

# Welcome to the NextGen Gov Training Summit!

May 20, 2026

nextgen | govloop

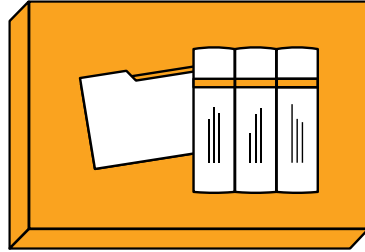


# Housekeeping



## Learn More

Check out the Resources tab for additional information and resources specific to this session.



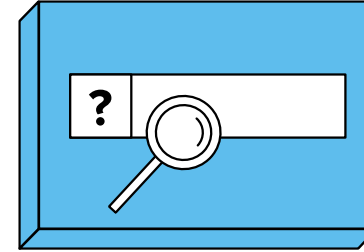
## Exhibit Hall

Head to the Exhibit Hall in the main environment to view all of our booths and download resources.



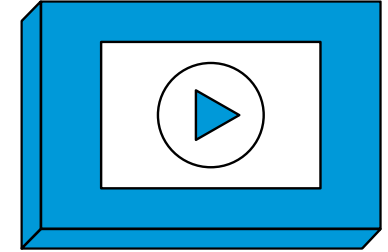
## Networking

Connect with your fellow govies in the Lobby chat in the main environment.



## Get Answers

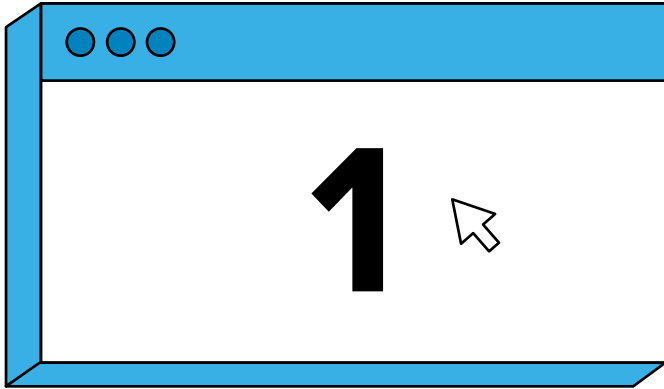
Submit your questions using the Q&A or Chat tab at the bottom of your console. The Q&A tab is also where you can submit technical questions.



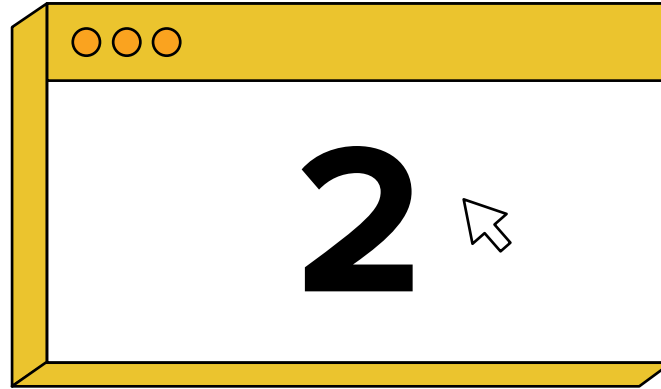
## On-Demand

We will email a link to the on-demand version tomorrow. Email us at [nextgen@govloop.com](mailto:nextgen@govloop.com) if you have any questions.

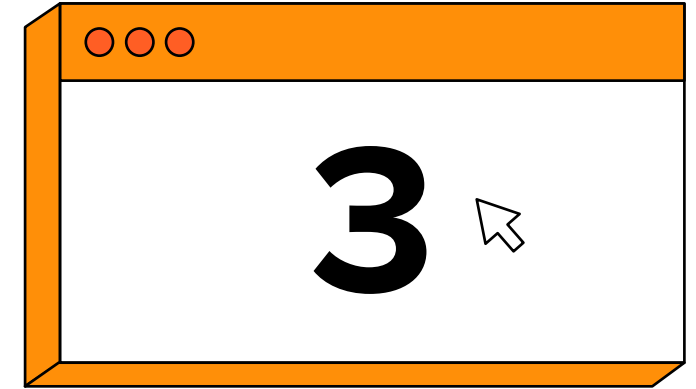
# CPE Info



**Attend** this live online training for the full duration



**Take the polls** throughout the live training. These will appear as a pop-out window on your screen. Click your response and hit submit.



**Complete the evaluation:** It can be found in the resource module on this training and in the Resource Center in the main environment.

# Thank You to Our 2026 NextGen Sponsors



**CODE** *for*  
**AMERICA**



# NextGen Public Service Awards

The awards recognize deserving individuals for their intelligence, exuberance, and dedication to improving government.

You can find full information on the nomination process via the Public Service Awards Nominations link in the resource console.

**Dates:**

Nominations are open until **July 31<sup>st</sup>**

Winners will be notified the week of **August 18<sup>th</sup>**

The background features a person in a striped shirt working at a laptop. A large, stylized lightbulb graphic is positioned in the lower right, with blue rays emanating from it. The overall theme is professional and creative.

# **Inspiring an Unmotivated Team**



## Laura Walker

Strategist and Service Design  
Analyst, Internal Consulting,  
Office of the Commissioner,  
Social Security Administration



## Michelle Felicetta

District Manager,  
Social Security Administration



# INSPIRING AN UNMOTIVATED TEAM

MAY 20, 2026



MICHELLE FELICETTA

FIELD OPS LEAD, INTERNAL CONSULTING  
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

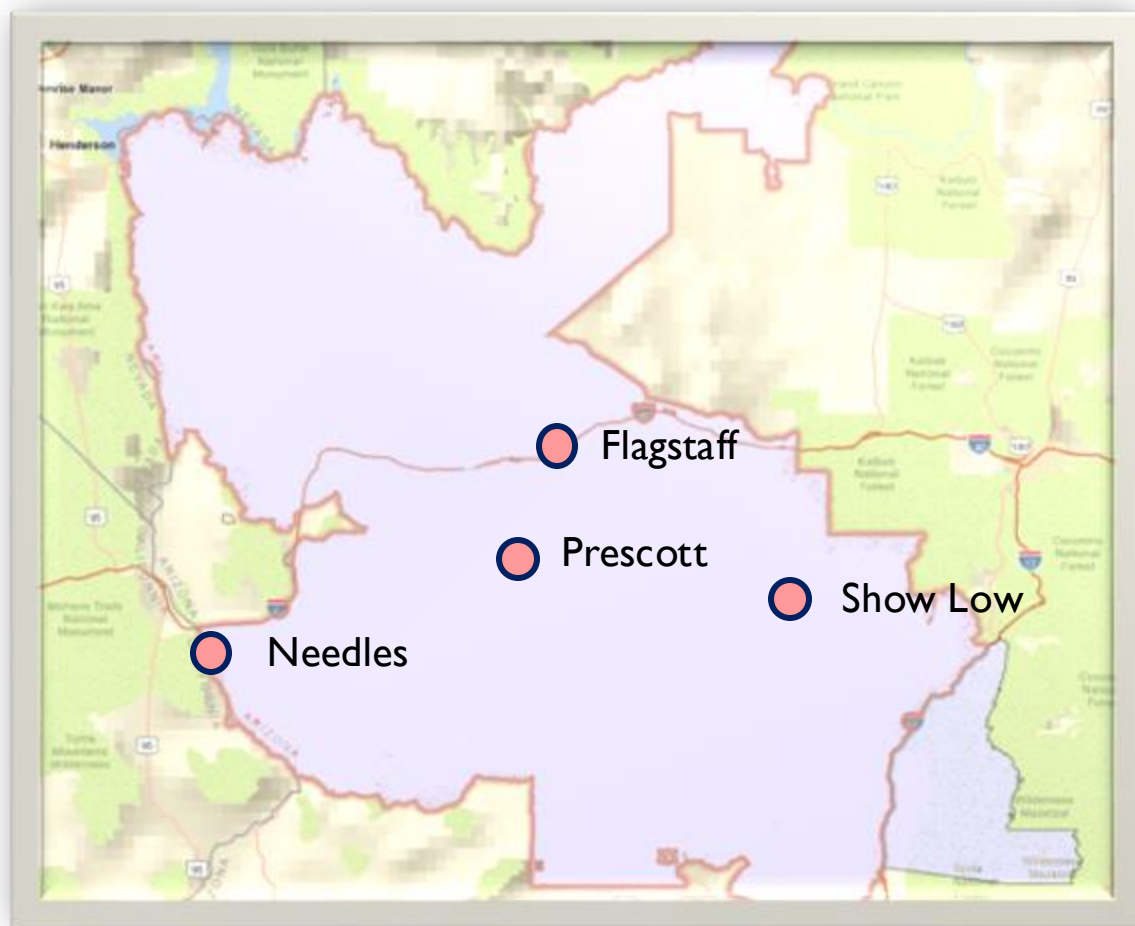


LAURA A. WALKER

PROGRAM ANALYST, INTERNAL CONSULTING  
SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION



# WELCOME TO THE PRESCOTT DISTRICT



## MISSION

To deliver financial support, provide superior customer service, and ensure the security of public information for our nation's people.

330+ million Americans  
75 million Beneficiaries  
1,250 Field Offices



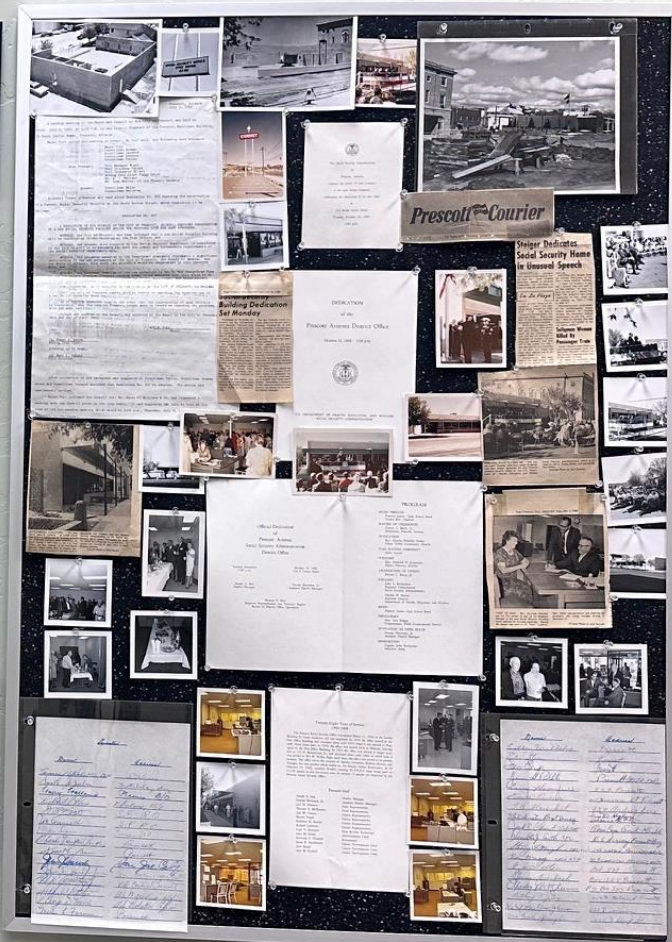
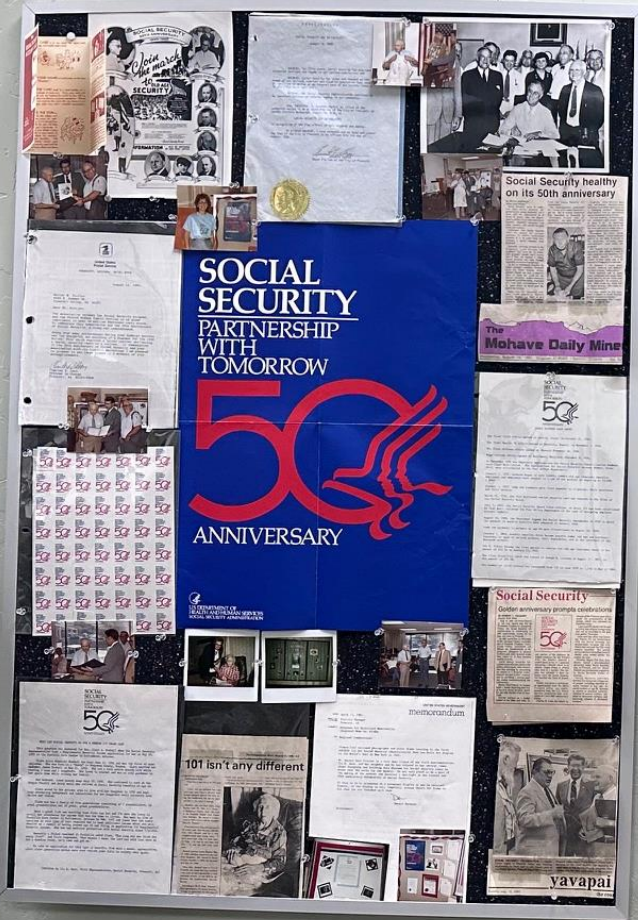




### Oath of Office

I will support and defend the  
Constitution of the United States  
against all enemies, foreign and domestic;  
that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;  
that I take this obligation freely, without any mental  
reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well  
and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on  
which I am about to enter.  
So help me God.













# THE FACE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Do your frontline employees know they are your most important people in your agency?

## Prescott, Arizona District Office



**Andrea Myers**  
Customer Service Rep



**Dana Williams**  
Customer Service Rep



**Joel Bevers**  
Claims Specialist



**John Orvis**  
Operations Supervisor



**Julie Slattery**  
Claims Technical Expert



**David Landin**



**Chris Merriman**  
Claims Technical Expert



**Christ Mitchell**



**Nicholas Hurt**  
Claims Specialist



**Susan Wade**  
Claims Specialist



**Aurora Postula**  
Claims Specialist



**James Mathew**  
Customer Service Rep



**Victor "Dee" Eason**  
Claims Specialist



**Ulisses Rayo**  
Customer Service Rep



**Chelsea Nipper**  
Operations Supervisor



**Sabrina Gray**  
Claims Technical Expert



**Belinda Rael**  
Administrative Assistant



**Michelle Felicetta**  
District Manager

## Colorado River Basin Field Office A15 Prescott, Arizona District



**Amber Donovan**  
Operations Supervisor



**Dayna Benjamin-Turner**  
Customer Service Rep



**Manuel Casillas**  
District Manager



**Marcella Schaefer**



**Stephanie L. Allen**  
Claims Specialist



**Tenille Barra**  
Claims Specialist



**Kathy Holmes**  
Claims Specialist

## Flagstaff Field Office Prescott, Arizona District



**Noah Stuth**  
Operations Supervisor



**James Barney**  
District Manager



**Elijah "Eli-ENZ" Neztosie**  
Claims Specialist



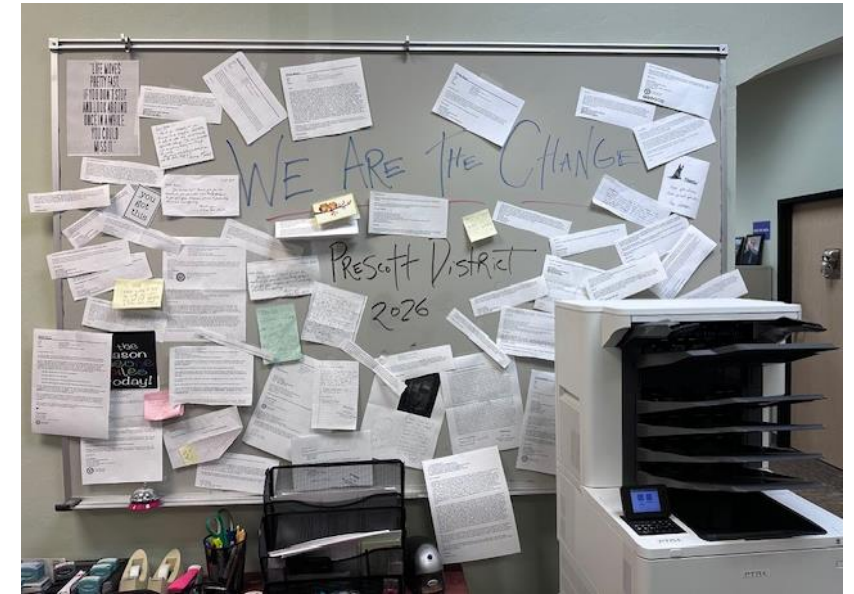
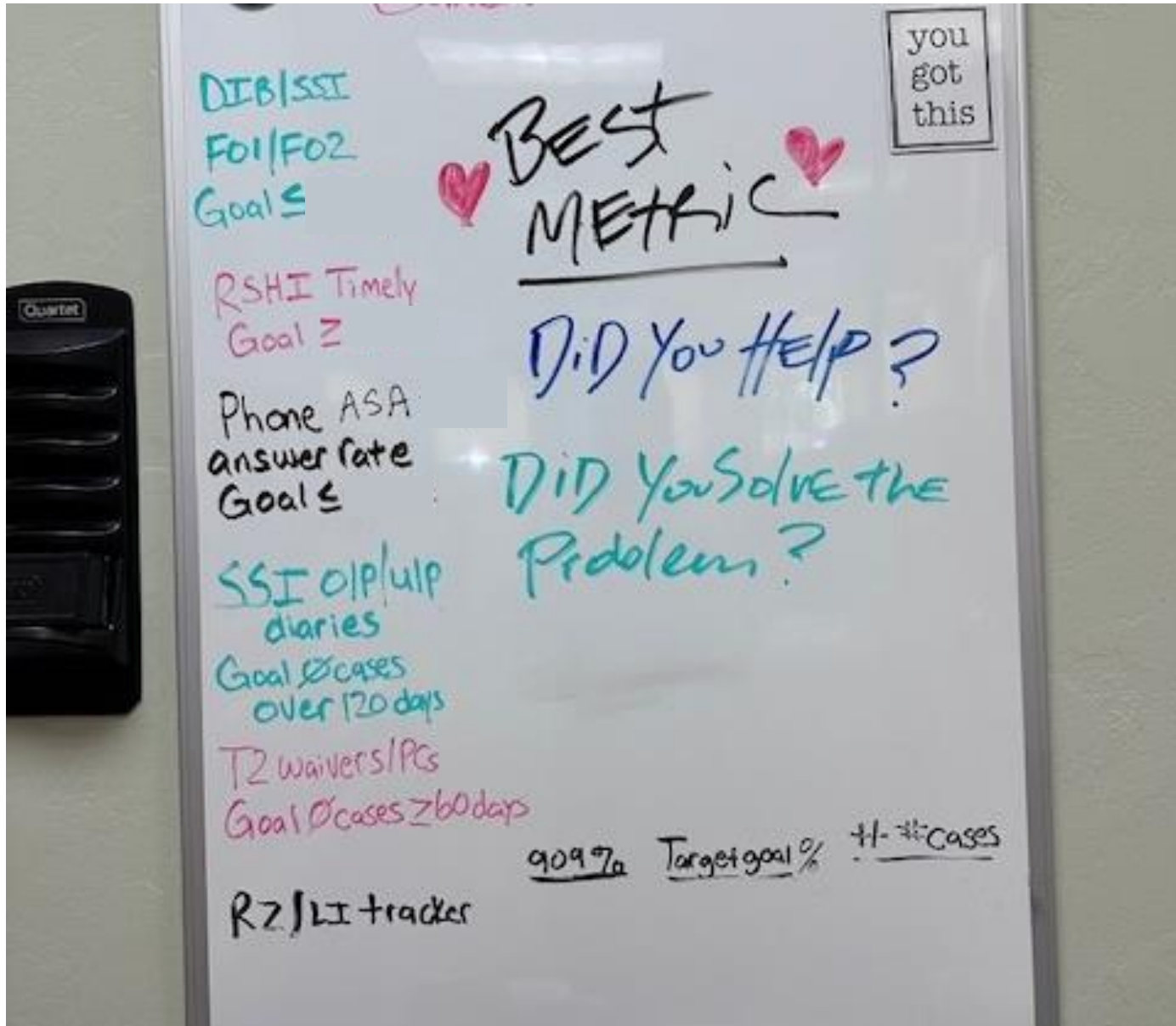
**Brittany Morgan**  
Claims Specialist



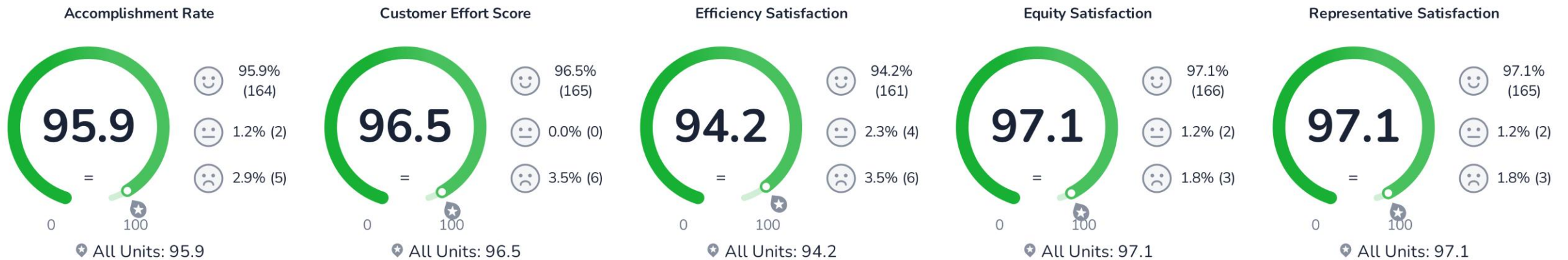
**Jeremy Kingbury**  
Claims Specialist



**Lisa Lopez-Orozco**



# VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER



“My SSA representative that I met with today demonstrated excellent customer care. He was knowledgeable, professional and courteous. I did not feel like I was just another number in our government system.”

“Your agent was extremely helpful. She changed my address for me. Then she took the time and effort to get my online acct up and running. I'm 88 yrs. old get confused easily. For the first time in my life I enjoyed my interaction with a government employee.”





# START TODAY

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**1** Connect people to outcomes, not just metrics

**4** Give employees ownership

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**2** Celebrate creative problem-solving

**5** Protect mission from administrative obstacles

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**3** Build visible employee feedback loops

**6** Quantify your success with data & share wins

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## CONTINUED LEARNING

1

**The CX Tipping Point Podcast –**  
[Episode 70 Featuring Michelle Felicetta and Laura Walker](#)

2

**2025 Service to the Citizen Awards -** [Laura Walker Speech](#)

3

**2025 Service to the Citizen Awards –**  
[About Prescott, AZ District with Video](#)

4

**2025 Service to the Citizen Awards –** [About Laura Walker with Video](#)

5

### **Brené Brown:**

- Book - *Dare to Lead*
- Book - *Stronger Ground*
- [Brené Brown Website](#)

6

### **Will Guidara:**

- Book - *Unreasonable Hospitality*
- **TED Talk** – [Secret Ingredients of Great Hospitality](#)

7

### **Matt Wood:**

- Book - *Both, And: Leading through complex change*

8

### **John Bernard:**

- Book - *Government That Works*
- **Master Class:** [The Results-Driven Manager](#)

9

### **Simon Sinek:**

- Book - *Leaders Eat Last*
- **TED Talks** - [Simon Sinek | Speaker | TED](#)
- [Simon Sinek Website](#) – The Optimism Company



# **Communicating Confidently During Disruption**





## **Dr. Bill Brantley**

President and Chief Learning Officer,  
Brantley Advanced Social  
Sciences Applications

# Communicating Confidently During Disruption

*The Pressure Test*

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Dr. William Brantley | Social Security Administration, General Services Administration,  
Office of Personnel Management, Department of Agriculture, U.S. Patent and  
Trademark Office, and the Office of the Naval Inspector General

*Think about the last disruption your organization faced.*

**Did your leaders  
communicate —**

**or did they  
disappear?**

---

Leaders who communicate during disruption retain 3× more organizational trust than those who go silent — even when they don't have all the answers.

*Today: three pressure tests. Real disruptions. Real decisions. No lecturing.*

**POLICY SHIFT**

Your agency just received a directive reversing a program your team has run for 3 years. Staff are confused. A stakeholder email is sitting in your inbox. You have 24 hours before it goes public.

*What do you say — and to whom, first?*

**Show of hands (in chat):**

**Staff first**

**Brief leadership first**

**Draft the external message first**

## SCENARIO 1 · THE REVEAL

### COMMON MISTAKE

Draft the press release first. Staff learn about the change from social media. Trust erodes from the inside out before the public even hears a word.

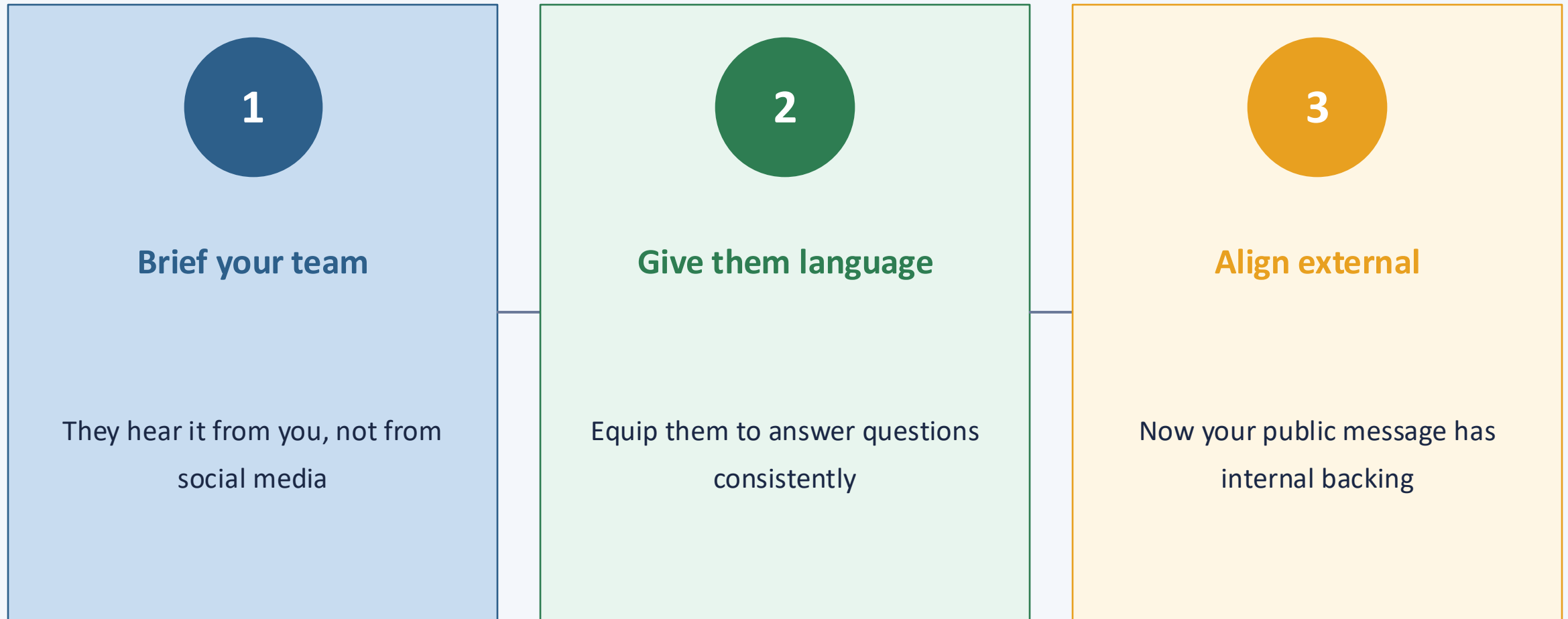
### BETTER PATH

Sequence matters: (1) Brief your direct team, (2) Give them language they can use, (3) Then align external messaging. Internal clarity before external credibility.

### CCL© PRINCIPLE

Communication-Centered Leadership©: Your people are never the last to know. Internal transparency is not a courtesy.  
**It is the foundation of organizational trust.**

# The internal-first sequence



*Key insight: the sequence is the strategy. Who hears what, in what order, determines whether you build trust or destroy it.*

**LEADERSHIP CHANGE**

Your director resigned abruptly this morning. No successor named. A town hall is scheduled for 2 PM. You're the most senior person in the room.

*The first question: 'What's going to happen to us?' — Write your first sentence in the chat.*

**WRITE YOUR FIRST SENTENCE NOW**

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## SCENARIO 2 · THE FAILURE MODES

### Over-promise

*"Don't worry, everything will be fine."*

Staff know the situation isn't fine. You lose credibility in the first 30 seconds — before you've said anything else. The reassurance lands as dismissal.

*Result: distrust + disengagement*

### Stonewall

*"I can't speak to that right now."*

Creates a vacuum. Rumor fills it within hours. Staff invent the narrative you refused to give them — and their version is always worse than the truth.

*Result: anxiety + rumor + attrition*

# The structure that works

## What I know

Name the confirmed facts, however few. Grounding the conversation in what is certain signals control and reduces anxiety.

## What I don't know

Naming the unknowns explicitly is not weakness — it's honesty. It prevents staff from assuming the worst about what you're hiding.

## What I'm doing

Commit to a specific next action and a specific time: 'By Friday at 3 PM, I will share what I know about the transition plan.'

*Transparency is closing the loop. Even when the loop closes with 'I'll have more by Friday.'*

**PUBLIC CRISIS**

A media outlet has published a story — partially inaccurate — claiming your agency mishandled public funds. Your phone is ringing. Your team is panicking. A journalist is waiting for comment.

*What is your communication priority in the next 60 minutes? Answer in the chat.*

**QUICK POLL:****Respond to the journalist first****Brief leadership first****Verify facts before anything**

## SCENARIO 3 · THE INSTINCT TRAP

### Fast + Wrong

You responded immediately — with inaccurate information. The retraction costs more trust than silence would have.

SPEED

### Fast + Right

The target. Verify quickly, issue a holding statement, correct the record factually. This is the discipline.

### Slow + Wrong

The worst outcome. You waited, then got it wrong anyway. No narrative control, no credibility.

### Slow + Right

Better than wrong, but the story has hardened without you. 24-hour silence lets others define the narrative.

ACCURACY →

# The Holding Statement

## FILL-IN TEMPLATE

*"We are aware of the [report / situation] and are reviewing it carefully.*

*We will respond fully by [specific time today].*

*[Optional: We are committed to accuracy, and our stakeholders deserve a complete picture.]"*

### Then:

- 1 Verify core facts (15 min)
- 2 Align on one voice — who speaks
- 3 Issue the holding statement
- 4 Correct the record factually

*Lead with accuracy, not speed. A fast wrong answer costs more trust than a brief delay.*

## The pattern across all three scenarios

SCENARIO 1 · POLICY SHIFT

### Sequence

Internal first.

External second.

Order builds trust.

SCENARIO 2 · LEADERSHIP VACUUM

### Structure

What you know.

What you don't.

What you'll do.

SCENARIO 3 · PUBLIC CRISIS

### Speed + Accuracy

Fast enough.

And right enough.

Not either/or.

*The leaders who communicated confidently weren't the ones with all the answers.  
They were the ones who controlled the sequence, the structure, and the loop.*

# Three things you can use tomorrow

## 01 Sequence is strategy.

When disruption hits, identify your audience layers and communicate inward-to-outward. Staff, then stakeholders, then public. Never the reverse.

## 02 Structure replaces panic.

Three sentences: what I know, what I don't know, and what I'm doing about it. That structure works in a town hall, an email, or a hallway conversation.

## 03 The holding statement is a tool, not a dodge.

Buying time with accuracy is professional discipline. A specific time commitment — 'by 3 PM Friday' — turns a holding statement into a trust signal.

**Your next disruption is coming.**

*You don't get to choose when.*

---

But you do get to decide whether you've built the  
communication discipline to handle it  
before it arrives.

---

**That work starts now.**

# Dr. William Brantley

Fractional Chief Learning Officer

## Connect:

LinkedIn: Dr. William Brantley

[bill@billbrantley.com](mailto:bill@billbrantley.com)

*"Confident communication isn't built in the calm. It's built in the fire."*

# Thank You to Our 2026 NextGen Sponsors



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# Up Next

## **Breakout Session Round 2 From 1:45pm – 2:45pm ET**

*Plan to attend one of the following sessions:*

**First-Time Manager Toolkit**

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**Silencing Your Inner Critic**

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**Project Management Essentials**

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**Calm to Crisis: Situational Awareness in Government Teams**