

## Getting Approval for PDT

Most agencies are operating under tighter budget restrictions and with increased scrutiny, which means you will need to strongly convey the value and benefits of attending PDT. Below are actions you can take to strengthen your case to attend.

- **Be specific.** Focus on what you will bring back to your organization as a return on investment (ROI).
- **Spread the word.** Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation or Q&A to your colleagues when you return. By doing so, others will also benefit from your attendance.
- **Share supporting materials.** Distribute the training agenda, speaker handouts and other related items to your colleagues. As an attendee, you will have unlimited access to materials posted by speakers.
- **Stress potential time and money savings.** If you are working to obtain or maintain a credential (e.g., CGFM, CPA, PMP), remind your supervisor that you can earn up to 24 CPE hours in just a few days. Attending PDT is less expensive than registering for separate trainings and means less time away from the office.
- **Be prepared.** Develop a plan for your supervisor regarding coverage for your office responsibilities while you are out. Identify what sessions you will attend to be able to bring actionable ideas and best practices to your office.
- **Check for lower rates.** Refer to the registration page to see if you qualify for any discounts.

Don't forget to emphasize that PDT enables all attendees and especially financial managers to comply with the federal agency and government-wide financial statement reporting and audit requirements in the Chief Financial Officers Act of 1990, the internal control requirements in the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996, the transparency requirements in the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 and Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012, and the Federal Accounting Standards issued by the Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board that all agencies must follow. PDT is a widely attended and effective forum for communicating administration financial management policies to the broader government financial management community.



### Justifying Your Attendance

Your organization will understandably want to see a concrete ROI for supporting attendance at PDT. This toolkit provides strategic planning advice and easy-to-use worksheets to assist you in calculating expenses and identifying that ROI.

### Understanding Your Training Expenses

Event expenses are affected by several factors. Use this Expenses Worksheet to develop a cost estimate for attending PDT.

#### Expenses Worksheet

Expense	Notes and Guidelines	Cost
PDT Registration Fee	Save \$100 if you register by June 27. Total cost can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	\$
Flights	Travelers will most likely fly into Nashville International Airport (BNA), 8.3 miles from the training location.	\$
Lodging	Gaylord Opryland Hotel – The PDT rate meets the GSA per diem rate plus tax per night. <i>(Note: This is the lowest rate in Nashville.)</i>	\$
Transportation: Airport to Hotel, Hotel to Airport	Visit <a href="#">PDT Hotel &amp; Travel</a> for multiple options.	\$

Mileage Reimbursement	Driving to the airport or all the way to PDT? Use Google Maps to calculate distances, then multiply miles by \$0.70 cents/mile ( <a href="#">GSA 2025</a> ).	\$
Parking Reimbursement	Most airports post their parking fees; check your departure airport website. At the Gaylord Opryland, self-parking is \$37/night + tax and valet parking is \$50/night + tax.	\$
Food Per Diem	See <a href="#">GSA M&amp;IE Schedule</a> for rates. Remember, PDT includes three breakfasts and lunches and multiple daily coffee breaks.	\$
<b>Total</b>		\$

### Understanding the Benefits

The greatest benefits are often the value of learning about solutions to common problems and networking opportunities. Where else can you find so many government and industry contacts facing similar issues as your organization? Are there approaches and solutions you're not aware of? Although networking is an important aspect of training and professional development, it might also be the hardest component to measure.

When working through the approval process for training and travel, be sure to focus on specifics — the valuable information and contacts you will bring back to benefit your organization. The important details you'll want to identify include:

- **Session content.** Which sessions are most relevant to your organization's work? Identify new tools, technologies and processes you can learn about from the sessions.
- **Training.** Will there be workshops designed to teach attendees a special skill that will enable your team to overcome current or future challenges?

- **Best practices.** Will there be training sessions in areas (e.g., data analysis and presentation, reporting tools, internal controls, fraud prevention) that will immediately benefit your team?
- **Vendor contacts.** Will the training showcase suppliers with tools you use or are evaluating for potential future use? Will you be able to compare competing tools?

## Power of Face-to-Face Interaction

It's a phenomenon well-studied and well-known that the most valuable communication is done in person. While virtual learning has its uses, organizational behavior experts agree that face-to-face meetings are the best way to learn, cutting through multi-tasking tendencies that divert and dilute our attention. In-person meetings provide a sense of intimacy, connection and empathy that is impossible to replicate via video. Greeting a colleague in the hotel lobby, having a spontaneous conversation, speaking with an exhibitor on the latest technology solution, following-up with a speaker after a session — these are just a few examples of the type of interactions that provide the intangible benefits of in-person learning.

## Quantifying the Benefits

To be most effective, consider clearly articulating the connections between your organization's knowledge requirements and the training program. Do not assume that your manager will automatically make these distinctions.

The following Benefits Worksheet can help you organize and focus on the benefits. Use whatever is most applicable to your organization and its training needs. Feel free to expand as you see fit.

## Benefits Worksheet

Your Organization's Benefits	Specific Needs and the Training Sessions that Meet Them
Networking Benefits	This training will allow [specific team members] to network with other professionals and suppliers in the industry. We will be able to take the pulse of which tools, technologies and processes are applicable to common problems (or our specific situations) and hear new ideas for application.
Teambuilding (if sending multiple organization members)	This training will help build our team, providing a forum for team members to discuss tools, technologies and processes and how we might apply them in our organization to improve our communication, information products, workflow and processes.
Current Tools	
Future Tools Exploration	
Current Technologies	
Future Technologies Exploration	
Current Processes	
Future Processes Exploration	
Suppliers with Tools & Technologies You Are Exploring	