



Strategic Objective:

Enhance Leadership and Promote Management Excellence

Issue: GAO intends to establish results-oriented agency management practices that will establish the agency as a leader among high-performing professional services organizations. To accomplish this objective, GAO will build on its established base of strategic planning, performance management, sound financial management, IT best practices, and leadership initiatives. GAO will also need to institute new ways of doing business to create management and leadership systems that are practical, flexible, and that enable managers to efficiently use resources to solve problems. GAO will lead by example.

Performance Goals: To support the objective to enhance leadership and promote management excellence, GAO will

- foster an attitude of stewardship to ensure a commitment to GAO's mission and core values,
- implement an integrated approach to strategic management,
- continue to provide leadership in strategic human capital management planning and execution,
- maintain integrity in financial management,
- use enabling technology to improve GAO's crosscutting business processes, and
- provide a safe and secure workplace.

Foster an Attitude of Stewardship to Ensure a Commitment to GAO's Mission and Core Values

Key Efforts

- ❑ Select candidates for leadership according to clearly defined criteria anchored in GAO's core values
- ❑ Develop programs for GAO's leaders and candidates for leadership that promote GAO's core values, performance excellence, and stewardship
- ❑ Develop a core curriculum for GAO managers that focuses on understanding the congressional environment and achieving excellence in performance
- ❑ Communicate and apply the new executive performance standard that emphasizes stewardship as an essential component of executive competency

Significance

Effective leadership embodies roles and responsibilities beyond those necessary for good management. To lead an organization like GAO, successful executives must inspire others, be effective agents of change, and lead by example. They must serve as stewards of GAO and constantly strive to improve the performance and accountability of the organization. They must also seek to effectively balance people, product/service and client considerations. Ultimately, GAO's success will depend in large measure on the positive attitudes and dedicated effort its leaders bring to their work.

Potential Outcomes

Improved ability for leaders to set organizational direction according to core values

A common understanding of the leadership and vision needed to enable GAO to accomplish its mission

A cultural transformation at the executive level that will enhance GAO's effectiveness in serving the Congress and the American people

Implement an Integrated Approach to Strategic Management

Key Efforts

- ❑ Institutionalize, as an ongoing strategic planning function, the process used to identify, monitor, and analyze global, national, and regional trends that have the capacity to significantly affect government and American society and integrate the results into engagement planning
- ❑ Align the strategic plan, budget, and new competency-based performance management system
- ❑ Implement a balanced scorecard of measures and feedback that focuses on clients, results, and people to gauge overall organization performance
- ❑ Revise current systems and processes to systematically review progress toward strategic objectives and performance goals and make adjustments as needed
- ❑ Produce performance and accountability reports that clearly link resources spent to results achieved in GAO's strategic goals and objectives

Significance

GAO supports the intent of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA), the primary legislative framework through which federal agencies are required to set strategic goals, measure performance, and report on the degree to which goals are met. GAO developed and maintains a rigorous strategic planning process that acts as the catalyst in determining how the agency directs its work and manages its resources. Because of GAO's key role in auditing other agencies' adherence to GPRA, it is important for GAO to lead by example and develop a model strategic management approach. GAO believes that to be a model in this area requires an integrated approach that includes planning, doing, assessing, adjusting, and reporting results.

Potential Outcomes

Increased ability of GAO to focus on the most important global and national issues facing the Congress and the American people

Improved ability to measure and compare GAO's performance to established goals and results

Continued improvement to GAO's strategic planning and budgeting

Work that meets the needs of the Congress and facilitates improvements in government

Continue to Provide Leadership in Strategic Human Capital Management Planning and Execution

Key Efforts

- ❑ Develop and implement a human capital strategic plan to support GAO's strategic goals
- ❑ Sustain a systematic workforce planning process to ensure that GAO hires, retains, or contracts for the appropriate number of staff with the competencies needed to achieve its mission
- ❑ Refine the agency recruiting and hiring programs to target staffing gaps identified through workforce planning efforts
- ❑ Develop and implement an agencywide succession planning model

Significance

Developing and implementing a strategic approach to human capital management ensures that GAO's human capital policies and systems are aligned with GAO's strategic goals. The plan will provide a framework for assessing current activities, designing and implementing new programs where needed, and monitoring and evaluating activities and outcomes. GAO will use the results to become a model of excellence in the human capital area.

Potential Outcomes

An improved human capital planning process

Improved human capital management that contributes to ensuring a highly successful GAO attainment of its mission

Maintain Integrity in Financial Management

Key Efforts

- ❑ Ensure exemplary practices and systems in GAO's fiscal operations and ensure continuing compliance with federal financial management guidelines
- ❑ Ensure the overall integrity of GAO's financial reporting, systems, and internal controls and ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations annually, including an independent audit of GAO's financial statements by a certified public accounting firm

Significance

Integrity in how GAO manages its fiscal operations is critical. GAO should be a model for other agencies in both operational and fiscal management by implementing and using systems that comply substantially with federal financial management guidelines.

Potential Outcomes

Clean opinion on the annual financial audit

Management of GAO according to sound financial management principles and best practices

Use Enabling Technology to Improve GAO's Crosscutting Business Processes

Key Efforts

- ❑ Develop a partnership between technology staff and GAO's internal customers to define business requirements and determine how technology can best support those requirements
- ❑ Refine and update the GAO IT plan, which provides the foundation for technology initiatives and ensures a secure IT environment in support of GAO's strategic and business goals
- ❑ Develop and maintain a GAO enterprise information architecture, including a concept of operations, that provides an integrated view of the agency's business processes
- ❑ Maintain an active IT investment committee that guides the direction of GAO's IT investment policies, processes and portfolio, and links GAO's IT investment decisions to the agency's strategic direction
- ❑ Continue GAO's partnership with the Clerk of the House of Representatives to develop extensible markup language (XML) applications for testimonies and other products
- ❑ Develop and implement, using enabling technology, a new intake process for congressional requests and correspondence and a new way to document interactions with clients
- ❑ Identify, prioritize, and implement enabling technology for the automated delivery of human capital services

Significance

Information technology (IT) has evolved dramatically in recent years, influencing the way information is both created and shared, while fundamentally changing the way mission needs are met and business functions are carried out. The role of IT has become increasingly vital in organizations, becoming a critical enabler to client service, strategic planning, human capital, and business process goals and objectives. IT adds value to organizations by creating, supporting, and enabling solutions to business requirements. When appropriately applied, IT can afford new services and product lines, significantly reduce process time and costs, enhance the quality and responsiveness of services and products, and increase accessibility to information and services.

GAO must maximize the benefits of information technology to become a model agency. The identification and implementation of new and emerging technologies is essential to GAO's continued efforts to provide efficient and effective services to external clients. New technology also allows GAO to provide its internal customers with the tools needed to accomplish GAO's mission priorities and become more efficient in its own business processes.

Potential Outcomes

Improved information technology planning and decision making, and flexibility to respond to continual improvements in business processes

Improved working relationships among internal customers and technology staff, ensuring that information technology more effectively meets the needs defined

More effective IT investment process that more directly links IT investments to GAO's strategic and business plans

Better integrated human capital services that are easier for customers to access

A robust, flexible, and secure technology architecture

Improved technology tools that will allow GAO staff to effectively accomplish the agency's mission

Provide a Safe and Secure Workplace

Key Efforts

- ❑ Prepare threat assessments for GAO's people, information, buildings, and other key assets
- ❑ Periodically monitor threat assessment and update as emerging trends trigger the need for change
- ❑ Implement enhanced security processes and procedures to guard against such threats
- ❑ Review and update GAO's emergency preparedness and response plan
- ❑ Develop a GAO continuity of operations plan
- ❑ Implement a comprehensive IT security program that embodies best practices

Significance

The safety and security of GAO's staff, information, and assets against threats must be a top priority. The September 11 terrorist attacks against the United States highlighted the nation's vulnerabilities. GAO must place a high priority on assessing the agency's current security measures, and identifying and adopting practices that will enhance GAO's overall security program.

Potential Outcomes

GAO's people, buildings, and other key assets are protected

GAO's information and technology assets are protected

GAO's leaders and staff are prepared to respond effectively to emergencies

A safe, secure, and adaptable work environment for all staff