

The Power of Partnership: How Higher Education and Public Agencies Can Co-Design Workforce Solutions

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Why This Matters Now

- Public sector retirements and succession gaps
 - Competition for skills across sectors
 - Increasing role complexity and workload
 - Training fatigue and limited organizational capacity



What the Research Tells Us

- Co-designed program outperformed isolated training
- Short-form, stackable learning works - especially for working adults
- Learning that connects to work improves performance and retention
- Partnerships work when education acts as a platform, not vendor



Applying Co-Design to Public Sector

- Co-Design Starts with Job Reality, Not Program Theory
- Constraints Are Not Barriers - They Are Design Inputs
- Outcomes Must Be Operational, Not Aspirational
- Feedback Loops Turning Training into Living Systems
- This is Adaptation Advantage in Practice



Cross-Agency

- **Opportunities**
- Leadership readiness
- Supervisory capacity
- Recruitment and hiring
- Retention & Engagement
- Succession planning
- HR literacy for managers
- AI Application and Implications
- What else?
 - Interagency Collaboration and Change Leadership
 - Ethics, Equity & Public Trust
 - Skills: Project management & Data



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Co-Design Lab: Priority Workforce Needs

Co-Design Lab: Public Service Leadership

Reflection Prompts

- Does this reflect the leadership reality you see day to day?
- Are there skills here that supervisors are expected to have, but rarely taught?
- What feels aspirational versus what feels urgent?
- What would make this credible and defensible inside your organization?

From Ideas to Action

- Clear Roles - Not Shared Confusion
- Shared Problem Definition - Before Shared Solutions
- Pilot Approaches - Because Scale Comes Later
- Continuous Feedback - Not One-Time Evaluation
- Not Perfect



Thank you!

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