



TESTIMONY

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Abstract

Policy and program success requires four evidence-related factors: (1) effective goal setting, (2) accurate, yet speedy, issue analysis, (3) an impartial solution selection process, and (4) follow-through and reinforcement. However, having a robust and interconnected infrastructure and “Big Data” isn’t the same as having “Big Evidence”.

With just two weeks of observation of the new Administration, one theme seems to be emerging: A desire – maybe an insistence – for rapid actions that make a big impact.

So, while there are many long term considerations that the Commission can address, delivering two or three quick, ground level, wins will serve as a notable indicator of the bipartisan promise of the evidence-based law on which this Commission was founded.

Dr. Hill Biography



Dr. Jim Hill is the founder and CEO of Proofpoint Systems, a provider of cloud applications that advance evidence-based organizational performance. Since 2003, he has led Proofpoint in digitizing the processes associated with gap and root cause analysis; planning, execution, and evaluation; and fair talent management to help clients and consultants produce better and more cost effective results.

Prior to founding Proofpoint, Jim was a career officer in the United States Marine Corps and an executive with Sun Microsystems. He is also a past president of the International Society for Performance Improvement.

Jim’s extensive writings consist of numerous articles and book chapters including the *Handbook of Human Performance Technology* (3d Ed., 2006) and *Performance Interventions* (1999). His book, *Giving Away Power*, was published in 2013.

Jim has been featured in *Training, Sales and Marketing Management*, *Japanese Management Journal*, and *BPTrends* for his visionary approach to organizational performance. Along with his clients and the organizations he has led, he is a 3-time finalist for the American Business Award (Best New Software Product), the recipient of the CyberFEDS Awesome New Technology Award, and a 6-time recipient of the ISPI Award of Excellence. He is the 2016 recipient of ISPI’s Distinguished Service Award.

Jim is a graduate of The Ohio State University and received his doctorate (human and organizational improvement) from the University of Southern California.

He and his wife, Aiko, have four children and reside in Los Altos, California where they are active in their community.

Introduction and Overview

Chair Abraham, Chair Haskins, and Commissioners joining us virtually, I'm Jim Hill and I'm delighted to be here with you this morning.

Having reviewed early drafts of the legislation, I appreciate the opportunity to contribute.

As the CEO of Proofpoint.net, I represent a cloud technology that helps organizations solve their biggest issues faster and more cost effectively than ever before. That takes evidence.

What Leaders Want

Our experience is that leaders just want clear answers to five key questions:

1. Do our program priorities align with achievable objectives?
2. How do we responsibly audit, govern, and allocate resources?
3. Who are we contracted with and are they performing?
4. How well are we integrated?
5. How do we assess ongoing programs and new requirements?

I founded Proofpoint.net to help answer these questions. Timely, accurate, and unbiased information leads to better and faster decisions, improved performance, and accelerated organizational evolution.

Government Needs Practical Evidence Now

The question facing the Commission is simple, "How do we make government smarter with all the data floating around?"

However, multiple factors call for a major change in the way we think about work-related evidence. Beyond policy and technology considerations, there is a *social* aspect that must be considered. As examples:

- It's estimated that world data will grow 50x over the next 10 years¹
- There is virtually no data related to day-to-day transactional work²
- Organizational improvement programs have about a 70% failure rate³ and probably higher⁴
- With the growth of virtual work and expansion of BYOD, people want easier access to their work tools and data
- And, Big Data is not Big Evidence.

This issue is so wide-ranging, that it may be prudent to tackle it *in short term, low cost chunks* that align to desired decision cycles and what will likely be a high demand, resource constrained fiscal environment.

I'd like to highlight some examples and offer recommendations for quick wins that advance your goals.

¹ J.P. Morgan Chase & Co. (2016). Unpublished venture capital briefing. San Francisco. January.

² Ibid.

³ Sources include Hammer & Champy, 1993; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Kotter, 2008. See additional reference information at the end of this paper.

⁴ Druckman, Singer & Van Cott, 1997; Smith, 2002; Hill, 2004.

Reference Case #1: Practical Program Monitoring

In 2013 a federal executive approached us with a problem: His staff was manually producing 80 daily and weekly reports.⁵

Little of the information they needed was in enterprise systems. Instead, it was in static documents and the heads of people.

So, rather than focus on planning and management, they were exchanging scores of emails and phone calls each day.

You can appreciate the inefficiency. You'll also sense that the millions of data points they were using and creating would never be available to others.

Nearly every federal program works this way. And, popular management applications don't help. They are designed for individual projects or, maybe, small groups. As a result, there is no effective way to bring thousands of projects or programs together.

This leads to my first recommendation to pilot a common enterprise project management tool in a willing department, agency, or program.

Doing so will demonstrate the power of capturing day-to-day transactional data that is now lost.

This recommendation is relevant to the Commission's charter in that it provides a use case for creating practices for monitoring programs and assessing their outcomes.

Reference Case #2: Simplifying Data Collection & Access

My second example begins with a recent report that more than 240 hospitals have been penalized three years in a row for infection-related issues. With an average penalty of \$500K,⁶ that is more than one-third of a billion dollars wasted.

In a related event, I recently visited a notable acute care facility where I was shown two walls covered in 8 ½ x 11 sheets of paper.⁷ Each sheet contained a graph that staff members were assigned to manually update each day – using a marker.

At the end of each month, the graphs were filed away.

While hospitals spend many millions on electronic health records, patient informatics, and bill collection technologies, healthcare administration is nearly all done via paper, spreadsheets, and white boards – and it's a massive vulnerability to the Nation's health.

So, my second recommendation to pilot a common quality management tool with a willing healthcare system.

This will lead to better patient outcomes and reduced readmissions. It will also cut administrative time, increase staff morale, and reduce turnover.

This recommendation aligns to your charter by eliminating barriers to accessing data that organizations already collect. In this case, the collection effort is so manual that the data will never get used by the right people or at the right scale.

⁵ Proofpoint.net use case. Client not disclosed.

⁶ Punke, 2016.

⁷ Proofpoint.net use case. Client not disclosed.

A Final Thought & Recommendation

My final comment is that data access and exchange are not technically hard. They are simply electronic handshakes.

But the barriers are enormous. Beyond longstanding policies, on the vendor side the core philosophy of your major providers is to intentionally not integrate, or to do so at great expense.

However, the “social” side of evidence exchange presents an opportunity. Make it personal.

So, I recommend the establishment of a federal “Goal Repository,” starting with a pilot program that rewards participation.

The Goal Repository would use interpersonal sharing to drive interagency sharing. It would cultivate thinking along the lines of, “This is what I’m trying to do (goals). I wonder if anyone else is working on a similar issue.” Leaders would connect and share information of mutual value based on mutual interests.

Conclusion

Finally, in your report to the President and Congress, I urge the Commission to recommend an approach characterized by “low cost immediacy.”

Addressing the issue via multiple, successful, pilots will produce frameworks that others can easily adopt. That will result in speed, cost efficiency, and improved productivity at every level of government.

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