

NASPE Nomination

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.
2. How long has this program or effort been operational?
3. Why was this program/effort created?
4. What are the costs of this program/effort?
5. How is the program/effort funded?
6. How do you measure the success of this program/effort?
7. How has the program/effort changed since its inception?

Program/Effort Title: **The Public Leadership Development Forum
The State of Utah**

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1. The State of Utah's Public Leadership Development Forum (PLDF), initiated by the Department of Human Resource Management, is an association of leadership/management development professionals from various executive branch agencies charged with, and interested in, helping their agency members become as effective leaders as possible. Specifically, the codified purposes of the PLDF are to:
 - Discuss leadership and management topics
 - Learn from one another about "best practices"
 - Inform and share resources
 - Train one another on how to overcome leadership development obstacles, particularly those faced in the public sector.
 - Explore opportunities to collaborate between agencies.
 - Share personal leadership development opportunities.

<https://sites.google.com/utah.gov/pldf/home?authuser=0>

The PLDF was established to facilitate a collaborative dialogue between sometimes competing entities. There is much ambiguity in the State of Utah's executive branch surrounding leadership/management development responsibilities. Statutorily much of this responsibility resides with the Department of Human Resource Management. However, other agencies are not precluded from (and in fact have) created their own leadership/management development programs specific to their agency demands, culture, personnel, funding, etc. Rather than viewing each leadership development department as a competitor for often scarce resources, the PLDF was created to

mitigate these inherent tensions and to help produce collaborative and collegial solutions that raise the overall level of effective leadership and management in the State of Utah's executive branch.

2. The PLDF was formed in November, 2019. Its meetings and website have run consistently since its inception, but the format has become primarily virtual since the Covid-19 pandemic.
3. Even though they do not work for human resources officially, many management and leadership development professionals work for the State of Utah's executive branch agencies and are responsible for this important (that is traditionally the purview of) HR function. The PLDF was created by the Department of Human Resource Management to bring these parties together to create a synergistic environment in which agencies can work together and strategically magnify their development efforts through collaboration, reduced redundancies, and shared resources.

Also, the practice of HR—and management/leadership development, specifically—in the public sector poses challenges unknown to those not working in government. The PLDF allows those who understand these public sector idiosyncrasies to associate, network with, and learn best practices from one another. Especially in a climate where financial support is often limited, the PLDF affords leadership development professionals, even those who are not HR professionals specifically, a chance to exchange ideas, collaborate, share materials, and improve their individual and agency's management/leadership development efforts.

4. Other than the participant's time, there is no cost to this program. That is one of its primary virtues.
5. The PLDF was created without funding or budgetary considerations. This became especially useful during the pandemic when budgetary constraints were magnified. In this sense, the PLDF acts as a "force multiplier" for state agencies' leadership development efforts. Even though there are limited financial resources, agencies gain the benefit of collaboration because they see what others are doing and are able to mimic efforts and share resources when possible.
6. The first "measure" of success worthy of mention is that the PLDF has held its monthly meeting consistently and without interruption (with a quorum of members) since its inception in 2019. In addition, there are other tangible measures directly resulting from the work of the PLDF. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, live facilitation abruptly ended. In response, the Department of Human Resource Management—in partnership with the PLDF—created the "Off the Shelf " series of virtual trainings. These are 1-hour webinars offered semi-monthly. The "Off the Shelf" series was immensely popular with over **8,000 registrants** total, and a **>96% satisfaction rating**.

Much of the credit for those impressive numbers is due to the PLDF, which impacted the design and delivery of the sessions in a few ways. First, the PLDF (because it consists of representatives from many agencies) acted as a “board of advisors” and helped determine which topics would be most beneficial to the State of Utah’s agencies to engage with. Second, PLDF members who are NOT in the Department of Human Resource Management acted as facilitators of the sessions. This means they developed and designed original content and delivered it under the auspices of a human resource product and platform. Finally, members of the PLDF acted as marketers for the “Off the Shelf” series.

Even though the series was officially a Department of Human Resource Management offering, because PLDF members were involved in the process, they felt a sense of ownership of the program and advocated for it to their agencies more enthusiastically and earnestly. In this sense, the successful “Off the Shelf” series was the product of the collaborative efforts of the PLDF and would not have been as successful without that important integration. Access to the “Off the Shelf” series is available here:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXUy2FQ_I-PrE64KX1I0uzw/videos

7. The two most valuable recent changes to the PLDF have been an increased focus on (1) the intersection between organizational and public sector leadership and equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belongingness and (2) an increased focus on leadership and mental health efforts, primarily as a reaction to the pandemic.

First, PLDF intentionally recruited and added the State of Utah’s Director of Multicultural Affairs as a member. This has improved immensely the depth and breadth of PLDF dialogue and its resources, especially as it relates to leadership efforts with groups and individuals who are often underrepresented in the State of Utah or otherwise marginalized. As a result of this addition and increased focus, recent DEI training efforts have been improved because of access to materials and ideas that would have otherwise not been utilized.

Second, like all institutions, the State of Utah has seen more demand for leadership efforts related to the mental health of organizational members. The PLDF—because of its inter-agency membership—has been invaluable in helping to identify this increased demand across all state agencies and in providing resources to leaders, better equipping them to assist their employees with the challenges and stresses of the modern workplace.