



UNIMAGINABLY ACHIEVABLE

CASE STUDY

FEDERAL AGENCY EXPANDS WORKFORCE BY 175% WHILE IMPROVING TALENT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES

United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT) is a global security program that was created to meet Congressional entry and exit system mandates in immigration and border management. As a program of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), US VISIT supports the DHS's mission to "lead the unified national effort to secure the country and preserve our freedoms." Its primary role is to collect, maintain, and share information through biometric identification and analysis services for homeland security decision makers throughout the federal government, as well as for state and local law enforcement agencies.

THE CHALLENGE

To meet the challenging demand of securing U.S. ports of entry (POE), while maintaining borders that facilitate trade and travel of legal immigrants and visitors, the US-VISIT Program needed to significantly grow its workforce by 175% in two years. In addition to meeting this recruiting and training challenge, US-VISIT's Human Capital and Training Branch (HCT) was also directed to design and execute a full-blown transformation of the branch from a reactive administrative service provider to a more proactive and strategic human capital partner. HCT needed to respond quickly to this new directive at a time when the department itself was in the midst of restructuring and on-boarding new team members.

All of this was occurring in an environment where US-VISIT was already challenged to fulfill day-to-day operational requirements including delivering basic services, fulfilling requests for workforce metrics, and responding to frequent, ad hoc "data calls".

THE CLIENT

A global security program, named United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US-VISIT), that was created to meet Congressional entry and exit mandates in immigration and border management.

THE CHALLENGE

In an effort to meet the increased demand of securing U.S. borders, US-VISIT needed to grow its workforce by 175% in less than two years.

THE SOLUTION

- Immediate fulfillment of recruiting, staffing, and on-boarding needs necessary to meet the talent deficit
- A long-term workforce management strategy that would transform the agency's talent management department into a strategic business partner

THE VALUE

North Highland helped US-VISIT ramp up its workforce needs while building a human capital organization that is now better equipped to meet the agency's overall mission.

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When you engage North Highland consulting, you can rest assured that we will deliver an innovative solution to the project. We are driven in our pursuit of unique, creative answers, tailor-made to your specific needs. However, we are also diligent in making sure that any implementation is based in reality. What we propose must always be achievable and work in concert within your enterprise as a whole.

“My organization would not be as productive as we are today without the professional assistance that North Highland provides.”

PENELOPE SMITH
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THE SOLUTION

US-VISIT engaged North Highland consulting to help them **develop a multi-phased program** that would 1) address the immediate tactical needs to meet their everyday demands more efficiently, while 2) strategically designing and supporting their long-term transformation into a full-service human capital organization. This effort included the following:

Phase 1—The immediate focus for HCT was the need to recruit and hire for the positions required to meet the increased workforce demand. With North Highland’s **deep workforce management expertise**, HCT was able to meet this challenge including revising position descriptions, refining and managing the recruitment process, enhancing the new employee on-boarding process, and developing hiring/staffing reports for the Program Director. Through a methodical and employee-centric approach, the team refined over 115 position descriptions, redesigned the on-boarding process, and conducted all recruiting, staffing, and on-boarding to meet the 175% workforce growth target.

Phase 2—As the urgent recruiting activities became more manageable, North Highland began to assist US-VISIT in becoming a more strategic and streamlined human capital organization, with a refined talent management structure, budget, and communications strategy. The program team began this effort by creating a branch strategy and performing a detailed workload analysis on the existing organization, a process that highlighted incongruence between current operations and strategic ambitions. The results of these efforts shaped the future state HCT organization and all of its team member recruitment, selection, and assignment decisions. Lastly, North Highland provided expert counsel to help US-VISIT through the design and formulation of a more long-term workforce strategy that included all aspects of key talent management programs, including strategic resource planning, competency modeling, new employee integration, career development, and leader development and coaching.

THE VALUE

As a result of this effort, US-VISIT’s HCT branch is now better equipped to achieve the organization’s mission with a higher performing workforce. At a tactical level, this means that human capital policies and programs, infrastructure, and resources are now in place. Leadership is more willing and better able to sponsor and support human capital objectives, and HCT now possesses a more flexible talent management foundation that will result in **improved employee recruitment and retention**.

In addition, HCT is now a robust team whose services are 1) better aligned with the program’s mission; 2) more efficient and effective; and 3) delivered with higher quality and improved customer service. US-VISIT is now ready and able to welcome the new generation of employees who are supporting our nation’s most critical safety programs.