing security and using the results to improve it. In short, security should be viewed as part of your program management responsibilities.

## **7. Innovation**

Innovation is a hot topic. While not usually viewed as a tool, innovation can assist you in improving performance and achieving your goals. Many organizations in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors are devoting much time and effort to developing new approaches to innovation. Your challenge is to foster the right mix of the four types of innovation in your organization.

### **Foster Business Model Innovation**

You should challenge your management team to examine your current agency-wide business models. Your team should ask themselves: (1) Are we sufficiently challenging the way our agency conducts its business? and (2) How can we better measure and manage our agency's performance in achieving objectives?

Changing a business model in government will not be easy. Business model innovation frequently creates anxiety and fear within agencies. It is thus crucial that you target your business model changes wisely, communicate effectively, implement the changes quickly, and make adjustments as necessary over time.

## Foster Operations Innovation

For the development of innovations in business operations, you will need to create “safe spaces” for mid-level management entrepreneurs to pilot new ways of doing business.

For the implementation of innovations in operations, you will need to champion things that work and expand them beyond the pilot phase. For example, as the pilots begin to demonstrate promise, you should export them to other parts of agencies and begin to share them as best or promising practices so that they can be developed in other parts of government.

## Foster Products/Services Innovation

To foster innovation in products and services delivered by your organization, there is much that you can do. First, recognize that employees often are the source of innovative services that can benefit your customers. Getting them engaged is key. You can do this by creating an atmosphere that encourages individuals to be entrepreneurial in proposing and advocating for innovations.

Second, the success of most innovations involves effective collaborative approaches. Recognizing that this is both an opportunity and a challenge is important when endorsing efforts to pilot or implement innovative products or services.

## Foster Management Innovation

In *The Future of Management*, Gary Hamel sets forth a threeprong approach to fostering management innovation in your organization:

- **Challenge long-standing management “orthodoxies” in the organization.** In short, Hamel recommends that you should go to “war” with precedent.
- **Develop new principles that will encourage new approaches which will “reinvent” the “management genome” in your organizations.** Hamel recommends that you bring together your management team to examine specific processes within your organization to ask questions such as:
  - Who “owns” this process and who has the power to change it?
  - Who are the “customers” of this process?

- **Find insights from what Hamel calls “positive deviants”—those individuals or organizations with management practices that are eccentric yet effective.**

## Be Engaged

Innovation does not happen in isolation to all of your other activities and initiatives. Innovation can become a key ingredient on actions related to all the tools discussed. The test of the success of innovation in your agency will be whether it has contributed to improving performance and achieving your goals.

## 8. Collaboration

Fostering collaboration will be a key component of your job. The need for improved and enhanced collaboration within and between agencies in the federal government, with state and local governments, as well as with nonprofits and businesses, is now clearly needed.

Collaboration occurs when people from different organizations produce something together through joint effort, resources, and decision making, and share ownership of the final product or service. The focus is often on producing or implementing something.

### Collaborate to Solve National Problems

Why is collaboration rising in importance? In short, the federal government’s role in responding to national problems is dramatically evolving.

The traditional model of government agencies administering hundreds of programs by themselves is giving way to one-stop services and cross-agency results. This transition implies collaboration—within agencies, among agencies, between levels of government, and between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. As networks and partnerships take on many new shapes, organizations are shifting their focus from “within” to “between.”

### Use Networks

Because of their informal nature, networks tend to be time consuming to develop and fragile to maintain. The decision on whether to use this approach depends on an initial assessment of whether the right dynamics exist and whether they reflect the characteristics of a successful network.

Successful networks share five characteristics: shared vision and trust, independent members, voluntary links, multiple leaders, and clearly defined roles.

While the reliance on networks and partnerships is increasing, there are still many challenges in effectively using these new tools. For example, as networks and partnerships grow, how do you fund them? As agency lines blur, who gets the credit, or when things go wrong, who is held accountable and for what?

## Use Partnerships

Much like networks, there are different types of partnerships. First, a partnership tends to be more resilient when there is a transition in leadership among its members. Second, because partnerships involve a more formal set of relationships, it is easier for them to leverage the resources of others. As the government moves forward in the decades ahead to meet challenges in many diverse arenas, collaborative networks and partnerships are approaches that can provide you with greater leverage to achieve national goals than the traditional “stovepipe” approach to individual federal programs. We recommend their increased use.

## Build New Management Skills

As the use of collaboration increases, you and your management team will be challenged in new ways because you and your team will have to behave far differently than in the past. One part of this shift is a change from the traditional bureaucratic approach focused on individual programs run by separate agencies to an approach that places increased emphasis on services and results. The new model implies organizing around customers and outcomes, not the traditional agency and programs.

## A Final Word

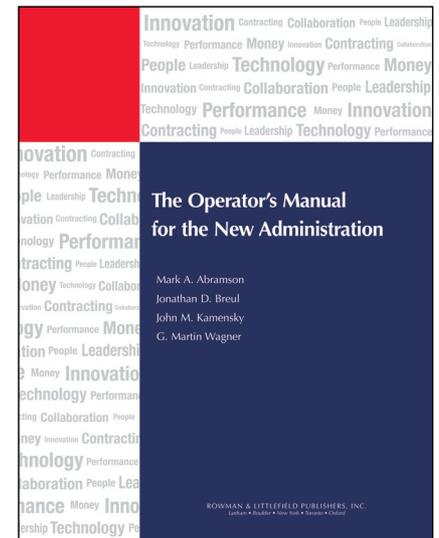
We do not rank the eight tools in order of importance. Government executives have to pay attention to and work with all of them. None can be ignored. Each tool complements the others. The challenge facing executives is to bring into line all of these tools to achieve their mission. We hope that these insights will be helpful to both new executives coming to Washington in 2009 and experienced executives who are seeking additional insights into managing the operations of government. ■

### To Learn More

**The Operator's Manual for the New Administration** by Mark A. Abramson, Jonathan D. Breul, John M. Kamensky, and G. Martin Wagner

The book is available at bookstores, online booksellers, and from the publisher at [www.rowmanlittlefield.com](http://www.rowmanlittlefield.com), or by calling (800) 462-6420.

To find out more about the presidential transition and how the IBM Center for The Business of Government is dedicated to improving public management, visit [www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008/](http://www.businessofgovernment.org/transition2008/).



# The Presidential Transition

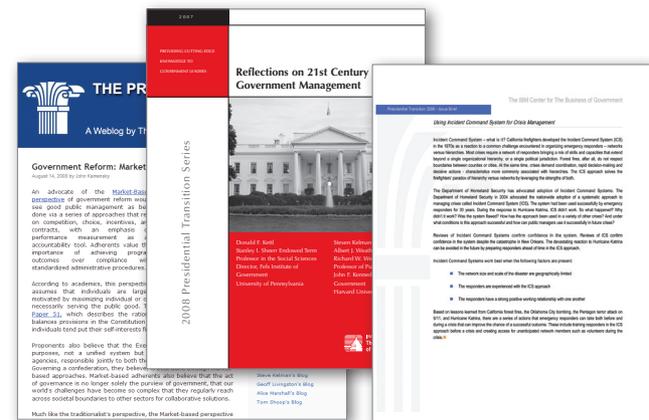
The new President faces a wide range of economic, political, and social challenges.

Good policies and sound investments won't succeed if undermined by poor implementation.

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