




## 7 Resources and People

MCG DTS workforce shares characteristics with other public sector agencies with the impending loss of its institutional and technical memory as well as the ever increasing private sector competition for qualified employees. The DTS strategic response is to develop a proactive approach so that it can meet Department and constituent needs more efficiently, effectively, and with significantly fewer increases employees. To help managers assess current and future workforce trends and plan realistically for the future operations, DTS is developing this Strategic Staffing Plan.

### 7.1 Retention / Attraction

#### Aging Workforce

In the U.S. there is a substantial pool of highly qualified workers who are on the verge of retirement. Bureau of Labor Services data shows that some 78 million Baby Boomers will begin retiring in 2010. This will impose a major drain on the existing labor pool. Within the next 10 years, 43 percent of the U.S. workforce will be eligible for retirement. By 2020, nearly 24 percent of the workforce will consist of employees age 55 or older. That is twice the number from 1990.



This reduction in the size of the labor market will impact businesses in two ways. Not only will they need to address the lack of employees in the terms of numbers, they must also consider the loss of vital skills and significant institutional knowledge.

Commonly known as the “brain drain effect,” when the Boomers leave the workforce, they take with them technical expertise that in many cases is not available elsewhere in today’s labor pool. Skills such as mainframe programming and maintenance are not commonly held by many of today’s young professionals and companies either can not or are not ready to give up on these technologies. Consequently there will be a pressing need for businesses to find adequate replacement personnel to support their legacy applications.

One step taken to address this issue was to determine DTS’ vulnerability to the impending labor shortage. To ascertain this, a skill assessment was conducted to identify potential vulnerabilities. An additional step is the continued participation in the MCG’s resource planning and Leadership Development Program (LDP).

### **Baby Boomer Departure**

Although older Americans are willing to continue working, most companies today have no planned retention policies to encourage them to stay. Nor do they have replacement strategies to help their business cope with their exodus. A 2006 AARP survey of 1,000 executives conducted by BusinessWeek Research Services found that a majority of executives are aware of the impending retirement crisis, but few are doing anything about it.

Though 59% of executives said their companies need to be “more proactive in thinking about how to retain workers who are approaching retirement,” only 37% say that their organizations have formal processes to capture key business knowledge from employees who retire or leave. Fewer still have programs to encourage older employees to stay with the company longer (just 16%). When asked if their company is ‘very’ committed to retaining employees who are approaching retirement,” only 14% responded yes.

While DTS can continue to recruit future personnel with technical skills and expertise, an effective alternative would be the retraining of current employees with the required enhanced technical and analytical skills. Retraining will help DTS overcome the scarcity of those specialized skills in the labor market.

Due to the complexities of required technical skills, development may require longer periods of training, perhaps exposure to several months of on-the-job experience.

DTS strives to improve its documentation of strategic job descriptions, particularly with the management and senior IT positions. It is equally important to enhance critical job procedures. Specialized knowledge should be captured and translated into a singular procedural manual, or projected into a configuration management information database. This will leave an informational reference or knowledge base for future employees in the agency.

Additional financial resources for salaries will be needed to successfully attract and retain qualified personnel for these positions, especially as new openings arise.

## Retaining Valuable Personnel

DTS has instituted a more comprehensive individual annual performance review process to provide feedback on the progress of employee development. DTS may also need to identify more formalized financial and non-financial rewards for employees accustomed to advancement and recognition within the constraints of the County's personnel regulations.

## Workforce

This is the first time in history that 4 generations are working side by side in the workplace. They are (as of Oct 2007):

**Figure 34 - Workforce Generation Mix**

| <b>Workforce Generation Matrix</b> |                        |                              |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Veterans                           | Born before 1944       | Youngest is 63               |
| Baby Boomers                       | Born between 1945-1962 | Oldest is 62; Youngest is 45 |
| Generation X                       | Born between 1963-1982 | Oldest is 44; Youngest is 25 |
| Millennials                        | Born between 1983-2000 | Oldest is 24; Youngest is 7  |

Today's organization is a cross-generational workplace more so than anytime before. Each generation has its own values, views, ambitions, defining events that helped shape their lives. Different ways of talking, thinking and working naturally bring about conflict that needs to be managed, which is a direct result of the considerable diversity of the organization. Management will continue to be challenged as the organization grows and recedes and there is an ongoing need to address the overlap that exists between the generations.

**Goal:**

***Continue to invest in human resources solutions to attract and retain a quality workforce that can support current and future technology strategies while developing resources for new and progressive technology solutions support.***