

2025 Trends Report



Project Overview:

This 2025 Trends Report will be the last. We are not retiring from our work, just from the production of the annual Trends Report. Tom Woll began developing the first Trends Report in 2012 when he was asked to develop a document that would stimulate discussions among agency staff about what they should be doing now as well as how to begin to prepare for the future. In 2016, Tom invited Bill Martone to join in developing this report to broaden the geographic scope of organizational issues represented from Tom's focus on Central and Eastern time zone organizations to include Bill's focus on Mountain and Pacific organizational issues and perspectives. The beginning of the inclusion of families and youth perspectives also began in 2016.

Over the past 13 years we have found one of the key uses of this report has been to help staff and board members of agencies, oversight organizations and associations think about their strategic planning efforts. Obviously, scores of these trends COULD be addressed by an organization, but we know organizations need to narrow their scope down to things they SHOULD do, and more importantly narrow them down even further to the things they absolutely MUST do.

We have been grateful for the assistance and support that the leaders and practitioners in the field have shown us for these past many years. Because this will be our final report, we are changing our format. While the report will still address the most pressing trends, the trends that are emerging and the trends that are continuing, it will be presented this year in a narrative format.

Tom & Bill

“

Obviously, scores of these trends COULD be addressed by an organization, but we know organizations need to narrow their scope down to things they SHOULD do, and more importantly narrow them down even further to the things they absolutely MUST do.

”

2025 TRENDS REPORT:

Most Pressing Trends...

Leaders and practitioners realize that the field is changing very rapidly. The levels of difficulty that organizations are being asked to address have been increasing and will continue to increase. The pressure to produce desired outcomes will remain in the forefront. The levels of stress and distress that staff will be called upon to manage will not go away.

Organizations are currently structured to do their best to support the youths and families who turn to them for help. They are coming to understand that to successfully achieve this prime directive for those who turn to them, they must also develop an equal level of support to help them meet the needs of their staff. **Understanding that they need to build clear protective factors for their staff into their everyday practice of service delivery is critical.** Workplaces that encourage balance, health and learning must be developed.

The major discussions of this coming year must focus on the need to fully synchronize the organization's Mission, Strategy and Culture. Organizations must begin to understand the importance of developing their capacity to change their organizational cultures. Organizational cultures are the highly defended storehouses of thoughts, feelings, beliefs and behaviors. Until organizations learn how to change their cultures, they won't be able to implement their strategies and advance their Mission.

In the past organizations have developed Strategic Plans that, many now believe, were too expansive. They often expended organizational energies on many lower-level strategic issues. Collective wisdom is now suggesting that organizations need to prioritize their strategic efforts and focus primarily on those three or four top imperatives that they absolutely must achieve to advance **their Mission. All organizational energies need to be directed toward implementing these imperatives within their Strategic Plan.**



“The major discussions of this coming year must focus on the need to fully synchronize the organization's Mission, Strategy and Culture. Organizations must begin to understand the importance of developing their capacity to change their organizational cultures.”

2025 TRENDS REPORT:



While change can be challenging on an organization, to thrive, they must be willing to adapt to the ever-changing environments they face.



Emerging Trends...

While change can be challenging on an organization, to thrive, they must be willing to adapt to the ever-changing environments they face. **These emerging trends reflect what leaders can expect to face in 2025.**

With the coming change in our federal and state administrations, leaders can anticipate a number of shifts in budget priorities and funding streams. These shifts will likely include policy, regulatory, and service changes that organizations are asked to provide to their clients. These changes will likely require organizations to adapt and adjust their practices and policies. **One area to especially watch is the IMD regulations around the 16-bed limits.**

Organizations are still wrestling with issues related to work in-office and work from-home. **Return to office will remain an ongoing issue for those organizations allowing work from home as employers and employees struggle to find an appropriate balance of best practices.** Staff are still wrestling with ways to achieve a work/life balance, and leaders will continue to need to address this issue.

Advocacy for clients and access to services will become an important component of the work organizations will need to undertake at both the federal and state levels. The emphasis on achieving family stability and the development of the means and methods to help achieve it will be important capacities to develop. Immigration and refugee services should expect some significant changes. Organizations serving immigrant children and their families will likely need to reassess the services they currently provide to address any future policy shifts.

Risk assessment is a focus area for both service providers and service purchasers. We have seen the beginnings of insurance companies being hesitant to write policies for certain programs, services, or activities currently being offered due to their rising litigation costs.

Several key themes are anticipated that leaders must address including:

- ◆ the need to continue providing Mental Health Services in schools;
- ◆ the struggles that will likely intensify to help LGBTQ+ youth achieve protected rights;
- ◆ and the issue of homelessness that has long been an issue in many areas, is now at a crisis level in some, and will require leaders to find ways to support families who are unhoused.

2025 TRENDS REPORT:

Continuing Trends...

The pace of change within our field has been accelerating and it will continue to accelerate. What has worked in the past will not serve organizations as well going into the future. There is a natural tendency within all of us to resist change. **Those who resist change at this important juncture will be left behind.** There is no single source that organizations can access to offer guidance to help prepare for what lies ahead.

Organizations need partnerships, they need engagement. Everyone holds a piece of the puzzle. Those we seek to serve can teach us. Those who serve with us can teach us. Those who purchase our services can teach us. Our Boards can teach us. And our fellow leaders can teach us. We may sometimes be competitive. **The future belongs to those who can be collaborative, who can join their resources to help address the most urgent needs of their communities, a practice known by some as cooperation.**

Another trend being reported involves the need to engage with those who purchase our services and then develop the services that will effectively respond to the most urgent community needs that they might identify. Sometimes our tendencies are to sell the services we are already offering which makes us seem out of touch. **We need to be open to respond to new and emerging community needs and offer what those who purchase our services identify as their highest priorities.**

This isn't new. This has been a continuing trend for the last five years. Some have responded to the trend and significantly increased their levels of engagement. They will be rewarded. They have sought to work together with other providers, joining resources and energies. We'll want to gather as many puzzle pieces as we can and then try to put them all together in support of the communities that depend upon us.


Contact Information:

For any queries or additional information, please contact:



Tom Woll, Strategic Change Initiative


 tomwoll@zoominternet.net

 330-321-9319



Bill Martone, WPM Consulting

 martonewilliam@gmail.com

 626-831-6850