

result of the idiosyncrasies of work in the public sector, such as responding to a policymaker or resolving a citizen's complaint. Yet, if we analyze the amount of time devoted to these matters, we can then schedule time for them. As a result, these matters no longer become as disruptive to our daily work because we have scheduled time for them.

The next two ideas for improving organizational performance are related to laws, regulations, policies and procedures and the associated processes used to implement them. The general way of discovering these outmoded governing rules is asking the question, "Why are we doing such and such?" and receiving the answer, "We are doing this today because that is how we have always done it." Such attitudes and habits create large inefficiencies and poor program effectiveness.

As much of the work of public administration consists of implementing laws, regulations, policies and procedures, we therefore need to establish a regular process to ensure that these guiding rules remain relevant to the rapidly changing operational environment that characterizes our work. Indeed, more often than not, these documents are often adopted to address some urgent issue and are rarely, if ever, reviewed again. We can then find ourselves implementing a rule or process that has lost its relevancy or does not quite fit with contemporary realities. Therefore, it is good practice to review these documents to ensure their relevancy. When doing so, it is important to establish a regular review process, as a one-shot effort can be quite lengthy and is likely to be a major endeavor. Rather, each organizational unit should be charged with reviewing a single law, regulation, policy or procedure on a regular basis, say once every two weeks or per month. This method should be employed until all pertinent policies and rules are reviewed and revisions are made as needed. Once completed, the entire review process should begin anew. This procedure ensures that all guiding policies and procedures remain up-to-date.

Our work processes also change over time due to organizational changes, modifications to the original authorizations or to accommodate organizational constraints. Thus, an originally conceived workflow process typically, over time, morphs into a complicated process with more and more individuals involved. To address this matter, complete a workflow analysis of each process that is used within the organization on a regular basis. The workflow analysis will illustrate bottlenecks, redundancies and inefficiencies and allows these drags on resources to be eliminated.

Our time is very precious; therefore, we should ensure that the time we have is invested wisely. Moreover, we have a duty to our citizens, co-workers and ourselves to manage our limited resources in the best way possible. We can do so by actively reviewing what we are doing on a daily basis. The three suggestions provided here do not require any new authorities. They can be undertaken today, as all they require is a true commitment to managing for high organizational performance.

Author: John Duffy, PhD, CM, AICP, serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Alaska, Anchorage, College of Business and Public Policy; as a visiting professor at the National University of Mongolia, School of International Relations and Public Administration, and is President of the International Chapter of ASPA. He served in local government for over 30 years. He may be reached at jduffy@alaska.edu ; Twitter: iceclimb03.