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## **Box 18, Folder 8: Minutes-meetings with Vice President Al Gore, 1997-1999. 1997-1999**

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*Pat Shay's notes from  
yesterday's meeting*

## NOTES ON AUGUST 4, 1997, MEETING OF VICE PRESIDENT GORE'S REINVENTION MEETING AT OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING

Participants in the meeting were involved in a review of the reinvention effort.

The Vice President stated that there was a "cancer on self government." He cited a poll that 77% of the people in 1960 believed the government would do right. In approximately 1989, that figure had descended to 17%. In the recent year, it had ascended to 21 to 23%. There is a level of cynicism that is creeping into the national sense. This cynicism is reflected in an attitude that no one trusts government to address or solve problems. There is a feeling that anytime the government gets involved there will be an unintended consequence that will cost the taxpayers money and not result in the end that it was meant to achieve. Vice President Gore indicated that this Administration was dedicated to proving integrity and viability of self-government. He felt that it was ironic, as many countries around the world look to the United States as a model, the very system that they were looking at was withering at home. It's reflected in the low-voter turnout.

This Administration is dedicated to making the system work and to show people that in the second term, there is a basis for self-government.

The Vice President indicated that they are undergoing a management revolution. All you need to do is look at your respective organizations. You will find people with their "Ph.D. in BLM" or their "Ph.D. in the FAA". Look for their help. The attitude towards government needs to change much like the attitude within Japan changed. You'll recall that in the early 1950's if something was "made in Japan" it was considered to be cheap and not of good quality. However, through persistent work, first through the radios, watches, and progressing through other electronics and cars, the "Made in Japan" liable became a sign of quality.

The Vice President told the story of "Good for Government" work. In researching the origin of that phrase, he found that during World War II that meant that the work was "top notch, better than what you would find in the market place. He noted that in his lifetime, since 1948, the phrase had taken on a much different meaning.

The people who were at the meeting came from the agencies with the most contact with the public.

The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways in which the respective organizations at the meeting could relate to the public. The Vice President cited the experience of NASA and the \_\_\_\_\_ Mars. The original project had crashed causing the loss of millions of dollars. The NASA officials asked the workers at NASA to do the same mission at one-



tenth the cost. They were successful and, indeed, they bought one of the modem parts for Rover at Radio Shack.

The Vice President indicated that the new budget will create problems, but also opportunities. The Vice President cited that there were over 300 agencies in government but that 32 of the agencies had 90% of the contact with the public. It is these 32 that help shape the perceptions the public has. There are three items that the Vice President wanted to emphasize they were: (1) partnership; (2) technology use in an open government; and (3) customer service. He cited a book that he handed out entitled Accessing America. The heat waves of the new technology will stimulate how the new workplace is organized.

The Vice President talked about the invention of the electric motor. At the beginning of its invention it didn't work well because it was not designed to accommodate steam operations. There are to be a redesign before an efficiency of the electric engine could be met.

Everyone should recognize that employees are the sources of good ideas. We need to change the sense of cynicism among employee workforce so that they feel empowered to bring forth their ideas.

The Vice President cited how each encounter with a customer is an opportunity and how if you focus on the customer it will make a difference. He gave the example of looking through a telescope from the wrong end.

The Vice President then cited different partnerships ranging from the Health and Human Services to the FDA, from Customs to OSHA. In the instance of OSHA, he cited how the Republican Congress had actually increased their budget because of its reinvention. He cited FEMA in terms of working with the customer rather than taken the "gotcha" approach. Peter Robertson from EPA gave an example of using its employee workforce and leveraging private investment.

The Vice President wanted a personal pledge which included the following elements:

- (1) Make your goal as Director to achieve a process of accessibility and good relationships with the customers you service.
- (2) Have strong interface with the senior managers and have them agree to buyoff on the goals that we working on.



- (3) Get to the frontlie employees and seek out their ideas. (He likened this to talking with a teenage child. You need to take the time to get their impression.)
- (4) Make reinvention a part of everything you do in the BLM and go from the small to the large. (He cited the Social Security experience of having all the checks mailed out on the same day.)
- (5) Talk to different people in different departments, and think about your role as a member of the team.
- (6) Use information technology. (The Vice President mentioned the Government Information Technologies Services (GITS).

The Vice President stated that Frank Raines, the Director, OMB, was deeply committed to the these and would be supporting them in budgets.

Finally, the Vice President cited the need to refine goals. Put the goals on the website and the Vice President stated that the people at the meeting would be reconvened in six months for a progress report. There will be a listing of ideas and their sources.



HIA Meeting w/Vice President Gore  
December 14, 1998  
OEOB

- Council of Agency Heads help each other solve problems
- Restore America's confidence in self-government.
- Our whole civilization rides on what we do.
  - HG Wells – "We are in a race between education and class."
  - Restore faith – make it work and make it work really well.
  - Use new tools, new thinking, etc.
  - Water skiing metaphors – keep on hanging on.
  - Restoring confidence is really important – we must really have our act together.
  - Focus on customers – via service goals.
  - 360,00 people less – government on the web.
  - Unprecedented partnerships
  - Restore trust in Government is above 30%
  - Do you trust the Federal Government to do the right thing most of the time?      1962 – 77%    1992 – 17%    1997 – 30%
  - Vice President's goal is 50%.

Balanced Measures

Take reinvention to next highest level convicting people to Government.

Focus on 3 balanced measures of success:

1. Business results

EPA cut pollution, saved energy by partnering with registering communities

Tailored results to needs of customers and industry.

2. Employee Satisfaction

Did lots of downsizing and contracting out.

Gave employees bad news first.

Down 30% without RIF

V.P – Way to change culture is to change the conversation.

Right level of coop between labor and management.

3. Customer Satisfaction



IRS – Get employees pointed in right direction. Taxpayer services

VA – 88% of patients like quality of care at hospitals.

Patient is the center of the health care universe.

V.P – What you measure is what you get.

V.P. – 1993 – only 50 sites on www. Don't use EPA speak. (NEPA speaks)



Notes from  
A Global Forum on Reinventing Government  
January 14-15, 1999  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington, D.C.

Thursday, January 14

Al Gore:

- Government must be more responsive to change and smarter
- We are battling bureaucracy and apathy
- Must move government from industrial age infrastructure to information age infrastructure
- If we are not lean and nimble, we will be left behind
- Brain power of employees is our largest unused asset
- Need a workforce held accountable for results
  - Pay for performance vs seniority
  - Proposal to congress
- Results for children not bureaucracy
- Conduct government-wide customer service survey
- Restore faith in people that the system works

Jenny Shipley – Prime Minister of New Zealand

Rather than treating illness – let's prevent illness

Ponnell – Challenges facing governments around the world

Al Gore – U.S. has saved over \$12 billion/year by streamlining procurement

New Zealand – not enough energy is put to long term strategy and developing vision for the future.

Culture of the bureaucracy is the hardest thing to change. There are keepers of the bureaucracy.

Change the dialog – focus on the land, etc., on the customer.

Customer service is delivered at the point of contact.

Denmark has the highest level of citizen trust of Government.

James Lee Witt – FEMA

- Customer service



- Working with our partner
- Working with our employees

Does a survey after (customer satisfaction) every disaster.

- Listen to customers
- Listen to partners at all levels
- Expand our constituency
- Take risk

David Oshorn – Author of “Reinventing Government”

“Don’t get lost in the trees – its about improving people’s lives not about organization, institution, or regulation.”

Al Gore

- The pace of change has been too slow
- Electric motor example: structure must change to gain the efficiencies

Friday, January 15

Al Gore: We can only have the policy we can administer.

Bill Clinton:

- Don’t reinvent the wheel, borrow good ideas
- How long does our work affect people (me) how does it affect people’s lives
- Find ways to talk about this that means something to people, that takes it home.
- We need less regulation & more incentive
- We need to preserve the vitality of democracy and the Forest Service

Dr Neye:

- How do we adapt Government for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, how do we rebuild confidence of people.

Al Gore:

- Using new information technologies
- Knowledge management is the key
- Permit applications on line
- Access America for Students – Gives students a simpler system leaving more time to study.



- Our human organizations must be reinvented to utilize information technology.

Al Gore:

- Employees are trapped in bad systems.
- Figure out who our customers are
- Ask them what they want
- What is the private sector doing
- Ask employees how to do it and what to do
- Set performance slots and publish them and measure results



# Global Forum on Reinventing Govt.

Jan. 14

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- Must move govt from industrial age infrastructure to information age infrastructure
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