

Restoring Trust in Government

Everything Starts with Users



Speaking Today



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Before we begin...

Our intention for this session isn't to speak *at* you, but with you.

Please submit questions throughout the session!

Get out your phone (if you haven't already!)

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Where we're coming from



Code for Canada is a national nonprofit dedicated to improving life in Canada using tech and design.

We partner with governments of all sizes to build digital solutions that benefit the public good.

[Can Building the Right Partnerships Help Restore Trust in the Public Sector?](#)



The Institute of Local Government Studies, University of Birmingham is the UK's leading academic centre for research and teaching on local governance, public management and administration.

[How to rebuild trust in government: The wellbeing approach](#)

What's the problem?



Public trust in government
is on the decline...

Without the public trust,
our governments **fail**.

Why does this matter?



What does this look like in Canada?

Anger, delusion and distrust: Is Canada's democracy in decline?

Canadians less trusting of governments as COVID wears on

Trust declines further in British Columbia and Yukon and is most negative in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Speaking truth to power discouraged in public service

RCMP internal polling shows declining trust, confidence in national police force

Canadian MPs across the spectrum see threats to democracy: 'There's no common middle ground'

What does this look like in the UK?

Levels of trust are associated with satisfaction with service

Trust in public services is higher than “government”

- 80% people trust the National Health Service (NHS)
- 42% Social care services

75% trust ‘most people’

35% trust the national government

42% trust local government

55% trust the civil service (national)

What's contributing to
this?



People depend on government
services...

When government tolerates poor
service delivery, people stop
tolerating government.

What's preventing change?

1. Administrative processes and culture of risk aversion
2. Insufficient data governance and sharing
3. Not enough digital talent in-house
4. Reliance on external, for-profit vendors

1. Administrative processes and culture of risk aversion

- Show you have “listened and delivered” - that you can be *relied* upon
- Decisions often made ‘behind closed doors’ - hiding behind process - reducing *openness*
- Slow, risk averse (often for good reason) decision-making, which reduces *responsiveness*

...combined with

2. Insufficient data governance and sharing

- User-friendly, accessible services aren't possible when data sits in silos (ministries/depts/divisions) that lack sharing agreements
- Lack of higher-level governance aligning silos on shared goals and language
- ...although we know it's possible based on some government pandemic-response initiatives

*...then to make
matters worse*

3. Not enough digital talent in-house

- An employee's market
- Slow recruitment cycles
- Compensation typically not competitive
- Retention challenges:
 - ◆ *Outdated or inaccurate titles and classifications*
 - ◆ *Unattractive career paths*
 - ◆ *Inhospitable culture*

...which then leads to

4. Reliance on external, for-profit vendors

Ottawa turns to consulting firm McKinsey to fix Phoenix pay system, doubling spending on outsourcing.

Deloitte... will be eligible for \$1.9 million in payroll rebates from the provincial government.

Who's really got Ottawa's ear? Paid consultants are everywhere in Ottawa. This so-called 'shadow public service' offers expert analysis at a pretty penny—and never has to worry about pesky accountability.

WSIB, provincial government pay Deloitte \$22.4M to run paid sick leave program.

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board said it decided to use Deloitte because it didn't have enough in-house staff to build the system in time.

Consulting firms are the 'shadow public service' managing our COVID-19 response.

What can we do?



It's not enough to deliver services...

Governments need to deliver
thoughtful human-centred
experiences.

Grow government's digital capacity

- Executive-level training on digital and data governance
- Build a workplace that attracts and retains digital talent
- Invest in upskilling current public servants
- Resist reliance on for-profit external vendors

A more well-being orientated approach

- Start with the person rather than the process
- Do “with” rather than “for” and “to” people
- Ongoing conversation rather than consultation
- Monitoring and transparency - demonstrate how things are going, using indicators that matter to people (e.g.: life satisfaction)

Your turn!
Let's discuss.

