

Barriers to Pre-decisional Involvement (PDI)

Lack of Awareness & Knowledge	Lack of Skills to Implement	Attitudes & Perceptions	Accountability	Administrative or Environmental Factors
<p><i>Union or Management, at various levels:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not know about PDI • Lacks awareness of resources available to support PDI efforts • Lacks understanding of Executive Order 13522 ("E.O.") (i.e., confusion about what is required, how it relates to collective bargaining) 	<p><i>Union and Management:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have not agreed on how to begin, conduct, sustain, and conclude the PDI process • Have not determined which issues are PDI-worthy • Are not communicating effectively and collaboratively (i.e., sharing ideas, actively listening, providing constructive feedback, building the relationship) • Lack a mutually identified method or technique for problem solving 	<p><i>Union or Management:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels that PDI is not meaningful, parties are "just checking a box" • Has the perception that PDI is too much work • Believes the PDI process does not work in their interest (process is controlled by management, or it gives the union two bites at the apple) • Has an organizational culture/tradition that is resistant to change and resistant to the use of PDI • Possesses false expectations as to the PDI process • Has the incorrect belief that PDI requires complete trust or agreement <p>Additionally...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in personnel can mean changes in philosophy about PDI • Trust or relationship issues interfere with successful PDI • Management fear of relinquishing power • Union fear of being co-opted or viewed as selling out to management • Higher level leadership doesn't see the value 	<p><i>Union or Management:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes the E.O. is unenforceable and they don't need to engage in PDI • Believes that if they wait long enough, the E.O. will go away • Believes final decision-makers are not sufficiently involved in the actual PDI engagement sessions • Does not get professional/personal recognition for engaging in PDI • Representatives do not have authority to engage in/promote PDI <p>Additionally...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The E.O. does not set forth a specific PDI process, meaning the parties must come up with something on their own • The flexibility given to parties to establish a PDI process makes it difficult to judge whether parties are making a good faith effort • The E.O. does not contain hard and fast requirements by which PDI can be judged or parties held accountable • Measuring the benefits of PDI is difficult 	<p><i>Union or Management:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulties in scheduling meetings and lacks available personnel for productive participation in PDI • Experiences geographic and organizational dispersion that interferes with successful PDI • Lacks funding to provide for technological means to overcome distance, travel, logistics, and participation (including on official time) at PDI sessions • Faces impediments to productive PDI, related to legal and subject matter expertise <p>Additionally...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in personnel may slow momentum of PDI efforts

Click on each barrier for more information, tips, and links.

Lack of Awareness and Knowledge

Union or Management, at various levels:

Does not know about PDI

- Union and management officials may not have received PDI training and may be uncomfortable with the concept. Also, they may not be aware of [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 13522](#)

Lacks awareness of resources available to support PDI efforts

- Parties have heard of PDI but are not sure how to get started or what the requirements may be if they do start engaging in PDI.
- *Tips:* The National Council's website has many resources describing PDI and how to begin the process. Parties might consider including links to these PDI resources on their respective intranet pages, social media sites or newsletters under the Director's or Union President's page.
- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement Resources](#)
[Pre-Decisional Involvement Quick Tips Video](#)

Lacks understanding of Executive Order 13522 ("E.O.") (i.e., confusion about what is required, how it relates to collective bargaining)

- The Parties have had PDI training but each has different expectations of the process, or different interpretations of the E.O.
- *Tips:* Ask for assistance from the headquarters' level of your agency or union, the National Council, FMCS, or FLRA; consider finding a facilitator to coach your team through a PDI effort. Have links on the agency and union websites to the National Council and FLRA resources. Also, HR University offers an online course on E.O. 13522.
- *Links:* [FLRA OGC's Historical Guidance on Pre-Decisional Involvement, Part III](#)
[Pre-Decisional Involvement Resources](#)
[Training on HR University](#) (go to Course Title: FLRA Office of General Counsel Training: Executive Order 13522)

Union and Management:

Have not agreed on how to begin, conduct, sustain, and conclude the PDI process

- There are many different ways that the PDI process can stall. Some examples of this may include, without being limited to, the following situations. The Parties have initiated PDI or have initiated partial PDI discussions, but it is not moving toward results or consistent PDI interactions. The parties may have engaged in PDI but failed to reach agreement, and concluded that the process didn't work. Some parties have engaged in PDI and developed good solutions but don't know what to do next, and how this relates to their collective bargaining responsibilities. Sometimes parties think that PDI can only be done in the context of an LM Forum or other formal process, but parties can engage in PDI at all levels of the agency, either formally or informally.
- *Tips:* Use the resources available at the National Council and FLRA websites and dedicate resources to setting up a PDI agreement prior to the next PDI event.
- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[How to begin PDI](#)
[How to conduct PDI](#)
[How to conclude PDI](#)

Have not determined which issues are PDI-worthy

- E.O. 13522 states that the parties should, "allow employees and their union representatives to have pre-decisional involvement in all workplace matters to the fullest extent practicable, without regard to whether those matters are negotiable subjects of bargaining under 5 U.S.C. 7106. . ." The parties may disagree about what topics are "practicable" for PDI.
- *Tips:* Use assistance from National Council, FMCS, or FLRA to assist the group in working through this issue, such as by using interest-based problem solving techniques.
- *Links:* [PDI Quick Tips Video](#)

Are not communicating effectively and collaboratively (i.e., sharing ideas, actively listening, providing constructive feedback, building the relationship)

- Parties may benefit from viewing PDI as an open and evolving process, and not one that resolves all problems. The parties may not have taken the time to discuss expectations for their PDI process, which may include the scope of PDI involvement, prior to starting PDI. So one party may come to the table thinking everything about an issue is on the table for discussion and the other party is willing to discuss only those topics that they have identified as PDI "worthy." Parties have not received training in how to effectively communicate through conflict. Successful PDI is approached from the perspective of joint interests and potential outcomes versus one-sided positions and traditional bargaining proposals.
- *Tips:* The group may benefit from formal training in communication skills and conflict resolution techniques.
- *Links:* [FMCS Resources-FAQs](#)
[PDI Expectations Agreement Checklist](#)
[PDI FAQs](#)

Lack a mutually identified method or technique for problem solving

- Sometimes, the parties have a perception that PDI success is a relationship in which they agree easily. Parties may benefit from viewing PDI as an open and evolving process, and not one that resolves all problems. The parties may be avoiding disagreement because they perceive it as a sign of trust or communication issues, when what is needed is the openness to express ideas knowing they will be considered.
- *Tips:* There is no right or wrong approach to problem-solving, but it is important for the parties to discuss what approach they will use. Many issues can be informally discussed and resolved, while others may

Lack of Skills to Implement

require a more formal, interest-based approach, and may even require the help of a facilitator. PDI may require patience and persistence by all parties. Don't give up. Know that your group is not alone, and you can get help from the National Council, the FMCS, or the FLRA.

- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[Labor-Management Success Stories](#)
Email requests for assistance to LMRCouncil@opm.gov

Union or Management:

Feels that PDI is not meaningful, parties are “just checking a box”

- One of the parties or both are not satisfied with the PDI process they have engaged in or are currently engaged in. For example, one party may feel that the other party is not willing to engage in full discussion, which may include joint problem-solving, collaboration and transparency, relating to the substance of the decision. Or one party may feel that the other party has already made a decision and is merely seeking input about how to roll it out, instead of presenting a situation and seeking ideas and potential solutions to effectively plan for and address the situation.
- *Tips:* Successful PDI may take different forms depending on the issue involved, the level of the organization at which the PDI is occurring, and other matters. But there are common elements to successful PDI. For example, transparency and early involvement of the union are important elements. It is useful for the parties to have an agreement that spells out what PDI will entail. But these agreements are a living thing. Each party should determine what behaviors would indicate to them that the PDI session was "meaningful" and then share it with the other party and in this sharing they will find common behaviors that they both need to see. Retirements, turnover, and changing circumstances may require that the parties revisit the agreement to make sure they still understand what it means.
- *Links:* [PDI Resources](#)
[PDI FAQs](#)
[PDI Checklists](#)

Has the perception that PDI is too much work

- Both union and management officials may be reluctant to use PDI because they believe it consumes a great deal of money and time and that very little comes from the experience because negotiations may be needed on any unresolved issues.
- *Tips:* Any good management decision-making tool is going to involve work and use of resources. The PDI process is one such tool. Identify what makes it feel like "work," that is what makes it seem burdensome and resource-intensive, and address those issues as contributors to the perception instead of dismissing the whole PDI process as "the problem." The parties should also seek to identify the benefits they expect to achieve from the PDI process. PDI can be a supplement to the bargaining process and can be beneficial to both parties as it may identify and address unexplored ideas, or expedite any bargaining that may be required for any issues that were not resolved through the PDI process.
- *Links:* [PDI Checklists](#)
[PDI Outcomes Interactive Module](#)
[Labor-Management Forum Metrics—Information and Resources](#)
Success Story videos: [BEP and Joint Labor Council](#) and [PTO and NTEU](#)

Believes the PDI process does not work in their interest (process is controlled by management, or it gives the union two bites at the apple)

- A common complaint is that PDI does not eliminate the need to conduct negotiations, so why should management bother? Another common complaint is that the union only gets to participate in the PDI discussion as a "reviewer" of a plan management already has put together instead of being a "developer" where the issue is presented by management and both sides work together to develop a plan.
- *Tips:* When anticipating an issue for PDI, both union and management should try to put themselves in the other party's shoes. See the other side's position, seek to understand why they have chosen to discuss only the working condition issues versus the substance of the action or change. When management is planning for PDI, they should try to put themselves in the union's shoes to identify areas where they can demonstrate that they believe the union's participation, as well as the bargaining unit employees', is "value added." Learning about other agencies and unions who have experienced success with PDI can help the parties to heighten their sensitivity to how the other party may perceive their actions.

- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement Resources](#)
[Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service](#)

Has an organizational culture/ tradition that is resistant to change and resistant to the use of PDI

- Either party or both parties are more comfortable in traditional LM relations. For example, topics are referenced at meetings where the union is in attendance, but discussion is not solicited by either or ideas shared until the issue is initiated in the parties' collective bargaining process.
- *Tips:* Leadership in any organization tends to set the tone for the culture. Change is a constant but it can be uncomfortable. A facilitator can assist the parties in learning each other's "stories" determining how each side got to this position and then assist the parties in identifying "baby steps" that are safe to try but take each out of their comfort zone and into an environment where they work together to achieve success.
- *Links:* [PDI Checklists](#)
[PDI Outcomes Interactive Module](#)
[Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service](#)

Possesses false expectations as to the PDI process

- One side or the other may believe, "If we engage in PDI discussion we do not need to do anything else: no negotiations, no additional discussions, etc." While the other party may think "The process for PDI is not complete until both parties have consensus and a written agreement." Or one party may feel they cannot engage in PDI unless the other party waives statutory rights such as management rights or the right to engage in impact and implementation bargaining.
- *Tips:* It is recommended that both agencies and unions communicate with their staff and representatives to establish a common understanding of the PDI process and to encourage productive and active engagement. The parties are encouraged to consider whether there are any legal, regulatory, or confidentiality issues that may impact the PDI process. Joint training or outside facilitation may assist the parties in developing a shared concept of PDI and how it will work, which may vary depending on the issue addressed.
- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement FAQs](#) (Question A6)
[PDI Outcomes Interactive Module](#)
[PDI Checklists](#)

Has the incorrect belief that PDI requires complete trust or agreement

- There may be a perception that if the parties can't agree on every issue, this means PDI has failed. Or they may feel they can't share information with the other party because they can't trust them not to use it in a negative way later on or release the information to outside parties creating more problems.
- *Tips:* Both parties should look at past working relationships they have participated in and ask themselves honestly, "Did we agree on everything all the time?" Probably not, and PDI is no different. PDI is a process that provides the *opportunity* for a better outcome, but there is no guarantee of success. While PDI works best in a high trust environment, parties should not abandon PDI simply because there are trust issues. Trust is not a prerequisite for PDI but as long as the parties are willing to use the PDI process, successful outcomes may be achieved. Trust may develop over time, with effort by both sides. Parties may want to examine what behaviors they are exhibiting that might create the perception that their intentions in this process are not reliable or trustworthy. In addition, joint training or outside facilitation, such as that provided by FMCS, can assist the parties with building trust and working through conflict.
- *Links:* [PDI FAQs](#)
[Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service](#)

Additionally...

Changes in personnel can mean changes in philosophy about PDI

- The parties have been successful at using PDI, but one of the main players – one who was the "energy" behind the PDI relationship - leaves that role. Afterwards, the PDI process does not "flow" and issues are not moving forward as they had before.
- *Tips:* When staff and representatives change, don't pretend things are the same. Take time to review the group's successes, philosophy, and expectations for the newcomers. Mentor new players who may not be "up to speed" the group's PDI process. Consider refresher training for all members of the forum. Retirements, turnover, and changing circumstances may require that the parties review any agreement or understanding concerning the PDI process the parties may have to make sure they still have a common understanding.
- *Links:* [NASA's Best Practices in PDI](#)
Success Story videos: [BEP and Joint Labor Council](#) and [PTO and NTEU](#)

Trust or relationship issues interfere with successful PDI

- One or both of the parties have a habit of working toward a solution and then the next day they return to the table and state that it won't work and they are withdrawing their consensus. Or one or both parties believes they have a verbal agreement but the implementation of the decision, doesn't match their understanding.
- *Tips:* The best way to avoid these types of disputes is to put agreements in writing. The National Council's website offers guidance on when and how to put PDI agreements in writing. Take the time to address reliability concerns and come to the PDI discussion with an openness for improving the other party's perception of your reliability. A facilitator can help with this. Also, FMCS offers training on how to work through trust and relationship issues.
- *Links:* [PDI FAQs](#)
[PDI Outcomes Interactive Module](#)
[Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service](#)

Management fear of relinquishing power

- "If I allow the Union to help determine possible solutions I will lose my ability to make decisions for this agency. Or, by discussing issues relating to a decision, I may mistakenly limit management's rights."
- *Tips:* Remember, E.O. 13522 promotes open discussion about all workplace matters to the fullest extent practicable, without regard to whether those matters are negotiable subjects. But the E.O. does not require either management or the union to waive any rights afforded to them in the Statute or in their respective collective bargaining agreements, when they engage in PDI. For that matter, the parties are not required to reach a final decision during the PDI process. Agency representatives with questions about the relationship between PDI and traditional collective bargaining responsibilities may wish to seek advice from within their organization.
- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement Resources](#)
[Executive Order \(E.O.\) 13522](#)
[Pre-Decisional Involvement FAQs](#) (Question A6)

Union fear of being co-opted or viewed as selling out to management

- The Union may engage with management on a sensitive topic that requires confidentiality (e.g., RIFs) and once the announcement is made, bargaining unit employees are angry that the union representatives didn't give them a warning about what was coming. In the absence of communication with bargaining unit employees about the PDI sessions, those employees may not see the benefit of a collaborative approach.

Attitudes & Perceptions

- *Tips:* Share as much information about the issue as you can, when you can share it, with bargaining unit employees. This will help to promote transparency and understanding of the PDI process and facilitate increased employee involvement (feedback) related to the change. Timely communicate information to the bargaining unit illustrating how the union, through the PDI process, lessened the impact of the change. The union can use the checklists on the National Council website to help determine if the topic is PDI friendly or if negotiations are more appropriate.
- *Links:* [PDI Checklists](#)
[PDI Confidentiality Guidance](#)
[PDI Confidentiality Agreement Template](#)

Higher level leadership doesn't see the value

- Sometimes higher level representatives are not familiar with the PDI process and its benefits. They may be concerned about the time and effort PDI requires, or they may have concerns about losing control of the decision, or they may have had negative interaction with the other party in the past. As a result, they may not encourage, or they may actively discourage, those within their organizations from using PDI.
- *Tips:* Remember that PDI provides agency decision-makers with an invaluable source of information from employees, who perform the agency's work on the front line, and their union representatives. For example, management might identify potential areas where services could be cut to achieve cost-savings, but then work with the union through PDI to get input from employees about other ways to achieve the same cost-savings without service cuts. Asking for input and ideas does not necessarily mean the agency relinquishes the agency's right to make the final decision. Some labor and management groups have found that beginning to use PDI on a relatively small scale can help them to build value in the process. Examples of "success stories" featured at the National Council's public meetings, and on its website, highlight examples where labor and management have used PDI successfully, on large-scale initiatives, where the value of PDI was demonstrable.
- *Links:* [PDI FAQs](#)
Success Story videos: [BEP and Joint Labor Council](#) and [PTO and NTEU](#)

Union or Management:

Believes the E.O. is unenforceable and they don't need to engage in PDI

- One or both of the parties believes that if PDI is not in the Statute it is not required. As a result, they are overlooking the requirements of the E.O. and have missed the focus of PDI, which is to gain the best information on issues such that management makes informed decisions promoting the efficiency of the government.
- *Tips:* E.O. 13522 is the official policy of the Administration and as such it is to be followed. Sections of E.O. 13522 discuss setting up forums, the role of the National Council and specifically, section 3a(ii) requires agencies and unions to engage in pre-decisional involvement. Parties can go to the National Council for assistance in setting up a Forum or engaging in PDI. The parties may choose to memorialize their PDI understanding in a collectively bargained agreement. However, if parties look to a third party to compel the use of PDI, which is fundamentally a cooperative process, they lose sight of real purpose and benefit of PDI; a tool to gain the best information and ideas to allow management to make more informed decisions that achieve mission-related goals, and save money and resources in the long run.
- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[Labor-Management Forum Metrics—Information and Resources](#)
[Executive Order \(E.O.\) 13522](#)

Believes that if they wait long enough, the E.O. will go away

- Some parties may feel that since E.O. 13522 may be modified or repealed sometime in the future, such as when there is a new administration; they do not see a reason to put resources into a process that may not be there for a significant period of time.
- *Tips:* With or without the E.O., engaging in PDI is an effective and forward thinking management best practice. The concept of gathering input from employees, and using their knowledge to improve the delivery of Government services and mission accomplishment does have value, whether or not there is an external requirement in place. To see how this works in practice, review the success stories from labor and management representatives who have made presentations to the National Council. Some of these groups had been engaged in "partnership" activities that began under a prior executive order, and continued these activities voluntarily after it was rescinded because the process had value for their relationship.
- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
Success Story videos: [BEP and Joint Labor Council](#) and [PTO and NTEU](#)

Believes final decision-makers are not sufficiently involved in the actual PDI engagement sessions.

- One or both parties fail to send people to engage in PDI who have the authority to make decisions. The people who are engaged in PDI feel like they are spinning their wheels because they come up with good solutions but then nothing happens with them – they never get implemented.
- *Tips:* Deciding who should be a participant is a difficult proposition. The parties should work together to define the behaviors they need to see to perceive "productive involvement." To be successful in PDI, the parties must commit to sending those individuals who have sufficient knowledge of the issue and/or authority to make effective decisions. The parties need to discuss how they can balance the time spent involved in PDI with their other responsibilities. Ideally, the highest level decision makers from both union and management would attend every PDI session, but for practical purposes these representatives may need to delegate authority to others. Similarly, the people engaging in PDI should understand that the ideas they generate may not automatically be implemented without having them reviewed, and possibly changed or vetoed, by others within the organization. Most important, the parties should, at the very beginning of the PDI process, discuss their expectations about the PDI process, including those issues noted above.

- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[PDI Expectations Agreement Checklist](#)

Does not get professional/ personal recognition for engaging in PDI

- Representatives for each party are actively engaging in PDI and have successfully developed solutions to issues within the agency and have built a working relationship that has assisted in other areas of labor/management issues (e.g., grievances and ULPs), but it is taken for granted or is not recognized in any meaningful way.
- *Tips:* In many ways, engaging in PDI is its own reward, as it frequently results in a better working environment for employees, better decisions by managers; and, most importantly, improved service delivery for the American people. In addition, there are professional associations that present awards to labor-management relations professionals to recognize the hard work that often goes into having a cooperative relationship. The parties (both union and agency, together or separately) may track PDI activities and the time spent working on these workplace initiatives or issues. This data may be used to highlight success stories and best practices for submission to the National Council for recognition and dissemination to the federal labor relations community at large. The parties may want to research other types of awards and recognition that may be available within their organizations.
- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
Success Story videos: [BEP and Joint Labor Council](#) and [PTO and NTEU](#)
To submit information about your own success story to the National Council, email LMRCouncil@opm.gov

Representatives do not have authority to engage in/ promote PDI

- Representatives from the Union and management at the middle management level or as a LR Specialist for the agency value PDI and believe that it would assist with promoting employee engagement, building labor management relations, and expediting business initiatives but key stakeholders, including senior agency and union leadership, do not appreciate the value of PDI and do not allow the representatives to participate in the PDI process or they have not provided sufficient resources for representatives to effectively engage in the PDI process.
- *Tips:* While the National Council subcommittee works to develop tools to assist the parties in measuring PDI, consider initiating your own method to determine if PDI is cost effective for your respective agency or union. Tangible results can be persuasive in showing leadership that PDI is worth investing in. Can you show an improvement in the delivery of high quality services to the public? Can you show a reduction in grievances, or negotiation time frames as a result of PDI? Can you show an increase in employee engagement? Can you show that PDI has resulted in better decisions or ones that have greater buy-in among those tasked with implementing them? Showing results like this may support the case for getting authority to engage in, endorse and promote PDI activities.
- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement Resources](#)
[Labor-Management Forum Metrics—Information and Resources](#)

Additionally...

The E.O. does not set forth a specific PDI process, meaning the parties must come up with something on their own

- Some parties may say that they want to engage in PDI but don't want to use the resources to develop a PDI process, or that if they do develop a process, it may not comply with E.O. 13522, the Statute, or the collective bargaining agreement.
- *Tips:* Research the different programs that other parties are using. Utilize the tools on the National Council website to identify a process that may work for the group. The FMCS has resources available on its website and FMCS Commissioners are available to provide free training on how to engage in PDI and

Accountability

collaborative problem solving techniques. The National Council can also put you in touch with parties who have experience with PDI who can assist you in developing a PDI process that fits your labor-management relationship.

- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[PDI Checklists](#)
[PDI FAQs](#)
[Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service](#)

The flexibility given to parties to establish a PDI process makes it difficult to judge whether parties are making a good faith effort

- Are the parties meeting just to check the box saying they met? Or are they digging in and addressing issues on a deeper engagement level?
- *Tips:* The parties should discuss their expectations for PDI and what behaviors are needed, by both parties, to reinforce the commitment to PDI and to establish their ability to work together to make wise decisions. With a common agreement as to expectations, the parties will be better able to hold themselves accountable to the PDI team and process.
- *Links:* [PDI Checklists](#)
[PDI Outcomes Interactive Module](#)

The E.O. does not contain hard and fast requirements by which PDI can be judged or parties held accountable

- The E.O. does not contain a detailed definition of PDI and so some people think PDI is a consensus-based decision-making process while others think that PDI is just gathering information before a decision is made. This lack of shared expectations often leads to problems and PDI failure.
- *Tips:* The E.O. allows the parties the flexibility to decide what type of PDI process works best for them. But it is important they discuss and reach agreement on what that PDI process will be before they start. A PDI agreement developed by the parties prior to the PDI process being conducted can establish these parameters. Collective bargaining agreement negotiations can include articles regarding PDI, and you could use other collective bargaining agreements as a model.
- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement Resources](#)
[PDI Expectations Agreement Checklist](#)
National union and agency labor relations offices may be able to assist with obtaining examples of contract language.

Measuring the benefits of PDI is difficult

- While the National Council has detailed guidance for tracking metrics these do not always directly relate to each instance of PDI at all levels. In addition, while the costs of PDI engagement may be easy to track, some of the benefits may be intangible.
- *Tips:* Several federal agencies and union organizations are tracking the occurrences of PDI and have a basic formula for measuring the value of PDI. Nothing precludes your PDI group from working out a mutual method to measure, but remember, each party may have a different perception of success based on the respective agency or union goals and organizational cultures.
- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[Labor-Management Forum Metrics—Information and Resources](#)
Success Story videos: [BEP and Joint Labor Council](#) and [PTO and NTEU](#)

Administrative or Environmental Factors

Union or Management:

Have difficulties in scheduling meetings and lack available personnel for productive participation in PDI

- Parties may find that resources are spread thin. It can be challenging to coordinate the parties' schedules, causing delays in the frequency of PDI meetings. The parties may lack representatives available to participate in PDI in addition to their other responsibilities.
- *Tips:* Union and agency leadership should make PDI sessions a priority. When planning for PDI sessions, it is important to include time tables and backward planning for deadlines or benchmarks. Meeting frequency is subject to mutual agreement, but should be consistent with the urgency of the initiative being discussed.
- *Links:* [PDI Checklists](#)

Experiences geographic and organizational dispersion that interferes with successful PDI (link "geographic" to list of tools that may be used for virtual meetings)

- Representatives may see the value in meeting face to face in one location but travel budgets or the participants' schedules do not support such in-person meetings.
- *Tips:* When planning and budgeting for PDI, parties may supplement their face-to-face PDI sessions with virtual meetings, teleconferencing, videoconferencing, and document-sharing software, where available. Other federal agencies in the area may have resources and may be open to sharing those resources as long as it doesn't conflict with its mission.
- *Links:* [PDI Checklists](#)
[Minutes from Success Story Presentation \(USDA/APHIS and NAAE\)](#) (page 14)

Lacks funding to provide for technological means to overcome distance, travel, logistics, and participation (including on official time) at PDI sessions

- Management may indicate that it doesn't have the budget to support the logistics necessary for PDI meetings. If the union views PDI as a management responsibility, it may miss the opportunity to contribute ideas or resources that would overcome the logistical challenges. Each union should be willing to participate in PDI and identify what contributions may be made to the PDI engagement process.
- *Tips:* Labor and management should recognize that PDI may have identifiable value, by achieving cost-savings, improved delivery and efficiency of government service. As a result, some investment (travel, official time, technology) may be appropriate. Inventory the resources already available within the respective parties, and work towards partnering or identifying resources to support PDI sessions. Partner PDI with established LM forum meetings or other management or employee meetings. Labor and management should be realistic about official time needs and discuss any concerns in advance.
- *Links:* [National Council's website](#)
[How to conduct PDI](#)
[How to conclude PDI](#)

Faces impediments to productive PDI, related to legal and subject matter expertise

- This barrier may be illustrated with an example: Management has identified issues with the current IT software employees use to record their time. Management is considering whether to replace it with a new system. Union representatives may not have access to a representative with an IT background. As a result, it is difficult for the union to know what questions to ask, or suggestions to offer in PDI sessions, with regard to the decision about the IT software.
- *Tips:* Union representatives or bargaining unit employees with experience with the current system will usually be able to offer meaningful input, even without specific technical expertise, based on their experiences in the workplace. In addition, the PDI process may benefit if a subject matter expert (in the

Administrative or Environmental Factors

example, it would be an IT professional) whom both parties trust is able to participate in PDI interactions. The National Council's Problem Resolution Subcommittee may be able to assist with overcoming impediments (email LMRCouncil@opm.gov).

Additionally...

Changes in personnel may slow momentum of PDI efforts

- Turnover in membership on PDI teams, on the labor or management side, can delay progress on initiatives. New representatives assigned to the PDI teams may not have PDI training, interest-based problem solving training or experience.
- *Tips:* The parties' leadership can stipulate that their respective representatives have PDI training or interest-based problem solving training prior to being assigned to PDI. Or, prior to actively engaging in PDI prospective members may shadow a current member to get a handle on how the parties' PDI process works. If the parties have a PDI agreement in place they may amend it to include a succession plan for replacement of current members. It may also be beneficial for all forum members to undergo periodic refresher training on PDI or interest-based problem solving techniques.
- *Links:* [Pre-Decisional Involvement Quick Tips Video](#)
[Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service](#)