

1. Please describe your innovation. When and how did this innovation get started? Do also detail how the program or policy innovative, how it has changed previous processes, products, or services, and how it has substantially stretched or improved the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations.

People are at the heart of every organization and we have to keep our finger on the pulse. Clichés that are often said and simply taken at face value. We all know what is most important to our overall success, so it's alarming that it's the one factor we understand the least. Why is employee absenteeism up? Why did our engagement scores go down? What value does training and development actually have on job satisfaction? These are all questions that are commonly pondered at leadership conference tables around the country. More times than not, practitioners get together and apply their experience, expertise and intuition to answer these questions– which is a much better way of describing the times we, as public administrators, are “guessing” or “feeling” our way around a situation.

Our employees are telling us a great deal even when they are not speaking. Are we listening?

Approximately one year ago the Adams County Government People and Culture service area decided to leverage what is commonly referred to as “People Analytics” or “Workforce Analytics”. The intent was to gain a greater understanding of our team members, and to learn from some of the objective measures that were available to us. We decided to glean as much insight as we could by using data to supplement our anecdotes. Admittedly, this concept is not new in the private sector, and more jurisdictions are embracing data-driven decision making than ever before. However, most government entities are only using data as an outward facing tool as a means to establish some public accountability or to maintain compliance.

Why have people been reluctant to use data in this manner? Data can be an intimidating conversation, and “people data” can even make some uncomfortable. The idea of predicting and explaining employee behaviors and sentiment may seem elusive and borderline reckless. It may also feel too aspirational and far reaching – only for those jurisdictions with sophisticated systems and endless resources. We are here to tell you it is none of these. In fact, it is very attainable, useful, and, we would argue, responsible.

The result has been a more informed and strategic organization. We feel more confident about decision making, and we can better forecast our results. We are more intentional with our allocation of resources, and can more effectively measure outcomes and impact. We are more responsive to the needs and expectations of our employees, and can begin to get ahead of matters rather than purely respond to them. We are now making people-driven decisions and, if we can all agree how important our people are, is this not an endeavor we should all consider?

2. You've been to a lot of conferences. TLG should be a unique experience for everyone. Describe how if this is selected for a case study presentation will be different than other conference presentations.

It begins with our philosophy – To cultivate the success of Team Adams and make a place where every person shines. We have a forward thinking mindset and courageous willingness to improve through innovation. Our analytics effort is housed within our People and Culture service area, under the

Organizational Effectiveness division. We offer a unique and progressive approach to how we look at traditional “personnel” or “HR” departments. We recognize our ability to empower leaders to positively shape the overall employee experience.

Next, we will bring multi-disciplinary professionals with more than 20 combined years of experience as public administrators, which are both professional facilitators and accomplished analysts to present an engaging introduction to beginning a people analytics initiative. We will use proven visuals and attractive materials in addition to Turning Point interactive clickers to actively involve participants, using data, as we work through the presentation. We will incorporate stories and have attendees steer some of the discussion to make it meaningful and applicable.

3. In 200 words, please address:

a. How will you make the session creative and unique?

Knowing that people have different priorities and motivators, the presenters will utilize their presentation experience to stimulate and engage all audience members. We will simplify complex concepts to make it relatable, while paying respect to the science. The delivery will be designed to appeal to those that are driven by people, process, or performance.

b. How do you plan to be both entertaining and educational?

We have some great proven visuals and exercises, along with practices (including the use of live polling), that will drive home points while allowing for some fun. The interactive nature will enable participants to walk away with memorable and practical information.

c. Include a description of how your session will facilitate group activities and/or interaction.

Again, we will use storytelling and live polling to track and report real-time data. We will also utilize short case studies to allow for participants to work through common problems/scenarios, and then show how data can better inform the decisions.

d. What will attendees be able to have as an actionable "takeaway" from the session?

People will walk away with clear starting points and a greater understanding of the concepts. General comfort and “can do” spirit will increase. They will know where to mine valuable information, how it can be used, and how to build it out. An example of some metrics and a printed “workgroup profile” will also be shared.

4. We also utilize showcases at TLG as candidates for an innovation award. The differentiating criteria is related to how the program was truly a quantum leap of creativity, and did it substantially stretch and/or improve the boundaries of ordinary governmental operations. If this program is selected for TLG and you would like this program to be considered for an award, can you describe what you think the program exemplifies in this regard?

Though we are extremely proud of the progress, direction, and implications, we humbly yield to some of the innovation being done by our colleagues.