



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER PRESIDENT



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Continuing from last month's message.

Think about controlling the mind – yeah right! Mind has been called the monkey and maybe a drunken monkey. So it helps to think of our mind as a muscle and it will strengthen with the usual eating right, getting ample sleep and daily exercise. Our mind muscle, just like your physical muscle needs resistance or challenges that stretch their limits. Growth follows such stretching. Try the following mind stretches:

1. Gradually increase the time of focus.
2. Write out your distraction list – list of things that come up when you are trying to focus in #1.
3. Build your willpower – deliberately ignore distractions (use #2 initially).
4. Physical exercise – even 30 minutes of a gentle walk around the neighborhood.
5. Memorize simple things – like in the old days before smart phones.
6. Mindfulness practice – my personal favorite - focusing completely on what I am doing, slowing down and being aware of emotional and physical sensations of the moment.

Anshu

Vision

AGA is the premier association for advancing government accountability.

Mission

AGA is a professional association advancing government accountability, transparency, and leadership by promoting education, certification, innovation, and collaboration across all levels of government and stakeholders.

Values

Service, Accountability, Integrity, Leadership

UPCOMING EVENTS

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

October 9, 2018
see page 2 for details



Eye Opener



\$215,000

Raise given to Kentucky's chief information officer by Governor Matt Bevin. His \$375,000 salary makes him the highest paid CIO in the country.

SOURCE: Louisville Courier Journal September 20, 2018





**MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY
October 9, 2018
11:45**
Van Waggoner Building
Great Lakes Room
Lansing, Michigan

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION
OF VA EXPENDITURES TO THE STATE
OF MICHIGAN**

SPEAKER:

Tim Loney, Deputy Director
Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

REGISTRATION

Register on-line at www.aga-lansing.org.
Click on events.
Register before Friday, October 5, 2018

COST

\$12 AGA Members
\$16 Non-Members
Free for Student Assistants

Registrants are responsible for payment unless
cancellation is received by the registration deadline.

**NATIONAL AGA COLLEGIATE
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

This program is sponsored by the Young Professional Focus Group. It provides up to 10 full-time undergraduate students with an opportunity to engage with and learn from leaders in government financial management at AGA's National Leadership Training (NLT) in Washington DC, on February 27 and 28, 2019.

Participants of the program will:

- Have an onsite mentor to guide them around the NLT event.
- Attend NLT sessions.
- Sit at reserved tables for an exclusive lunch with corporate partners and government officials.
- Receive recognition at the event, including a certificate of participation and commemorative photo.
- Earn CPEs for the sessions they attend.
- Receive a complementary e-membership in AGA for one year.

The application deadline is November 9, 2018.

[Learn more and register today.](#)

**MESSAGE
FROM AGA'S
NATIONAL
PRESIDENT
2018-2019**



John Lynskey
CGFM, CPA

On behalf of AGA's National Executive Committee, I am pleased to inform you that the bylaws amendments to modernize AGA's governance structure were approved at the National Board of Directors meeting in Orlando, Fla. in July.

Thank you to our members and volunteer leaders who overwhelmingly supported the proposed changes. I especially want to thank Past National Presidents Jim Arnette, Doug Glenn and John Homan, and the Governance Committee members who served with them, for guiding the organization through a comprehensive governance review since 2015.

The new governance structure:

- Consolidates the National Board of Directors and National Executive Committee into one 17-member governing board.
- Establishes a National Council of Chapters, made-up of one member from each chapter, to advise the board on strategic issues, facilitate connections among chapters and promote chapter health and growth.
- Provides a streamlined structure with fewer layers to allow for more direct communication between leaders and members.

We believe these changes will provide chapters with a stronger voice in the running of their organization, create a more strategic and responsive board and enhance service to members and chapters.

For more information about the changes, which will take effect in July 2019, please visit our governance web page.

I am excited about AGA's future and look forward to working with the NEC on a smooth transition to the new structure in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

John

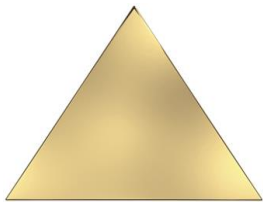


Craig Fischer

Posted
September 6, 2018



BALANCING THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE OF BLOCKCHAIN, AI, AND RPA



Within the Federal Chief Financial Officer community, we talk a lot about the future of financial management. The underlying idea behind this future is that the federal government is meeting the expectations of citizens in managing its finances. Citizens want to see their government acting as responsible stewards of their money, be assured that their financial data is accurate and transparent, and have interactions with the government that are modern, seamless and secure.

Technology plays a major role in meeting these expectations. We are in the midst of a digital transformation in which we are increasingly looking to technology to solve our problems. There's no shortage of examples for how we have come to rely on technology in our own personal lives (groceries can be delivered to our house by simply speaking to a digital voice assistant—how convenient!). While the pace of technological advancement is exciting, it poses challenges for government. We constantly have to evolve to meet citizens' expectations, making the "future of financial management" a moving target.

To ensure that we're staying current with the latest tech trends, the Bureau of the Fiscal Service within the U.S. Treasury Department has been identifying and testing some of the most exciting and innovative emerging technologies that could impact how we manage the nation's finances. There are three technologies that we're currently examining to determine potential benefits: Robotic Process Automation (RPA), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Distributed Ledger Technology.

The 3 Technologies of the Golden Triangle

RPA is computer software that automates manual, rules-based repetitive tasks like copying and pasting data from one system to another. We recently completed an RPA pilot where we automated seven manual processes in the areas

of data entry, email intake and processing, data reconciliation and form validation. Through our pilot, we learned that RPA software can increase processing times, increase data throughput, improve accuracy and save time. The pilot was successful, and we're in the process of moving it into production to take advantage of these results on a broader scale. Artificial intelligence is a loosely-defined term that has come to encapsulate many things. Simply put, it is computer software with a built-in mechanism that enables it to learn from data and use what it has learned to make future decisions. Machine learning, deep learning and natural language processing all fall under the umbrella of artificial intelligence. At the Fiscal Service, we recently launched a pilot to evaluate the use of chat bots (another form of AI) to provide a more efficient and responsive way for citizens to interact with us through our contact centers.

Distributed ledger technology, commonly known as blockchain technology, offers a new paradigm for making business transactions. To learn more about the technology, we launched two proofs of concept to test the use of blockchain technology to manage and track physical assets (cellphones) and digital assets (software licenses). Though our initial findings were positive, blockchain is one of the least mature technologies that we're investigating. But by applying blockchain technology to simple, low-risk use cases like physical asset management, we're gaining a better understanding of what the technology is and how it works so that we can begin to develop a point of view on how it might impact government finance.

How to Strike a Balance

It's safe to say that these technologies are poised to play a big part in the future of federal financial management. We're learning that their ability to automate manual tasks and offer new paradigms and business models will likely transform the way we manage our finances and create a better experience for our customers.

But, as things change, keeping the elements of the "Golden Triangle" in balance is going to be necessary if we want to realize our financial management vision. As we embrace new technologies to solve our problems, we need to make sure that the people and the processes necessary to implement and govern these new technologies are keeping pace.



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Early Career Center

A TOOLKIT FOR MANAGING RISKS AS YOU CLIMB THE GOVERNMENT LADDER

By: Sherrie P. Mitchell, GovLoop Featured Contributor, September 24, 2018



Much of the East Coast was impacted last week by Hurricane Florence. Prior to the storm's landfall, governors of several states declared a state of emergency in an effort to be proactive. People boarded up their homes and evacuated low-lying areas. Residents in affected areas were advised to assemble emergency toolkits containing food, drinking water, flashlights and batteries.

In addition to damaging coastal areas, Hurricane Florence caused significant inland flooding, resulting in billions of dollars in damage many miles away from where the storm made landfall. Surprised property owners in these inland areas without flood insurance were left with substantial uncovered damages.

As a government leader, risk opens you up to new challenges and increases your opportunity for success. However, it makes you vulnerable. Preparing ahead of a predicted storm is always a good idea to help manage risk. It's not just the eye of the storm that matters. Substantial damage can also occur in outlying areas. Much like preparing for a hurricane, you can formulate your own course of action to control your reactions and responses in case calamity strikes. Here is a toolkit for managing risks as you climb the government ladder:

The Risk of Physical Harm

It's disconcerting, but today's workplaces are rife with health and safety concerns. Do you sit at a desk all day? Numerous studies show that extended sitting can result in metabolic diseases which can put your life at risk. How ergonomic is your workstation? Most executive desks are not ergonomic, putting you at risk for repetitive motion injuries. Do you squint from staring at the glare on your computer screen all day? Extensive screen time can cause eye strain.

As frustration mounts with employees being expected to do more with less all the time, there's the risk of verbal violence and bullying in the workplace. Additionally, government jobs are not as secure as they once were due to increased accountability. This can lead to more stress, which can result in workplace violence. Government leaders are likely to deal with a disgruntled employee at some point in their career. If you are a leader responsible for someone's discontent, you could be the target of workplace violence.

As a leader, you're in a unique position. You have some control over workplace health and safety. You can mitigate the risk of physical harm by analyzing workplace environmental risks, addressing verbal violence and bullying, and working to reduce employee stress. Find a trusted advisor or human resources professional to work with to mitigate these risks for you and your employees. Make sure you and your employees have access to employee assistance plans to help reduce personal and work stress. Always have a plan for employee health and safety (including your own), and plan training for both you and your employees on what to do in an active-shooter situation. In addition to government resources, many communities now have local resources available to assist with active-threat emergency action planning. Let your employees know that you have a plan and practice it with them.

The Risk of Financial Harm

Although government managers are usually protected from lawsuits as long as they are performing their official duties, the odds of being accused of wrongdoing during your government career are not in your favor. A disgruntled employee or public citizen can still sue you. While it's uncommon for government supervisors to be found personally liable, they can be under certain circumstances.

To mitigate financial harm, invest in professional liability coverage. Additionally, ensure that you carry the maximum amount of personal liability insurance and that you supplement it with umbrella coverage. Seek a professional insurance consultant to assist you with adequate insurance coverage so you can have peace of mind.

The Risk of Reputation Loss

According to Benjamin Franklin, "It takes many good deeds to build a good reputation, and only one bad one to lose it."

One of the biggest risks to your reputation today is social media. While social media can be a great way to interact with others, it can also be a liability. You can single-handedly damage your own reputation and that of your employer with one social media post. Additionally, a disgruntled employee can trash

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GOVERNING

THE STATES AND LOCALITIES

MANAGEMENT AND LABOR

MORE GOVERNMENTS ARE TURNING TO GIG ECONOMY FOR HELP

Mike Maciag | May 30, 2018

Gig Economy: A labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs.

Whether it's hailing a ride or finding help with home improvement projects, the gig economy is slowly transforming the way a lot of work gets done. It's hardly surprising, then, that governments have started to rely more on these workers, too.

A new national survey from the Center for State and Local Government Excellence provides the first-ever snapshot of the gig economy's developing role in the public sector. It suggests that while only a few governments have started hiring gig workers, they're already plugging some staffing holes in nearly every segment of the public workforce. "It's an emerging issue and is one there has not been much attention paid to," says Gerald Young, a senior research associate at the center.



Gig economy and temp workers are most commonly employed in office and administrative support functions, with 20 percent of states and localities surveyed indicating their use. Other positions more frequently filled with these workers include accounting, cleaning and maintenance work.

A small number of governments have further tapped the gig economy to help carry out various information technology activities, understandable given the high degree of specialization in the field. "IT support used to be something you needed to have entirely in house," Young says. "There are a lot more opportunities for IT support to be cloud-based or temporary."



Turning to the gig economy could help governments overcome a number of staffing pressures they're currently contending with. A strong economy has led many employees to seek employment outside the public sector. About 34 percent of governments reported more employees left their positions without retiring last year, while only 13 percent experienced declines over the year.

States and localities further continue to lose significant numbers of their most experienced employees to retirement. The survey found that only 21 percent of governments were seeing their retirement-eligible employees postponing retirement dates, a figure that's steadily declined for several years.

There are still a lot of unknowns given that utilizing the gig economy is a relatively new practice for governments. Agencies often must comply with rules and regulations around hiring staff or issuing contracts, so it's unclear whether these would apply to smaller tasks completed by gig workers. It is also uncertain how cost-effective gig hiring is for governments and how their roles affect full-time staff.



If one thing is for certain, it's that the gig economy will continue to grow, creating more potential opportunities for governments to meet staffing needs. A report from Intuit and Emergent Research estimates 3.7 million Americans worked on-demand jobs in 2016. By 2021, that number is projected to rise to 9.2 million workers.



The Mark of Excellence in Federal, State, and Local Government

CGFM is the professional certification recognizing the unique skills and special knowledge required of today's government financial managers. It covers governmental accounting, auditing, financial reporting, internal controls, and budgeting at the federal, state, and local levels.

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For example, while the technology behind the RPA project mentioned earlier demonstrated impressive results and led us to move our pilot into production, we also learned that we will need to make some people and process adjustments to take full advantage of the RPA software.

People and Process

From a “people” perspective, it’s imperative that we train employees to spot processes that are ripe for automation, teach them how to program and fix the software when it breaks, and train them on how to manage a *digital workforce* as well as how to interact with their new digital ‘co-workers.’

From a “processes” perspective, we will need to understand the potential impact on our policies

and procedures and update our processes to reflect the use of new software. We’ll also need new documentation to support internal and external audits, and we will have to stay aware of how RPA software may impact the larger regulatory framework.

Our deep dive into testing new and emerging technologies will help us identify the innovative technology solutions that will carry out our future vision of federal financial management. But it will be achieving the right balance between “people, processes and technology” that will ultimately lead to long-lasting, transformational change. We’re discovering through our pilots and testing that there are many technologies that show a great deal of potential for improving federal financial management, but, without a knowledgeable workforce and an up-to-date policy and procedures framework, these new technologies simply won’t live up to their full potential.

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your reputation with one post. Social media can destroy reputations in a heartbeat and can even lead to loss of your career.

To mitigate the risk inherent in social media, limit your personal utilization to professional networking sites. Keep your personal life, thoughts and opinions off-line. Actively monitor your online social interactions and manage them appropriately. Don’t post anything negative, and watch for derogatory posts or comments from others. Monitor and be prepared to delete posts that could have a disparaging impact on your reputation. Protect your personal brand and that of your employer by having a crisis management plan ready to remove inappropriate posts and respond appropriately.

The Risk of Failure

We are all familiar with “successful failures” in life. Thomas Edison, Henry Ford and Abraham Lincoln are all examples. Failure is part of the experiment of life. As a government leader, you must be prepared to take calculated risks to succeed. Failure is unavoidable at some point in your career. There’s wisdom to be gained from failure. Failure encourages innovation and provides new opportunities.

Though failure can be inevitable even with proper planning, your response to it can be formulated ahead of time. Following failure, you will feel bad. Adopt a positive attitude anyway. Admit the mistakes you made. Stop the bleeding. Just like after a hurricane, you’ll need to tally the damage and provide some damage control. Analyze what

went wrong. You may be frustrated, but you cannot be paralyzed by the fear of repeated failure. You’ve got to get up and keep going. As Abraham Lincoln once said, “You cannot fail unless you quit.”

The Risk of Accountability

The higher up the government ladder you climb, the more you are accountable for your actions and the actions of those who follow you. In today’s current environment just one mistake can cost you everything. You are responsible for your own actions as well as the actions of your employees. Political leaders are often looking for someone to blame for a failure in government. In today’s contentious political environment, it can be “off with your head!” if you are the one in charge.

To mitigate the risk of accountability and its impact, stay actively engaged with your employees. Make sure you know what is going on out on the floor. President Harry S. Truman had a sign on his desk. It read “The Buck Stops Here.” Don’t place blame on others when something goes wrong. Making yourself out to be the victim will backfire. Instead, own the failure. Take personal responsibility. Analyze what went wrong and use it as an opportunity for future improvement.

Final Thoughts

To climb up the government leadership ladder, you must step outside of your comfort zone and be willing to expose yourself to new risks. These risks include the possibility of physical harm, financial harm, reputation loss, failure and accountability. However, like assembling a toolkit in preparation for a major hurricane, you can plan ahead of time to help manage these risks and reduce their impact as you climb the government ladder.

Chapter Education Calendar



You can register for all chapter events at www.aga-lansing.org. Click on events.



Check the chapter website and upcoming newsletters for more information.

September 12, 2018

Webinar Conference

Communications

VanWagoner Building, Sleeping Bear
2 hours CPE

February 19, 2019

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Topic to be Determined

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
1 hour CPE

October 2, 2018

Professional Development Training

Training for Government Professionals

Michigan Historical Library Forum
4 hours CPE

March 6, 2019

Webinar Conference

Finance

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
2 hours CPE

October 9, 2018

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
1 hour CPE

March 2019

Professional Development Training

Training for Government Professionals

Location to be Determined
8 hours CPE



March 27, 2019

Webinar Conference

Cybersecurity

Location to be Determined
2 hours CPE

November 20, 2018

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Topic to be Determined

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
1 hour CPE

April 16, 2019

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Topic to be Determined

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
1 hour CPE

November 28, 2018

Webinar Conference

Ethics

Williams Auditorium
2 hours CPE

April 24, 2019

Webinar Conference

DATA Act

Location to be Determined
2 hours CPE

December 19, 2018

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Topic to be Determined

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
1 hour CPE

May 15, 2019

Webinar Conference

Fraud and Data Analytics

Location to be Determined
2 hours CPE

January 15, 2019

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Annual Tax Update

Library of Michigan
1 hour CPE

May 21, 2019

Monthly Luncheon Meeting

Optimizing Professional Relationships

VanWagoner Building, Lakeshore Room
1 hour CPE

February 6, 2019

Webinar Conference

GASB Update

Constitution Hall, ConCon A and B
2 hours CPE

June 12, 2019

Webinar Conference

Leadership

Location to be Determined
2 hours CPE



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS! Member Anniversaries

Carol Carlson, CGFM-Retired	39 years
Jane Wallin	39 years
Pratin Trivedi, CGFM	29 years
Cindy Osga, CGFM	26 years
Nicholas Bohac	16 years
Peggy Murphy	13 years
Zada Schriener	8 years
Michael Booth	4 years
Bethany Doyle	4 years
Roberta Marks	4 years
Derek Childs	3 years
James Duso	2 years
Courtney Meyer	1 year
Rachael Spohn	1 year



CHAPTER FINANCES

Financial Position at August 30, 2018

Assets

Current Assets:	
Checking Account	\$ 25,834
Pay Pal Account	\$ 878

Total Assets	\$ 26,712
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Liabilities and Net Assets

Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	\$ -0-
Beginning Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$ 23,330
Income (Loss)	\$ 1,133
Ending Unrestricted Fund Balance	\$ 22,197
Restricted Fund Balance	
AOA Donation	\$ 4,515

Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 26,712
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GREATER LANSING AGA CHAPTER 39 YEARS OF SUCCESS

The Greater Lansing AGA Chapter conducted its first meeting on August 9, 1979. The chapter received its charter from the National AGA on September 25, 1979. The Chapter began with 66 charter members. Today the chapter has 120 members, with 32 (27 percent) of its members holding the Certification of Government Financial Manager. The Chapter continues to provide low cost quality continuing education at its professional development trainings and monthly luncheon meetings for its members and others serving the government financial management community.



OTHER EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



National AGA

To register for events, visit www.agacgfm.org

November 1, 2018

Shared Services Summit

Washington DC
24 hours CPE

February 27-28, 2019

National Leadership Training

Washington DC or Virtual
14 hours CPE

July 21-24, 2019

Professional Development Training

Washington DC or Virtual
24 hours CPE

West Michigan AGA

To register for events, visit www.agawestmichigan.org

October 23, 2018

Practical Implementation of GASB 84 – Fiduciary Activities

Your Computer
2 hours CPE



ACCOUNTABILITY Talks

The new podcast from AGA

"Accountability Talks" is a new podcast from AGA focused on the government accountability community. We hope these conversations will provide you with fascinating insights from government thought leaders, enlighten and inspire you as you navigate your career and encourage you to take part in this vibrant community.

Episodes one-five are now available on [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Google Play!](#)



Chapter Executive Committee 2018-2019

Platinum
Chapter

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See the Chapter's Annual Citizen Centric Report
on the website.

The Chapter's Citizen Centric Report was awarded a Certificate of Excellence by National AGA.

www.lansing-aga.org

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