

PUBLIC SECTOR WORKFORCE ANALYTICS

Insight You Can Act Upon

Orion
Communications 





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Introduction

Efficiency is the name of the game for public sector organizations across the country. In the aftermath of the recession, every state was forced to make budget cuts that reduced funding for essential local services. Even now, many states and municipalities are acting cautiously.

While agencies are facing intense pressure to perform using limited resources, they must also do so with a sense of real-time transparency. When increased auditing and regulatory compliances are factored in, it is apparent that these are unprecedented times to be a public servant. Accountability to the tax payer is the bottom line.

It's no wonder that most public administrators will tell you that improving workforce productivity through better labor management is their primary concern. Since labor cost is typically the most significant expense for any organization, effective organizations are transitioning to automation as the means to drive transparency, accountability and compliance.

All in all, it goes beyond technology alone. Government leaders must know how effectively their business processes are working. They must be able to quickly adjust outdated procedures, while clearly documenting and managing workflows. It's simply a condition of today's public sector organizations that requires full accountability to the tax payers that they serve.

In this eBook, we'll explore how your organization can use workforce analytics from Orion Communications as the means to answering questions that lead to smart workforce decisions you can act upon.

- What are the business processes you need to improve in order to run a better organization?
- How can you identify and improve productivity?
- What's the most cost effective way manage and retain a productive workforce?

It's all about your data and being able to view it in a way that you can easily take action. Just knowing there's a problem isn't enough.

You've got to be able to get down to a granular level so that appropriate personnel can be addressed and workforce processes modified.

In this way you'll use workforce analytics to drive improvements in efficiency, effectiveness, situational awareness and collaboration agency-wide.

Is Big Data the Answer?



Much has been said about the promises of 'big-data' and the value it can provide. The term itself means different things to different people. To some it is perceived of a black hole of data that is complex and constantly changing. To others it is viewed as having the ability to reveal a new realm of analytical potential and unparalleled insight. But before you can experience its potential value, you've got to understand how to use it so you don't end up with a massive data migraine.

Sure, if your data is selectively collected and presented in a way that is easy to understand and act upon it can add tremendous value. But getting your arms around complex data from disparate systems can become quite frankly – incredibly overwhelming. From payroll, to operations and beyond -- traditional reporting simply fails to provide the real-time visibility needed to identify and correct costly inefficiencies.

So what's to be done?

Collaboration Is Key

“What does successful collaboration between users and IT look like? How can IT personnel ensure that they understand user pressure and desires, and vice versa? Looking at the processes for creating new analytical initiatives, it is clear that the benefits of collaboration are not restricted to data discovery (Figure 1). A collaborative assembly line forms to roll out new ideas around data.

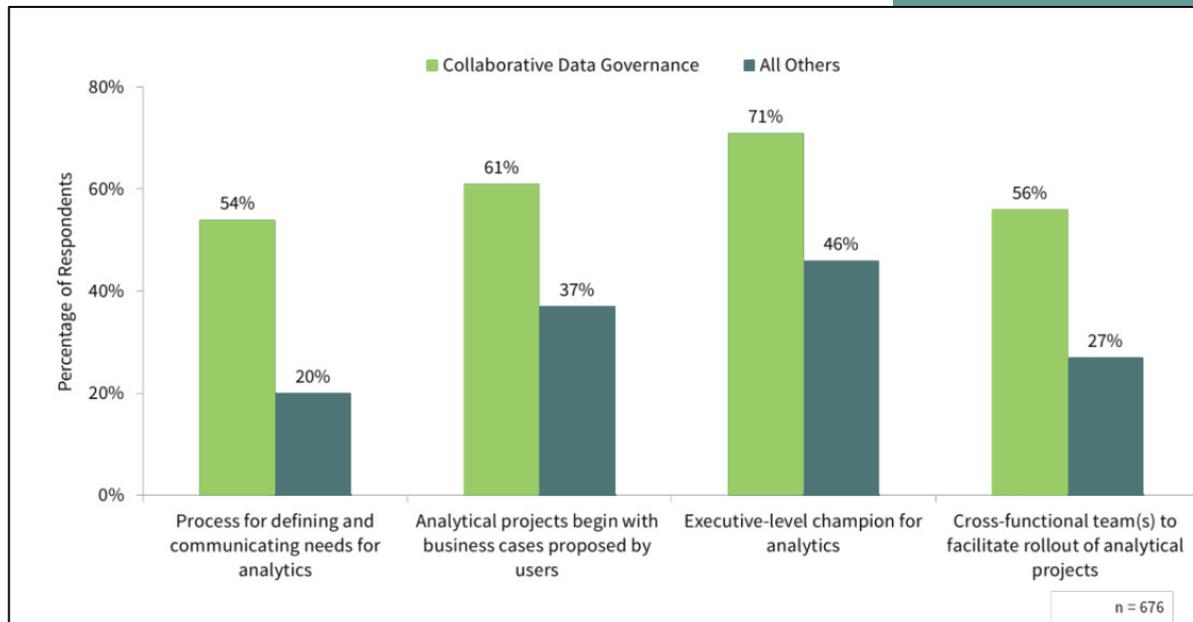


FIGURE 1 - DATA DISCOVERY ASSEMBLY LINE

*Source: Aberdeen Group, April, 2014

Organizations with collaborative data governance are over twice as likely to have a process in place for defining and communicating needs to analytics. This process provide IT visibility into the needs of users and lets IT decision makers know which applications and data sources are accessed most frequently and should be given the highest priority. It also helps users break through roadblocks in their data discovery.”

- The Aberdeen Group
May, 2014, Collaborative Data Governance:
Peeling the Red Tape Off Data Discovery

Actionable Insight

For the Executive Team to Operational Managers

In the past, analytics have been used by a select few at an executive level. However, today's forward thinking agencies realize that these insightful tools must be accessible to managers throughout the organization in order to efficiently manage their specific areas of expertise. Being able to easily view real-time information that is relevant to their role and responsibilities is the name of the game. With this type of tool, managers across the board are becoming proactive in remediating issues that might have resulted in serious consequences for their agency.

But it's not just about viewing a nice looking dashboard. It's more about knowing what data to consider and looking at it in way that serves you today, tomorrow and beyond. Orion's AgencyWeb® Analytics does this by using an advanced statistical engine that collects data from Orion's AgencyWeb® workforce management system and other external sources. As a result, AgencyWeb® Analytics is able to organize and present complex, constantly changing data in a highly visual way using gallery dashboard views that are easy to understand and act upon.



By using relevant data based on roles and responsibilities, managers and executives alike have the insight necessary to monitor workforce performance, identify problems and make whatever adjustments are necessary.

“Aberdeen’s survey asked government end users what specific process and initiatives they are empowering with analytics and data management (Table 1). Many of the top use cases focus on better understanding of performance and improving operations. Over half of government agencies are using analytics to help optimize allocation by getting the right resources in the right place at the right time. Analytical tools can help decision makers optimize the utilization of their workforce by distributing personnel based on analysis of experience, training and compensation.”

- The Aberdeen Group 2014 study on Analytics in Government

Analytic Applications in Today’s Public Sector

Use Case / Application	Percentage of Respondents, n=46
Performance management and reporting	70%
Planning, budgeting and forecasting	68%
Lowering operational costs	52%
Ensuring that resources are in the right place at the right time	52%
Granting the public access to information (performance indicators)	45%

TABLE 1 - USE CASE/APPLICATIONS FOR ANALYTICS

*Source: Aberdeen Group, November, 2013

It’s apparent that workforce analytics is a powerful tool that is enabling public sector organizations nationwide to deliver services while cutting costs and increasing transparency. From performance management and reporting to financial planning, budgeting and staff forecasting – analytics are providing government decision makers within the insight to support smart decision and decision-making processes.

Workforce Analytics



Workforce analytics centralizes workforce data and provides organizations with the visibility needed to make intelligent decisions that reduce labor costs, increase workforce productivity and ensure compliance.

Insight into Smart Scheduling



It's no secret that certain public sector organizations have incredibly complex scheduling requirements. Using automation to schedule a mission critical workforce that's manned 24/7, 365 days a year is just one piece of the puzzle.

Workforce scheduling data can be used to drive analytics that help managers realize how their labor budget is being spent. This type of insight can facilitate communications between operational and financial managers about resources and investment.

Analytics is ideal for labor forecasting. Understanding past patterns and the cost of various staffing scenarios help organizations to plan better in the future. It can provide guidance in managing complex issues that may require organizations to rapidly staff up or down in order to meet specific need. With this type of insight, agencies can move toward improved workforce utilization.

Analytics can be used for operational managers to make decisions based on performance. When employees see that performance, along with time & attendance data is used as the basis for scheduling decisions it becomes harder to argue for favoritism. Data leads to transparency. And transparency leads to better overall business decisions for everyone.

Making Informed OT Decisions

For a number of municipalities, some of the largest expenses they face come not from normal compensation, but from overtime pay. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), employees make at least one-and-one-half times their rate of regular pay. This can add up quickly, especially in places where agencies are forced to rely on overtime because they do not have a large enough staff on hand.

With workforce analytics, organizations are able to use their time and attendance data to quickly identify staffing problems and determine root causes. By analyzing historical information, agencies can use their own data to optimize the right scheduling mix of full-time, part-time and temporary personnel.

Workforce analytics also provides comprehensive labor-cost information that organizations can use to make better decisions and improve processes. This insight can help to reduce high priced overtime payments that result from under-staffing or lack of reallocating existing resources. Thus, costly overtime decisions are avoided and unprecedented culture of accountability is created.



Effectively Managing Absenteeism

While some absences are unavoidable, poorly managed absenteeism creates costly and multifaceted risk for all public sector organizations. The impact includes lost wages and productivity, compliance risks, administrative burdens and lower employee engagement. Personnel who do come to work are often frustrated at having to assume an additional workload. And supervisors focused on backfilling open positions are not able to spend time on their own managerial responsibilities.

This is where the use of absentee data can add significant value. While some agencies might need to track absenteeism trends in order to plan for future scheduling and hiring, others might use it as a gauge of policy, morale or planning. It may seem like a small thing, but one reliable indicator of a larger problem is an employee that is consistently tardy or absent. This can be easily tracked using analytics and may suggest that an intervention may be required, particularly if the quality of the employee's work is suffering..

The types of leave that cover various situations at a state, local and federal levels are complex to say the least. Workforce analytics can add tremendous guidance in helping managers to more appropriately classify each leave case. Understanding and following regulatory rules are essential in the public sector. By using workforce analytics, managers are able to view their absentee data in a way that helps them make better decisions on a daily basis.

Analytics can also be used to help organizations with attendance reporting and to easily spot absentee abuse. When organizations are able to see spikes in absence, they can more easily trace the back to the root cause. When root causes are addressed, absences can be reduced or eliminated as opposed to merely being tracked.



Visibility into Grant Life-Cycles

In a time of tightening public budgets and growing responsibilities, grants can be a useful way for agencies to fund existing operations or new projects. However, oversight throughout the awarded grant life cycle can be difficult.

Workforce analytics can be used to provide a real-time snap-shot of all grant statuses, such as how much was originally allocated, what has been spent to date, how much is left. Collecting its data from workforce management systems, analytics can provide real-time insight regarding the resources and workgroups associated with each grant. By closely monitoring each grant's usage rates, reports to funding sources can be easily prepared. This is particularly important for ensuring eligibility for future grant award and avoiding non-compliance risks.



Ensuring Compliances are Met

Money isn't the only constraint weighing on public sector organizations. They must also contend with a variety of regulation compliances and in some states union rules. Organizations must ensure that they are following labor laws, as well as their own state and local policies, federal rules and regulations.

When analytics uses the specific data from workforce management systems, public administrators are able to visually monitor compliance requirements in order to ensure that rules are being followed. By using analytic gallery screens, non-compliance issues are red-flagged so that immediate action can be taken by the appropriate personnel. As a result, exposure to litigation due to violations can be significantly reduced.

Real-Time Activity Tracking

In order to stay within budget while provide community services, it is essential for public sector organization to know what their personnel are accomplishing on a daily basis and how long it takes to complete specific tasks. From responding to 911 incidents to completing required certifications, public sector organizations simply must track the activities that their personnel are working on daily and how long it takes to complete them.

By collecting and presenting activity data using workforce analytics, agencies have a clear snapshot into how their budgets are being applied and how their employees are performing. Organizations can then monitor activities against costs by organizational groups or individual performers. As a result, financial managers are provided with ongoing visibility into labor costs and are able to track key performance indicators such as overtime and productivity.

Equally important is the quality of personnel performance when completely these tasks. What kind of skills do they have? What kind of field services do they go on? How effective are they during their shifts? How do they rank within their work group? Are they doing the majority of the work within their group? Are they doing the majority of initiating calls? These are just a few types of insights that workforce analytics can provide.



Managing Alleged Misconduct

Though it is unfortunate, the fact is that organizations occasionally receive allegations of misconduct. Situations ranging from inappropriate conduct to unethical practices can present serious liability to the public sector. Since most incidents are typically caused by a small minority, it stands to reason that departments using workforce analytics are able to identify and address allegations of misconduct before they snowball out of control. This not only reduces the risk to the agency as a whole, but also the personnel being accused.

With workforce analytics, early warning data for personnel can be collected and used to identify personnel suffering from stress prior to a major incident. Once identified, steps can be taken to protect the employee and department from inappropriate behavior as a result of undue stress. These could include possibilities relating to training needs, misconduct, or policy concerns that would reduce departmental liability.

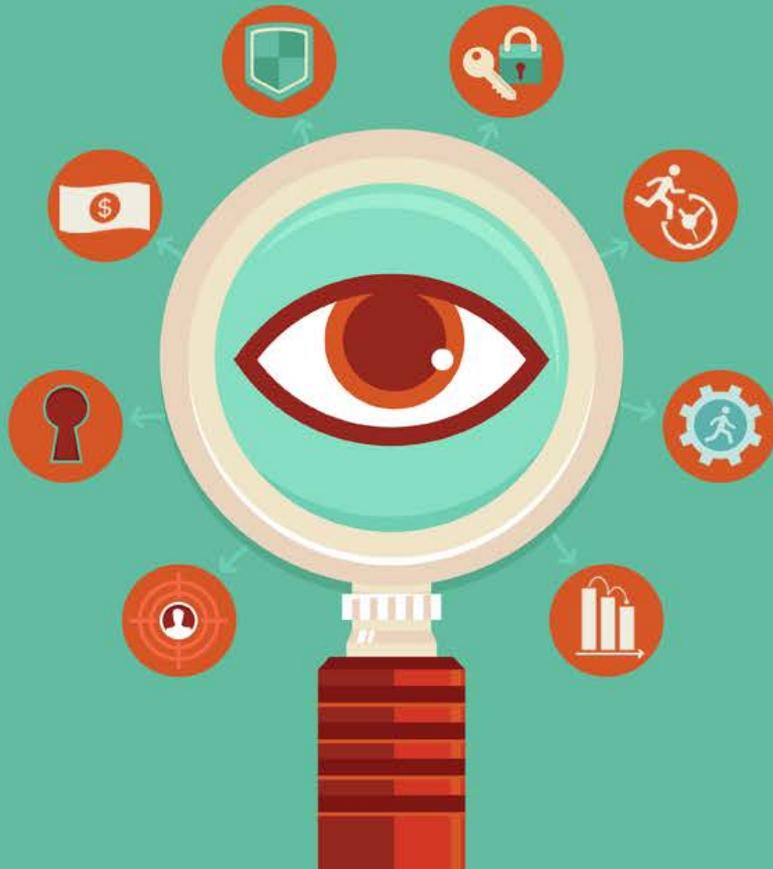
For example, data used for law enforcement early warning detection could include threshold settings for citizen complaints, use of force incidents, sick time, firearm-discharge reports, arrested subject injuries, officer injury reports, vehicle accidents, civil litigation and head strikes. Supervisors and HR personnel would be able to take action after viewing dashboards that red flag personnel meeting the defined threshold levels.



Where Do I Start?

Analytics
Road
Map

When beginning a new analytics initiative it's best to start slow and see where the data takes you. Think in terms of small short-term achievable goals to build momentum. It's possible that you'll get some unexpected results, so keep an open mind to what your workforce analysis reveals. Cultivate support by spreading the word internally.



Begin by assembling your colleagues and identifying the following:

- What is the goal of the analysis?
- What user types will be viewing and using them?
- How will you be measuring progress?
- Do existing KPI's already exist that should be used?
- What type of data needs to be collected?
- What data sources will be used to collect the data?
- What gallery format do you want to view the results?
- What user types are responsible for acting upon any issues that are identified?
- How will you track the effectiveness of any corrective actions?
- How often will the analytics reside within your system?

It's important to always ask the right questions in order to embed analytics into your cultural mindset. Once you do that and provide personnel with access based on their roles and responsibilities, you will have the tools needed to make smart, data-driven decisions.

Conclusion

Workforce analytics has a broad range of use cases for public sector organizations. However, success in daily operations stems from how the data is used, not just how it is collected. Rather than being reactive, public servants can now take advantage of analytics by using workforce data for optimal operations and spending.

Why not let your data guide you to making smart decisions that improve workforce processes, policies, and spending? By putting workforce analytics into the hands of executives as well as operational managers, issues can be immediately identified and action plan quickly defined. Process modifications can then be set in motion that resolves conflicts before they spin out of control. When you combine Orion's AgencyWeb® Analytics with AgencyWeb IWM®, you'll have easy-to-use data analysis software with workforce management tools that drive bottom line results.



The key lies in your data.

Call Orion Communications
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About Orion Communications

For the past 15 years, Orion Communications has been providing innovative workforce management solutions to the Public Sector. Today, we continue to push the envelope in workforce management automation that increases productivity and dramatically reduces labor costs. With a dynamically intelligent framework that shares its data with other systems Orion's software gives agencies the analytic visibility to use their data on a daily basis in ways that drive better decision making.

How? The keys are coordination, automation and integration. Our expertise with complex, Public Sector workforce processes and data interfaces allow us to offer a unified solution that connects agency employees, volunteers, management and business rules in real-time. What's more, our software's interface capabilities allow agencies to share data in real-time with different resources, jurisdictions and legacy systems.



AGENCYWEB® ANALYTICS

More than a nice looking dashboard

Orion's AgencyWeb® Analytics uses an innovative statistical engine that collects and organizes data from AgencyWeb® IWM (Intelligent Workforce Management™ system) and other external sources. Data is presented in a highly visual way using gallery dashboard tools that are easy to understand and act upon.

Types of Analytic Use Cases

- Scheduling
- Labor Cost
- Overtime
- Absenteeism
- Grant Funding
- Time & Attendance
- Court Events
- Regulatory Compliance
- Certifications
- Performance

For information on how to use your data to provide insights that can drive smart decision making processes call 866-779-1689 or email us at sales@orioncom.com.