

## Day 1: Government Breakout Group

### What are the greatest OSTO challenges?

- Lack of long term focus – need to look ahead to workforce problems that are coming
- Mismatch between gov't and academia. Caliber of gov't employee is poorly perceived. Academia is perceived as easier to work for (less red tape and less restrictions)
- Younger workforce wants more freedom and best technology; cultural mismatch between millennials and “old style gov't”
- “Time at sea” is not marketed well to recruits and becomes a retention problem.
- Lack of proactive recruiting; HR has shrunk and has become more “territorial” of the recruitment function
- Lack of diversity, need of specialized programs to attract diverse workforce
- No understanding of the benefits of working for the gov't
- Application process is bad/complicated/time consuming

- Perception that business is better place to work than gov't. Can't compete on salary. HOWEVER, gov't needs to market its programs regarding work/life balance, paid tuition, and other benefits besides salary.
- Need to promote spirit of public service to people. Creating incentives other than salary, such as creating change.
- US citizenship is a requirement. Gov't can't hire many excellent candidates.
- Technology is advancing rapidly and is a challenge and gov't doesn't appeal to the people who are getting these skills. (millenials)
- Students don't see gov't as cutting edge science; seen as paper pushers. Seen as managers, not scientists.
- Lack of opportunities to expose students to gov't work and science and job opportunities. Can't get them in the "front door" to introduce gov't work to them.
- Academia does not push working for the government as a viable job opportunity to students. (old style culture of academia. Academia is for advanced degree holders, not gov't)
- Lack of bachelor's and master's level recruits for current jobs

- In some ocean sciences jobs recruits have to move from their home locations (e.g. to rural southern MS for Navy),
- Growth in need for life science workforce; gov't can't compete with health sciences for life sciences recruits
- Gov't is slow to anticipate and react to workforce trends

For which occupations is it most difficult to hire qualified applicants?

(Those with the smallest applicant pool in general are hardest for gov't to attract because of competition from other industries)

- Geologists, geophysicists, petroleum engineers
- Marine engineers (running the ships)
- Computer scientists & programmers
- Program managers for ONR/NSF—seen as the death of a PhD's research career
- Multidisciplinary scientists who can translate science into applications--science “translators”
- Geodesists (people who measure the earth), hydrographers (people who measure the seafloor)
- Underwater acousticians (fisheries monitoring, military applications)

**For what occupations are there problems with oversupply, retention, work conditions, lack of skills/education, obsolescence, losing skilled and experience workers due to uncertain or intermittent funding....?**

- No occupations are in oversupply
- Obsolescence—still people in gov't who have “analog” electronics (obsolete) skill sets
- In the university and gov't environment, if funding fails, you must find a new job; hard to retain qualified team of people; no infrastructure in place to retain these people.
- Training is the first component of a budget to get cut.
- The benefit of gov't is that it's more stable than business, more predictable than private sector. Industry is seen as high pay while gov't is seen as low pay but more stability
- Retiring baby boomers are taking knowledge and passion that isn't being replaced; future workforce doesn't place the same value on working for the gov't (passion lacking). Retiring employees could be used in educational system to infuse potential workforce with passion and desire to work in gov't

- Most faculty have an academic-only perspective, they've never worked in industry or gov't because of benefits and freedom
- Operational nature of some gov't work affects ability to attract and find good applicants—mismatch between academic perspective and real world applications of science and engineering
- The connection between regulatory authorities and gov't agencies is a big problem (e.g. required agency missions vs. perception of academic freedom)
- Geoscience literacy is much lower than other sciences. Students tend to find it “accidentally.”
- “Rocks for jocks” attitude towards geosciences vs. other sciences

## PGO—piercing glimmers of the obvious

- PR (The appeal of gov't work isn't adequately marketed)
- Time at sea (work life balance)
- Incentives go beyond salary; we don't exploit that well
- Universities train people to be professors, that's not what gov't needs
- Effective linkages with academic; effective models using case studies (the way medical industries do it—i.e. lessons learned)
- Inspiring students (K-12) that ocean tech careers are as exciting, such as how NASA teaches them about space

- Engage a very diverse, young student population / Engage and invest in all segments of society
- Proactive recruiting and improve PR
- Look at benefits of gov't work and how you can make a bigger difference in gov't than in academia. ***Do you care enough to make a difference?***
- A lot of gov't missions are operational but academia doesn't prepare you for operational careers
- Promote gov't job security
- Constant reinforcement of recruitment efforts
- Operational oceanography is about proficiency not education

- Understanding and recognizing the implications of national demographic and cultural changes (e.g. less visitors to national parks affects children's introduction to the sciences—"Last Child in the Woods")
- Technology transfer always outruns education