

Evaluation to Advance Mission



Cultivating innovation in government

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U.S. Dept of Labor (DOL) Chief Evaluation Office

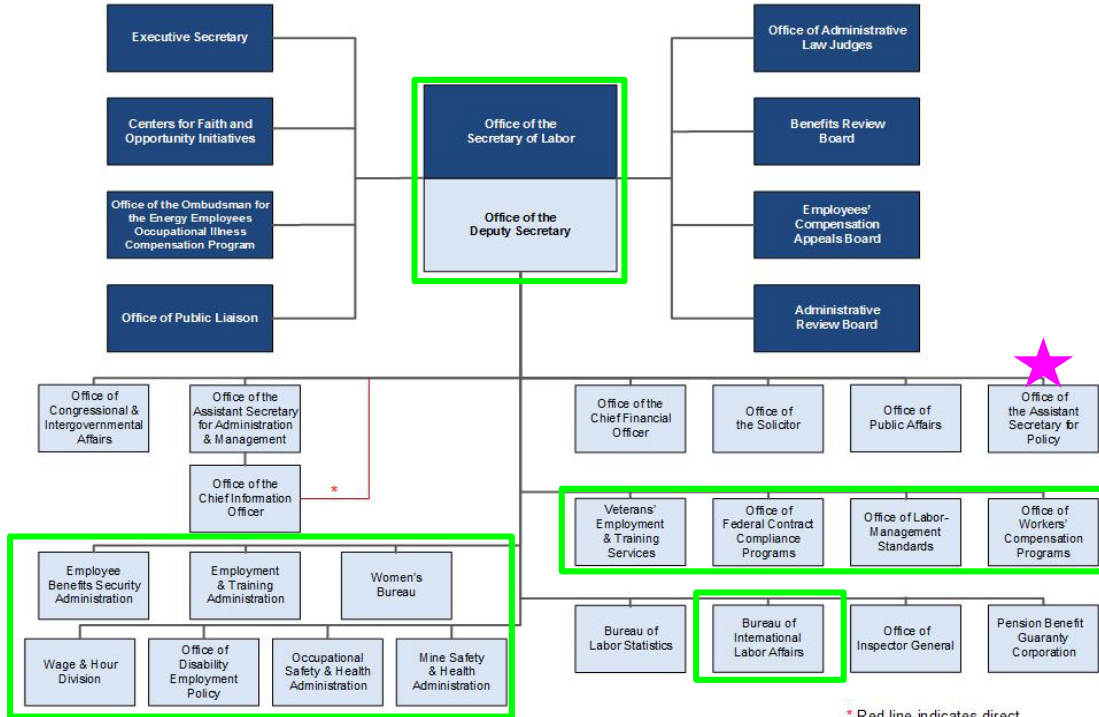
- Established in 2010 to coordinate, manage, and implement the DOL evaluation program, which is embodied by an annual DOL Evaluation Plan.
- Small independent, department-level office, led by Chief Evaluation Officer. Staff skill set includes social science methodology, project management, evaluation oversight, subject-matter expertise, statistics, and data analytic skills. Two operating units:
 - Evaluation
 - Plan and oversee research studies (3rd party contractors)
 - Build capacity
 - Disseminate/publicly post findings and work with stakeholders to incorporate evidence
 - Data Analytics
 - Directly conduct analysis of extant administrative data
 - Ongoing consultative model for internal consumption



Quick Primer on DOL

MISSION: To foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

Quick Primer on DOL



* Red line indicates direct access to the Secretary

Government \neq Innovation

Innovation in Government is hard, (though not impossible).

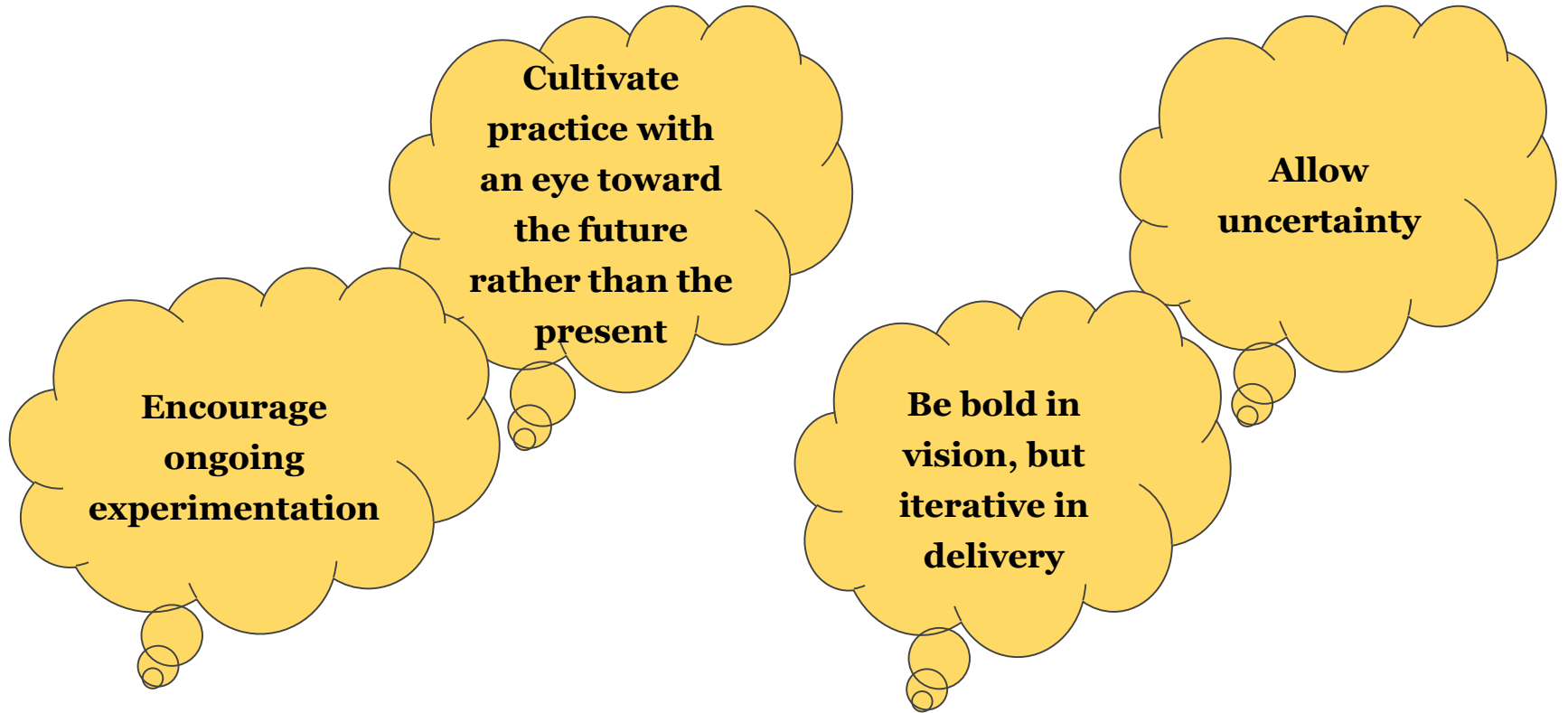
Government has little capacity to spark innovation.

Can government innovation overcome institutional silos, sluggish bureaucracy and a risk-averse culture?

Why Does The Government Struggle So Much With Innovation?



Secret sauce of innovation





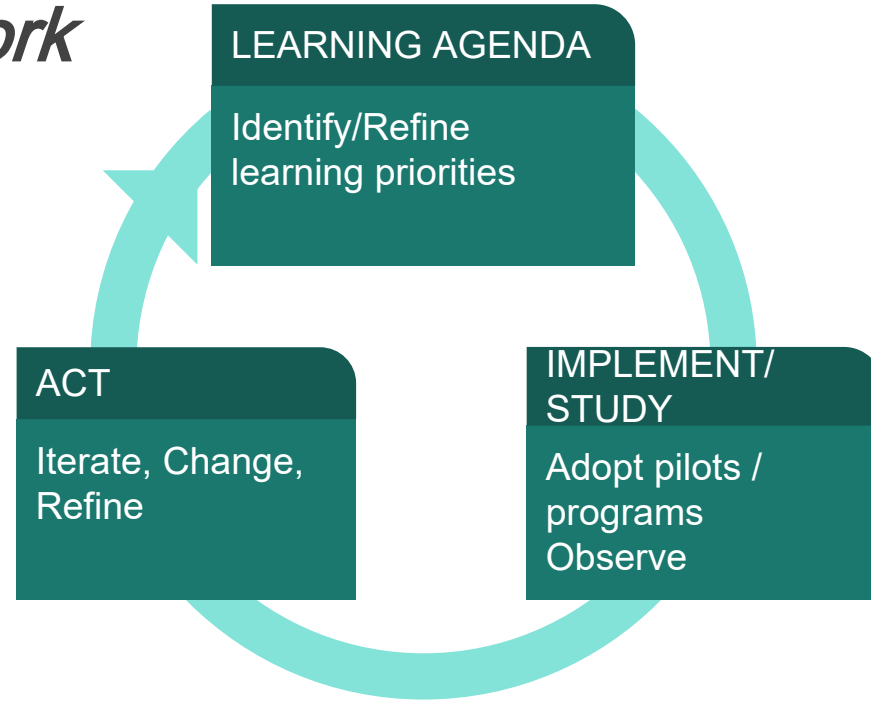
DOL Chief Evaluation Office

providing structure for innovation

- Collaborates with the 12 operational sub-agencies to identify learning goals, research questions, and 'what' they want to know.
- Translates ideas and priorities into actionable research projects.
- Funds projects directly through a base Congressional appropriation and a set-aside directed by the Secretary on an annual basis.
- Revisits progress, assesses status, updates evidence portfolio on routine basis.
- Develops capacity in the Department through expertise, tools, training, evidence generation.

The Learning Agenda *as innovation framework*

- Low threshold for inclusion.
- Encompass a range of evidence.
- Process builds capacity: linking learning to evidence to program and policy decision makers.
- Minimum learning cycle is annual.
- Focus on coalition of the willing.





DOL's Evaluation Policy

underpins innovation with principles

Independence. Insulate evaluation from both the appearance and the reality of bias.

Rigor. Use the most rigorous methods that are appropriate and feasible.

Transparency. Present all results, including favorable, unfavorable, and null findings, timely.

Relevance. Address priorities and be responsive to diverse programs, customers, and stakeholders.

Ethics. Safeguard the dignity, rights, safety, and privacy of participants.



Lessons for the future

- Build portfolios of evidence. Diversify in number and types of studies.
- Leverage different types of evidence. Balance time, money, & risk.
- Link administrative data. Build new analytics, partnerships.
- Continue innovating. Incentivize learning.
- Institutionalize process. Commit to improvement, not specific practices.



thanks!

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www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation