A LITTLE PROVOCATIVE

I don’t think our biggest AI challenge is the technology.

Using it ethically and responsibly isn’t optional. That’s exactly why leadership matters.

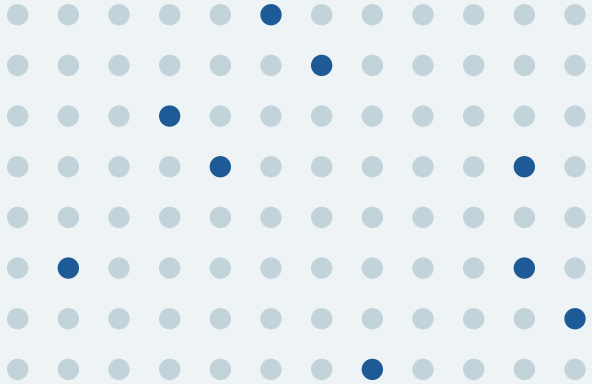
PAUSE

It’s how we lead.

The technology is here. The talent is here. So is our responsibility to use it well.
Are we ready to unlock it, responsibly?

A HABIT

Everywhere I go, I look for the people who are trying to make things better.



MY OBSERVATION

Government doesn't have a talent problem.

We have an unlocking problem.

WHAT WE HEARD ACROSS DEPARTMENTS

A powerful engine. Too many brakes.



Siloed governance

Gatekeepers under-informed about AI

Fear and risk aversion

Skilled staff overextended

Pressure to deliver without resources

Friction, not malice.

Don’t just tell me no.

Help me understand why, and what I can do instead.

NO.

CONVERSATION ENDS

01

Here’s the risk.

02

Here’s why it matters.

03

Here’s what you can safely do instead.

Innovator
sees the opportunity

Expert
makes it safe

Executive
gets them in the same room

WHERE WE STARTED

When I went looking, most departments were ahead of us.

Dedicated teams. Dedicated budgets. We had neither.

StatsCan · SSC · CER · PSPC · PSC · ESDC · GAC · CSPS · CSC · CSIS · RCMP · DFO

THE POINT

Don’t ask for extra money if what you really need is permission to start.

WHAT I ACTUALLY DID

Beg.
Borrow.
Build.

→ Learn.
→ Scale.

AT PUBLIC SAFETY

What that looked like here.

Beg.

Asked 12 departments what they'd built. Asked our branches what frustrates them.

Borrow.

The Canada School briefed all our executives. We plan to build on PCH's AI investment for Gs&Cs.

Build.

Three program partners (GOC, Gs&Cs, Supply Chains Act) shaping proofs of concept in 100-day cycles.

Don’t confuse what it takes to scale with what it takes to learn.

HOW WE USUALLY START

Strategy → Funding → Procurement → Team → Technology → *maybe value*

HOW WE COULD START

Real problem → Small experiment → Evidence → Decision → Scale

Funding should scale evidence. It shouldn’t always be required to create it.

AI is not a technology project. It’s a work-design problem.

What should people keep doing?

What can be assisted?

What should stop?

Where is the friction?

You don’t need to build AI. You need to lead an organization that learns to use it.

MEANWHILE, IN SINGAPORE

These are public servants too.

Same mission. Same constraints. Same accountability.

> Li Hongyi, “Imagining Government from the Ground Up”, TEDxSingapore

OVER TO THE PEOPLE DOING THE WORK

Enough from me.

Here’s what this looks like when the people doing the work get their hands on it.

IN THEIR WORDS

Doing more with less: maintaining parliamentary reporting capacity amid workforce and budget reductions.

01

The problem

high volumes; time-consuming; manual transcription

02

The old way

listening; transcribing; summarizing; formatting

03

The experiment

newsdesk; google cloud; Pilot

04

What AI does

automated transcription; structured reports; minutes

05

The human

less admin work; faster review; more time for analysis

06

The lesson

solve real problems; augment people; human oversight

So what is our job?

Find	Listen	Connect	Protect	Remove friction	Sponsor	Scale
Who's already trying?	What problem are they really solving?	Who can help them?	How do we make it safe to try?	What barrier can I remove?	What needs me in the room?	What evidence says it's worth it?

None of this needs a budget line. It needs us.

YOUR 30-DAY CHALLENGE

One piece of work.

Not one strategy. One problem you're going to change.

01 What's frustrating people?

02 What could AI change?

03 Who already understands it?

04 Who could help?

05 What could we safely test?

06 What could we learn in 30 days?

07 What should stop if it works?

08 What evidence would justify scaling?

Find the talent.
Listen to it.
Unlock it.
Let it build.

If they can do it, **so can we.**