

Training and Organizational Design for a Federal Agency



The Challenge

A US federal agency with a wide array of geographic distribution and responsibilities sought to better distribute learning events and resources to diverse professionals spread all over the United States. With a workforce of over 20,000 and millions of customers every year, this organization generates billions of dollars annually for the US economy.

As part of the overall project, EK engaged in a training, coaching, and knowledge transfer effort with a service group that supports the federal agency by housing and managing all media content, showcasing innovative solutions, and supporting the agency's brand and vision. To help this smaller organization better support the federal agency, EK focused on developing an organizational design and model that would address its weaknesses, namely, poor organizational health, project management challenges, operational and logistical confusion, a decreasing workforce, limited capacity for research and development, a siloed culture, and brand misconceptions.



The Solution

EK conducted a series of training activities over a multi-week period, focusing on organizational analysis and synthesis. In order to ensure that the organization's leadership understood and accepted the proposed Target Organization Definition, EK conducted multiple feedback sessions with senior leadership to share the proposed organizational recommendations, gather feedback, and refine the model as needed. In these feedback sessions, EK elicited leadership's perspectives on whether the proposed change practices were appropriately prioritized and covered the key initiatives and priorities of leadership. These sessions also allowed EK to identify and share problem points or bottlenecks in certain processes (e.g., lines of authority and decision-making, communications) and whether there were any opportunities to simplify organizational actions and processes. Following each of these sessions, the EK team made iterative edits and developments to the Target Organization Definition to ensure the organizational model remained up-to-date and in-line with organizational objectives.

EK also delivered a synthesized version of the Target Organization Definition as an executive briefing deck, to be used externally when updating current and future partners on the new organizational model. This deck provided the organization with a clean, marketable message to showcase their value to the broader federal agency and discuss planned changes to the organization. This executive briefing deck described the organization's differentiated value, outlined why it is changing its approach to how it delivers its services, what its core offerings are, and what the organization is uniquely able to provide its partners. EK developed the deck iteratively, presenting leadership with a draft version from which to gather reactions and make adjustments.

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The EK Difference

EK supported this organization throughout the entire project to design, develop, and implement the best possible solution for their needs. Beginning with the strategy and design phase of the project, EK conducted multiple rounds of workshops and focus groups to uncover the root of their challenges and discover the right people, processes, and content that should be included in the organizational model and involved in the change efforts. EK designed multiple iterations of the model to incorporate feedback from workshop participants and key stakeholders.

During the development process, EK leveraged Agile processes to maximize communication with organizational leadership and staff. User stories were expanded upon and business requirements were revised in a collaborative process between the design team and key stakeholders. EK began this engagement with a Current State SWOT Analysis, assessing the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for growth, and the roadblocks that could inhibit the project. This phase of work allowed EK a deeper understanding of the organization's desired Target State. EK also provided change management, training, and a comprehensive transformation and roadmap plan to ensure a smooth transition and high adoption rate of new federal services and solutions.

The EK team displayed Agile approaches and methodology throughout this entire process, demonstrating to the organization's staff how they should approach the implementation of the new organizational model. The model was developed iteratively, and at each phase, all stakeholders were given the opportunity to voice concerns and shift priorities. The change practices that EK advised to reach the Target State were supported by recommended actions and milestones, success criteria, and anticipated outcomes so that change management best practices would become second nature at this organization.



The Results

As a result of this engagement, the organization possessed a renewed understanding of Agile and Design Thinking program planning processes, approaches for Center Strategy and Change, and training on messaging and communications regarding that change. The organization was better equipped to handle its vast array of digital media, as staff were upskilled on project management roles, project planning processes, and resource management. EK concluded the engagement with a Business Transformation Plan, comprising seven change practices and a new mission statement to guide the organization in creating a more dynamic and adaptable organization focused on providing world-class expertise and service to its partners in the federal agency.

Enterprise Knowledge (EK) is a services firm that integrates Knowledge Management, Information Management, Information Technology, and Agile Approaches to deliver comprehensive solutions. Our mission is to form true partnerships with our clients, listening and collaborating to create tailored, practical, and results-oriented solutions that enable them to thrive and adapt to changing needs.

Our core services include strategy, design, and development of Knowledge and Information Management systems, with proven approaches for Data and Information Management, Knowledge Graph Implementation in support of NLP, ML, and AI initiatives, Taxonomy Design, Project Strategy and Road Mapping, Brand and Content Strategy, Change Management and Communication, and Agile Transformation and Facilitation. At the heart of these services, we always focus on working alongside our clients to understand their needs, ensuring we can provide practical and achievable solutions on an iterative, ongoing basis.