



California  
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY



# DIGITAL WEB SERVICES NETWORK

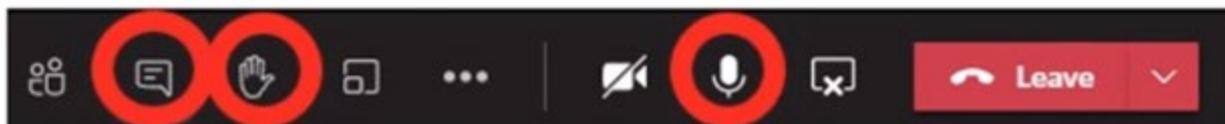
DWSN Quarterly Forum  
Thursday, October 21, 2021

[webstandards.ca.gov](http://webstandards.ca.gov)



# Digital Web Services Network

- Welcome to the DWSN forum, we will begin shortly.
- For the best experience, please use your computer to join the meeting.
- Mute your audio.
- Turn off your video.
- Use the Raise Hand button or the meeting Chat for comments and questions.





# Digital Web Services Network Forum Agenda



## Digital Web Services Network Forum Agenda

Thursday, October 21, 2021

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting

+1 916-573-5828

Phone Conference ID: 952457153#

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Opening Remarks	Blaine <u>Wasyliw</u> , CDT (5 minutes)
Innovative Hiring / Recruiting	Phoebe <u>Peronto</u> , CDT (20 minutes)
Content Design Principles	Michael Sullivan, ODI (20 minutes)
Promoting a Culture of Design	Brian Armitage, State Library (20 minutes)
Open Discussion / Q&A	All (20 minutes)
Suggested Future Topics / Closing Remarks	Blaine <u>Wasyliw</u> , CDT (5 minutes)

Please email [DigitalWebServicesNetwork@state.ca.gov](mailto:DigitalWebServicesNetwork@state.ca.gov) for suggested topics or questions.





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# Opening Remarks



**Blaine Wasykiw**

Chief Web Officer

*California Department of Technology*

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# Hiring Best Practices: A Case Study from OET

Phoebe Peronto

State Deputy CTIO

*California Department of Technology*

[webstandards.ca.gov](http://webstandards.ca.gov)



# Contents

- Setting the Stage
- Scoping the Challenge + Defining the North Star
- The Plan of Action (POA)
- Identifying Opportunities for Efficiency
- Results
- Takeaways



# Understanding the Context and Challenge

## The Situation

- A team of 60
- 30+ positions to fill
- 33% vacancy rate
- 6-month fill timeline for internal and external candidates
- Hiring was a priority, but not a *top* priority, within the team

## The Challenge

- Reduce vacancy rate to 5%
- Fill 30+ roles
- 5 weeks to execute (by 10/31/2021)
- Leverage existing HR support
- Elevate hiring to be a *top* priority within the team



# Scoping the Initiative and Defining our North Star

## The Process of Arriving at the Scoped Initiative



North Star: Fill all open roles (30) by the end 10/31/21, reducing our Office vacancy rate to 0%.

Using the North Star as our guide, we scoped the initiative and set goals.

### Scope of the Initiative

5% vacancy is equivalent to 4-5 open roles at the end of October 2021.

This means that if we are to satisfy the bare minimum, we must fill 5 roles/week.

**Goal 1:** Establish a candidate pipeline of  $\geq 50$  people.

**Goal 2:** By mid-October, post all 30 open roles.

**Goal 3:** By the end of October 2021, have final offers out for  $\leq 25$  open vacancies.



# The Plan of Action Established the “Instruction Manual” for Execution



North Star: Fill all open roles (30) by the end 10/31/21, reducing our Office vacancy rate to 0%.

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## Plan of Action (POA)

### Phase 1

- Establish a working group + launch the team
- Scope all open roles
- Create an internal referral process for candidate pipeline
- Draft supporting documentation

### Phase 2

- Develop single source of truth dashboard for real-time tracking
- Create reporting / check-in cadences
- Launch pipeline

### Phase 3

- Track hiring in real-time
- Remove obstacles / blockers
- Hire!





# Observing Patterns, Leveraging Shared Knowledge, and Iteration Helped ID Efficiencies



## Opportunities for Efficiency in the Hiring Process

**Efficiency #1:** Conduct batched interviewing for the same role.

**Efficiency #2:** Evolve RPA approval for backfilled positions to email vs a signed form.

**Efficiency #3:** Leverage historical duty statements and SOQs.

**Efficiency #4:** Split candidate pipeline into functional categories; conduct group outreach.

**Efficiency #5:** Parallel process parts of the hiring funnel that are within your control.



# Optimizing for Outcomes Led to Results

*Note: We are still in the midst of this initiative. Results are preliminary.*

## Goals

**Goal 1:** Establish a candidate pipeline of  $\geq 50$  people.

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## Results to Date

90% achieved with 45 pipeline candidates

70% achieved with 9 roles left to post

16% achieved with 5 final offers confirmed



# Takeaways

**Takeaway #1:** Assess the full process and identify opportunities for efficiency.

**Takeaway #2:** Take ownership of cultivating a candidate pool by asking for referrals.

**Takeaway #3:** Brief internal stakeholders at the outset and share your goals.

**Takeaway #4:** Establish a single source of truth for data; track progress in real-time.

**Takeaway #5:** Create frequent forums for progress reports, check-ins, updates, and voiced obstacles.



# Content design principles to create better services

Michael Sullivan

Senior content designer

*California Office of Digital Innovation*

[webstandards.ca.gov](http://webstandards.ca.gov)



# Meet Michael



UC San Diego



Intuit  
**turbotax**®



# ODI's mission

Deliver better government services to  
the people of California through  
technology and design.



# Content team's challenge

How can we change the way we write online so more people can do what they need to do when they interact with the state?



# Our solution

Seven principles that everyone can use to write better digital content



# How did we make them?





# The team





# A team effort



“I’m going to be real with you. I’m not like the best dragon. Have you ever done like a group project, but there’s like that one kid who didn’t pitch in as much, but still ended up with the same grade?”

Sisu in *Raya and the Last Dragon*



# How we created each principle

1. Concise, top-line idea
2. Define why we recommended it
3. Actionable advice to implement it



# Concise, top-line idea

- General guidance for the whole State
- Flexible to accommodate a wide range of situations
- “If you remember only this...”



# Define why we recommend it

- Supporting our recommendations with research
- A resource to help stakeholders learn about content design
- Adults learn better when they understand “the why”



# Actionable advice to implement it

- The tactics behind the strategy
- Lessons learned from:
  - [alpha.ca.gov](http://alpha.ca.gov)
  - [covid19.ca.gov](http://covid19.ca.gov)
  - [cannabis.ca.gov](http://cannabis.ca.gov)
  - [drought.ca.gov](http://drought.ca.gov)



# The principles

- Focus on user services and needs
- Know your audience and meet them where they are
- Build accessibility in from the start
- Be concise
- Write in plain language
- Write with a conversational and official voice
- Organize content strategically



# Focus on user needs and services: why

People come to State websites with needs.  
Our primary job is to meet those needs.



# Focus on user needs and services: how

Before you start writing, ask:

- How will someone use this information to take action?
- What does someone need to do here?
- Why are they coming to this page?



# Know your audience and meet them where they are: why

- Government content usually asks people to do a lot of work.
- As public servants, we need to do that work for them.



# Know your audience and meet them where they are: how

- When you're working on content, ask:
  - Is this content part of a larger process?
  - Where are the friction points? What can I do to smooth them?
- Do research to learn about your audience.
  - If you can, work with researchers, data analysts, and engineers.



# Understanding user needs and meeting your audience: example

## Explore more data

### Vaccination data

State and county data about vaccination, including by race and ethnicity and age

### Health equity data

How COVID-19 has affected different communities across the state

### Data and tools

In-depth models, dashboards, databases, and information about California's COVID-19 data reporting



# Build in accessibility from the start: why

- State laws require government websites certify that they're accessible.
- Content creators have a role in making digital experiences accessible.
- When content is designed for people in different situations, it better serves everyone.
- When people feel content is “for them,” this builds trust and empowers people.



# Build in accessibility from the start: how

- Put content in web pages, not PDFs.
- Write descriptive hyperlink text.
- Add alt text to images.



# Build in accessibility from the start: example

## ***Not accessible***

You can view the source data for snowpack measurements [here](#).

## ***Accessible***

Review the [snowpack measurement source data](#).

[UC San Francisco screen reader demonstration](#)



# Be concise: why

Shorter sentences are easier to understand.



# Be concise: how

- Have one thought per sentence.
- Think about every word you use.
- Do not duplicate content across your site.



# Be concise: example

If an individual has a payment to submit to the Treasurer's Office of Department of Weights and Measures that accompanies their license renewal, this payment must be submitted through the online portal at the same time of the submission of their application to the Department.

vs.

You must pay your license fee when you renew your license. Use the Department of Weights and Measures online portal to renew and pay.



# Write in plain language: why

Plain language is easier to read, no matter who you are.



# Write in plain language: how

- Run your writing through a reading level checker like Hemingway.com.
- Spell out acronyms the first time you use them.
- Write in present tense using active voice.



# Write in plain language: example

Complicated language	Plain language
Assistance is available to people affected by the fires.	Help is available to people affected by the fires.
You are required to show your driver's license when you apply.	You must show your drivers license when you apply.
Additional information is available.	More information is available.



# Write with a conversational and official voice: why

- People expect a conversational, approachable voice when they're online.
- We're still the State of California and a source of truth.



# Write with a conversational and official voice: how

- Read your writing out loud.
- Imagine you're helping a friend understand or complete a task. Be supportive without being superior.
- Use common contractions like:
  - It's
  - You'll
  - That's



# Write with an official and conversational voice: example

*Too official:* It is required that all people seeking to apply must do so prior to the deadline set by law of September 30. No applications shall be accepted after this date.

*Too conversational:* Listen up: you've got to get your application in before the end of the month. Don't wait! Do it ASAP.

*Just right:* Apply between August 1 and September 30.



# Organize content strategically: why

- When people read online, most of the time they're actually scanning.
- Dense content can discourage people from even attempting to read it.



# Organize content strategically: how

- Order content where the most important or broadly applicable content goes first.
  - Follow with the next-most important content.
  - Keep going until you've covered everything.
- Break up content with headers and paragraph breaks to match how people scan.



# Organize content strategically: example



California is lucky enough to have 3 NHL hockey teams, the Anaheim Ducks, Los Angeles Kings, and San Jose Sharks. From 2010-2017, a California hockey team made the Western Conference Finals every year. California hockey teams have won three Stanley Cups from 2007 to 2014. The Los Angeles Kings have the most Stanley Cups with 2, won in 2012 and 2014. They are the oldest NHL team in California, founded in 1967. They were the first California team to go to the Stanley Cup Final. Their 1993 trip was spoiled by Marty McSorley's illegal stick. The Anaheim Ducks were the first Californian hockey team to win the Stanley Cup. They have been to the Stanley Cup Final twice and have the best points percentage of any California hockey team. The team was originally known as the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim. They were named for the movie starring Emilio Estevez. There were 3 Mighty Ducks movies, an animated series, and a live-action TV series. The team changed their name in 2006, just in time to save the Stanley Cup from having "Mighty Ducks of Anaheim" engraved on it. The San Jose Sharks are tied with Anaheim for the most trips to the Western Conference Finals with 5. The Sharks are Michael's favorite NHL team, which is appropriate because he usually picks disappointing sports teams. SJ Sharkie was the first NHL mascot to have his own website. The Sharks' home arena, affectionately known as The Shark Tank, is also home to their minor league affiliate, the San Jose Barracuda.

## California's NHL teams

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The San Jose Sharks are tied with Anaheim for the most trips to the Western Conference Finals with 5. The Sharks' home arena, affectionately known as The Shark Tank, is also home to their minor league affiliate, the San Jose Barracuda. SJ Sharkie was the first NHL mascot to have his own website.

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## Anaheim Ducks

The Anaheim Ducks were the first Californian hockey team to win the Stanley Cup. They have been to the Stanley Cup Final twice and have the best points percentage of any California hockey team.

## Team name history

The team was originally known as the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim. They were named for the movie starring Emilio Estevez.

There are:

- 3 Mighty Ducks movies
- An animated TV series
- A live-action TV series

The team changed their name in 2006, just in time to save the Stanley Cup from having "Mighty Ducks of Anaheim" engraved on it.



# ODI style guide

The [ODI style guide](#) is available to use and peruse.

- Detailed info on each principle
- Recommended standards
- More strategies for your writing
- Examples
- Other resources we use



# Coming soon

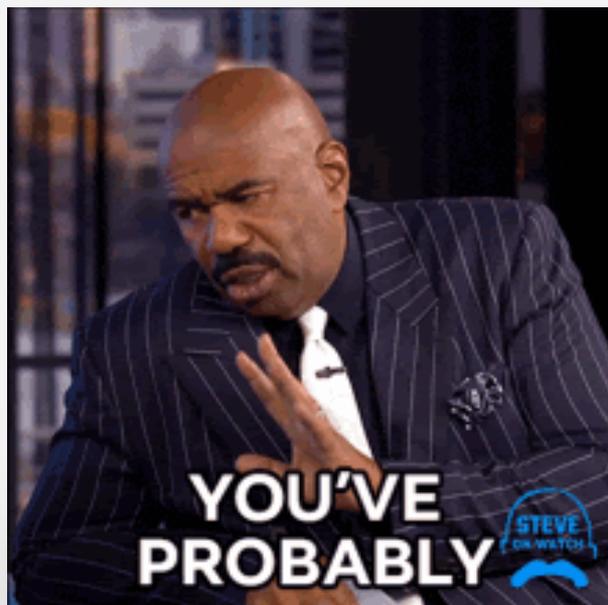
A fancy, pretty website

(We love iterating and gradual improvements!)



# We want your feedback

- Where do you want more info?
- What situations are not covered?





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# Promoting a Culture of Design

**Brian Armitage**

Webmaster

*California State Library*

[webstandards.ca.gov](http://webstandards.ca.gov)



Human-centered design is user-centered, data-driven, and iterative.



# Why don't we use human-centered design?



“Culture eats strategy for  
breakfast.”  
—Peter Drucker



Our jobs are defined by law, not  
by supply and demand.



# Design is hard.

- Design must be intentional.
- Design takes more work and more time.
- Design takes humility.



# How to Promote Design Culture

Educate yourself:

- about human-centered design principles.
- about your users.
- about your agency's mission.



# How to Promote Design Culture (continued)

Ask questions:

- Who is this for?
- What are our users trying to accomplish?
- What issue are you trying to solve?



# Thank you!

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# Open Discussion & Q/A

[webstandards.ca.gov](http://webstandards.ca.gov)



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# Suggested for Future Topics

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# Closing Remarks

**Blaine Wasykiw**

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# THANK YOU

Post conference materials will be published on the [www.dwsn.ca.gov](http://www.dwsn.ca.gov)

For questions, please write to:

[DigitalWebServicesNetwork@state.ca.gov](mailto:DigitalWebServicesNetwork@state.ca.gov)