

Implicit in this multipronged approach is the notion that both officials and staff must become ambidextrous when it comes to technology. Overall, the population is becoming more and more technologically literate. It is, therefore, more imperative than ever that governments at all levels fully invest in and make use of an array of tools to reach citizens and allow them to reach government.

In addition, the potentially shrinking labor pool combined with a competitive hiring climate strongly suggests that there may be fewer public employees available to issue permits or attend neighborhood meetings. Each public sector employer, then, must be used wisely and well and must have up-to-date tools to use.

Ironically, at the same time that our public officials and staff focus on the different subgroups, they must also be cognizant about how all the groups fit together. Overlapping generations and cultures are destined to be the norm

in another generation, cities such as Saint Paul, Minnesota, are finding that what some ethnic groups really want is just access to facilities and basic equipment so that they can craft their own programs and solutions.

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If local governments are to deal effectively with the new external envi-

ronment, it is simply not correct in thinking that cities are often the places where all of the issues of the day play out. For this reason, it is imperative that public leaders and officials pay attention to and really see what our changing demographics, work, and technology mean for the public sector.

The vision for the future must be one of a modular community with core elements that can be connected and reconnected in many ways to meet the needs of a multidimensional citizenry. Such a modular place must be staffed by modular people who are able to solve problems and adapt to a just-in-time environment.

It isn't just about recruiting differently or adding more programs for seniors. It is about seeing what is really happening and aiming for the right target. The time to act is now; the world is already moving forward. PH

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