Guidebook: Succession Planning for Local Health Departments

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

NACCHO
National Association of County & City Health Officials

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GUIDEBOOK INTRODUCTION

PREFACE

The *Succession Planning Guidebook* is provided to you by the Ohio State University Center for Public Health Practice in partnership with the National Association of County and City Health Officials. This guidebook serves as a companion resource to the eLearning course - Succession Planning for Local Health Departments: Ensuring Talent Sustainability for Optimal Public Health Outcomes.

WELCOME

Succession planning can and should be a process consciously and thoughtfully approached throughout the employee life cycle to ensure knowledge is successfully transferred between mission critical individuals and leadership roles are continually manned. This process should take place well before a leader or mission critical individual transition takes place. The goal is the assurance of continued quality delivery of public health services. This session will provide a tangible framework/template to get you started.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Organizational success relies on having the best human capital resources to meet the needs of their clients, partners, stakeholders, employees, and communities. In addition to inevitable and constant change within an organization, you can count on human and intellectual capital leaving the organization or position through planned changes, retirements and unanticipated departures.

We will provide you with concepts and processes that will help you mitigate the challenges associated with employee turnover in your organization and better ensure business continuity through effective succession planning.

It is important to recognize that many local health departments may not be able to discuss succession planning as a formal process and may need to refer to it in another way. In this course we will present key succession planning definitions, activities and strategies using industry terms. The goal is to provide you with information on best practices, but feel free to adapt the process, including re-naming or re-framing elements, as needed.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Ohio State University, Center for Public Health Practice

Meredith Cameron, MSW

NACCHO

Ashley Edmiston, MPH

Tahlia Gousse, MPH

Local Health Departments

Dorothy Adams, MPA, LEHS	Salt Lake County Health Department, UT
Laura Conklin, MPH	City of Wauwatosa Health Department, WI
Jennifer Ludwig, MS	Tri- County Health Department, CO
Zumana Rahman, MHA	Multnomah County Health Department, OR
Molly McNamara	Maricopa County Public Health, AZ

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MODULE 1: SUCCESSION PLANNING OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

In this module, we will review the definition of succession planning and the importance of having a plan. We will also discuss the general differences between succession planning and replacement planning.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Define succession planning
2. Describe the importance of having a succession plan
3. Differentiate between replacement planning and succession planning

WHAT SUCCESSION PLANNING IS AND IS NOT

Succession Planning

- Is NOT simply identifying someone with promotion potential to fill a vacant position when it occurs
- Is a process that ensures two things:
  1. **Organizational talent needs are identified and aligned with strategy and objectives**
  2. Key positions are identified, and a pipeline of new leaders is developed

IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN TERMS

Succession planning complements and is a follow-up to workforce planning and is typically determined in the action planning phases of workforce development planning.

Succession planning efforts build a talent pool to help ensure continuity by developing potential successors who could compete for future positions. The decision to pursue succession planning is typically determined within a specific step of a workforce plan. A succession plan does not commit to a specific person that they will get a promotion. Several people are typically in the succession pipeline.

If the intention is to prepare a talent pool for a position or positions targeted for succession planning, those positions that are best to target are typically identified during the workforce planning process. If the intention is to capture knowledge of staff that may be departing soon, a comprehensive workforce planning process may not be needed. There are succession planning tools that can be used for this. Select succession planning tools can be used on an as-needed basis, like the Knowledge Transfer Questions or the Succession Profile Worksheet.

Succession Planning

- Identifies leadership or mission critical roles, therefore determining the knowledge, skills, abilities, and competencies required in correlation to the strategic goals of the organization.
- Takes into account data and trends that affect turnover and retention.
- Provides a development program for identified talent with the desire for the next role, as well as the aptitude to grasps the new information/ knowledge required.

Replacement Planning:

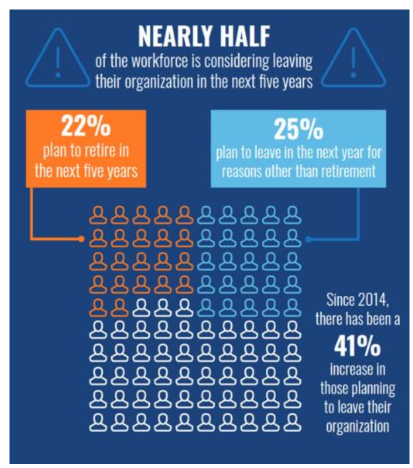
- Identifies short-term or long-term backups.
- Puts incumbents in place who have the base skill set but are not necessarily developed to understand the new working environment or to smoothly transition into the new responsibilities.
- Focuses on emergency replacements.
- Works under the assumption that the structure of the organization will not change.
- Typically, there may be two or three "replacements" identified in the organization.

WHY IS SUCCESSION PLANNING IMPORTANT?

Proper succession planning instills confidence across the organization that selection of future leaders is strategic, comprehensive, and fair. This confidence is the foundation for trust in the organization's leadership, growth, stability and ongoing success.

WHY IS SUCCESSION PLANNING IMPORTANT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH?

Health departments are facing a high rate of turnover which threatens the sustainability of the workforce. National findings from the 2017 Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey (PH WINS) show that nearly half of the public health workforce is considering leaving their organization in the next five years. Since 2014, there has been a 41% increase in those planning to leave.



Of those planning to leave, 22% indicated it was for retirement, while 25% said they planned to leave in the next year for reasons other than retirement. For this group, the top 5 reasons for leaving include inadequate pay, lack of advancement, workplace environment, job satisfaction and lack of support.

These statistics paint a grim picture and pose a huge challenge for local health departments in ensuring continued services and retaining organizational knowledge in an effort to sustain the capacity needed to keep their communities healthy and safe. While many health departments can't combat the "silver tsunami" of an aging workforce preparing to retire, implementing effective succession planning processes can slow the departure of staff by helping to address some of the top 5 reasons cited for leaving.

Source: (2017 PH Wins Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey)

WHO ARE THE SUCCESSORS?

Succession planning is a systematic method for preparing future leaders and mission critical practitioners to compete for positions as they become available.

Therefore, while all employees will benefit, not all will be identified as an active participant.

THE COST OF NOT ENGAGING IN SUCCESSION PLANNING

While succession planning does involve significant time and effort, it is an investment in your agency's future. Let's look at the cost involved in **not** having a succession plan.

Ask these questions about your organization:

- How much does it cost to hire a replacement for a key position?
- What is the cost of loss productivity?
- How do these costs and losses affect your remaining employees?
- How much time will it take to fill the position?

Since one of an organization's largest investments is in its people, as fiduciary stewards, we must ensure all people-related plans and decisions support this investment. Planning for talent is one of the most impactful ways to do just that.

NOTES

MODULE 2: THE CASE FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

In this module we will delve into detail about the benefits of succession planning as we discuss the business case for why succession planning is critical and how it should be directly connected to your organization's strategic plan as well as other workforce planning processes and data that should contribute to it.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Describe the business case, including:
    - A. Organization, employee and client benefits.
    - B. Workforce statistics that drive the need for succession planning.
    - C. Processes and counterparts that correlate with the succession planning process.

WHAT IS THE BUSINESS CASE FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING?

Succession planning is smart business planning. It allows you to proactively develop people, rather than simply naming them as replacements, as mentioned in Module 1. Succession planning is about making sure your organization can continue to grow and move forward. It helps to build the bench strength of your organization to ensure long-term health, growth, and stability.

> **"Succession planning helps build the bench strength of an organization to ensure the long-term health, growth and stability."**
>
> -Taela Wilson, Senior HR Consultant,
> Saba's Strategic Services

THE SUCCESS IN SUCCESSION PLANNING

Organizational Benefits

- Stabilize performance
- Ensure continuity of leadership
- Develops pipeline of skilled workers
- Minimizes disruption during change (business continuity)
- Enhances knowledge transfer
- Makes "employer of choice" – gets you the better workers
- Employee engagement/loyalty/commitment
- Provides structure for skills development/training
- Reduced costs
- Helps ensure long-term health, growth and stability

Employee Benefits

- Improved communication and morale
- Improved effectiveness
- Personal/professional development path

Community and Partner Benefits

- Improved reliability
- Improved staff knowledge
- More efficient service
- Increased staff responsiveness/pride

WORKPLACE REALITIES

Let's look at a couple of workplace realities that are business case drivers for succession planning.

While Baby Boomers are staying in the labor force at higher rates unseen in previous generations, 22 million Baby Boomers are still projected to leave the workforce over the next 10 years (that's 5,900 per day)! The labor market is finding that there are insufficient replacements available.

While this statistic looks across all industries, public health paints a similar picture. As you learned in Module 1, the 2017 PH WINS showed that nearly half of the local governmental public health workforce is considering leaving their organization in the next five years.

Well thought out succession planning can help the public health industry avoid a labor crisis in coming years.

Sources:

- (2017 PH Wins Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey)
- (RICHARD FRY. The Pew Research Center. JULY 24, 2019. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/07/24/baby-boomers-us-labor-force/)

IMPORTANT COMPLEMENTS TO INFORM SUCCESSION PLANNING

Another important component to the business case for succession planning is that there are four key processes that feed into and out of succession planning that may already exist at your organization.

In addition to alarming workforce statistics that drive the need for succession planning, there are several important requirements and processes that coincide with the succession planning process and should directly align with or inform the succession plan.

- The organization's strategic plan
- The choice to pursue public health accreditation
- The public health core competencies
- Your organization's workforce data

STRATEGIC PLANNING IN SUCCESSION PLANNING

Indicates an agency's current position and the directions the agency can follow to achieve its goals.

The strategic plan:

- Provides criteria for monitoring progress and outcomes.
- Provides a clear picture of where it is headed, what it plans to achieve and how, and measures to monitor progress.
- A leadership tool grounded in decisions the organization has made about strategic priorities for the near future.
- Based on these priorities, provides a basis for future decision-making.
- Fundamental to effective management

Look at this example, which illustrates how the succession plan is rooted in the strategic plan goal:

THE METROPOLIS LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT WILL FOCUS MORE ON FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE IN THE FUTURE. FOR PROGRAM MANGER JOBS, THERE IS AN EXPECTATIONS THAT THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE BUDGET AND FINANCIAL TRACKING OF THE DIVISION. SO POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS WILL NEED TO TAKE CLASSES, PARTICIPATE IN FINANCIAL REVIEWS, WORK ON PROJECT TEAMS DEALING WITH BUDGETING AS PART OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT.

Resource: NACCHO's Strategic Planning Guide

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AS KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

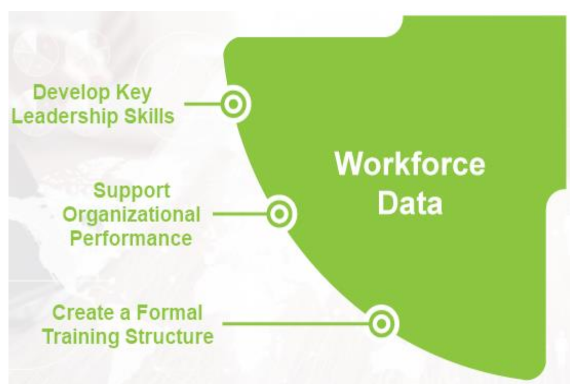
Succession planning doesn't start with people. It starts with the requirements of the position.

- Developed by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice (Council on Linkages), the Core Competencies for public health professionals can serve as a means of assessing or determining Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for a variety of positions within your health department.
  - The eight domains reflect skill areas within public health.
  - The three tiers represent career levels for public health professionals.

Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals: http://www.phf.org/resourcestools/Documents/Core

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AS KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Develop Leadership Skills: Key leadership skills should be determined and talent gaps identified through competency assessment.
Support Organizational Performance: It can support organizational performance by aligning with prioritized strategic areas and organizational performance metrics.
Create a Formal Training Structure: A workforce development plan, such as those required for PHAB accreditation, is an effective way to regularly assess skills, provides a **formal structure** and accountability for implementing a plan to address skill gaps, allows the agency to develop their own approach to workforce assessment and training by identifying competency frameworks, including an ability to prioritize leadership development.



ALIGNING YOUR SUCCESSION PLAN WITH PUBLIC HEALTH ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND MEASURES

Effective public health practice requires a well-prepared workforce.

Domain 8 of the Public Health Accreditation Board focuses on the need for health departments to maintain a trained and competent workforce to perform public health duties.

PHAB standards and measures https://phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/PHABSM_WEB_LR1-1.pdf

THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN SUCCESSION PLANNING

Standard 8.1 - Encourage the Development of a Sufficient Number of Qualified Public Health Workers.

- Succession planning presents an opportunity to demonstrate a health department's efforts in building relationships and/or collaborations that promote the development of future public health workers.

Standard 8.2 - Ensuring a competent workforce through the assessment of staff competencies, the provision of individual training and professional development, and the provision of a supportive work environment.

- The measures within Standard 8.2 further emphasize the importance a succession plan can be to sustaining accreditation support.

Other touchpoints to PHAB domains:

- **Domain 5, Standard 5.3:** Develop and Implement a Health Department Organizational Strategic Plan
- **Domain 6, Public Health Laws**
- **Domain 9, Standard 9.2:** Develop and Implement Quality Improvement Processes Integrated Into Organizational Practice, Programs, Processes, and Interventions
- **Domain 11, Standard 11.1.5:** Develop and Maintain an Operational Infrastructure to Support the Performance of Public Health Functions
- **Domain 12, Standard 12.1:** Maintain Current Operational Definitions and Statements of the Public Health Roles, Responsibilities, and Authorities

MODULE 3: STEPS AND PHASES OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

INTRODUCTION

Now that you understand the principles associated with succession planning, its importance, and the business case for its implementation, let's look at the steps, resources, and tools for building a successful plan.

In this module you will learn how to approach succession planning, as well as key steps and tools for execution.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Describe the steps, resources and tools for building a successful succession plan.

APPROACHES TO SUCCESSION PLANNING

There has been a significant amount of literature published on the concept of succession planning. The seminal works of Walter Mahler in the 1970s provided the foundation on which all other succession planning models have been built. Mahler's work gained recognition when it was used as the succession planning model for General Electric, which was the gold standard for succession planning practices. Mahler's work was outlined in his book, "Executive Continuity', which was followed by three other books on the topic. Mahler's work has been advanced by many, and some of the noteworthy were penned by his colleagues in the critically acclaimed "The Leadership Pipeline: How to Build the Leadership Powered Company". Based on the foundation provided by Mahler was born various approaches to succession planning.

We will deep dive into one general but comprehensive approach that include steps that are highlighted across several models.

PHASES TO SUCCESSION PLANNING

There are several phases in Succession Planning.

Preparation	Alignment	Analysis	Strategy	Implementation	Evaluation
Understand what succession planning is and how it will benefit your agency.	Align the goals of the succession plan with the strategic direction or the organization.	Identify key positions and analyzing the existing talent pool	Develop succession planning strategies to address results from analysis and the metrics to evaluate success	Document the succession planning phases (preparation, alignment, analysis and strategy into a comprehensive plan). Execute the plan.	Determine how well the plan is being executed and if the plan is meeting the desired needs of the organization

NOTES

SUCCESSION PLAN STEPS: PREPARATION PHASE

Preparation Steps:

1. Get to know succession planning.
2. Build your succession planning team.
3. Prepare your team.

PREPARATION STEP 1: GET TO KNOW SUCCESSION PLANNING

The informed leader.

- The person(s) leading the succession planning effort should:
  - Become fully informed about the succession planning process.
  - Have a thorough understanding of the benefits to the organization.
  - Speak with and learn from other LHDs that have implemented succession planning processes.

Suggestions for small agencies.

Many business leaders and HR practitioners believe that succession planning is a complex process and a practice restricted to the largest organizations with the most sophisticated organizational development departments. On the contrary, succession planning can be of great value to smaller organizations that have fewer resources available for knowledge management programs and the formal, structured development of employees.

- Create an organizational/unit chart.
- Develop a timeline of retirement eligibility for key positions.
- Consider questions such as:
  - When do you expect them to leave?
  - Where do you expect to get replacements?
  - Are replacements abundant and readily available? If not, where will they come from?
- Identify those who are possible successors and discuss how they will be developed to compete.
- If feasible, work with HR to identify and build a relationship with successors.

Remember, if you are a small health department you would not necessarily utilize an approach as robust as the one we will cover in this module. The information presented here outlines a process based on best practices. Do the activities that make the most sense for you and your health department. Capture essential information and key recommendations into your written succession plan.

PREPARATION STEP 2: BUILD YOUR SUCCESSION PLANNING TEAM

To successfully implement a succession plan, it may be important to develop a team or committee. Smaller local health departments may not be able to assemble a team. However, the characteristics listed are important to consider for any person leading the succession planning effort.

Overall, there are several leadership characteristics to consider when determining who will be involved in the succession planning effort. These include leadership and navigation, ethical practice, business acumen, an ability to manage relationships, cultural awareness, effective communication, critical evaluation, and an understanding of transformational or transactional effectiveness.

In addition to characteristics, it is important to recognize which programs, divisions, or positions you want to ensure are part of your team, including a representative from your Board of Health.

	Characteristic	Meaning
☐	**Leadership and Navigation**	The ability to direct and contribute to initiatives and processes within the organization as well as an understanding of how to navigate the organization.
☐	**Ethical Practice**	The ability to integrate core values, integrity, and accountability throughout all organizational practices.
☐	**Business Acumen**	The ability to understand and apply organizational knowledge that will contribute to the succession plan.
☐	**Managing Relationships**	The ability to manage interactions that will support succession plan development.
☐	**Cultural Awareness**	The ability to value and consider the perspectives and backgrounds of all parties.
☐	**Effective Communication**	The ability to effectively exchange information with partners and stakeholders.
☐	**Critical Evaluation**	The ability to operate at a level of critical evaluation, interpret information, and make business decisions and recommendations.
☐	**Transformational/Transactional Effectiveness**	Understands that soft skills are as important as technical skills and demonstrates effectiveness in both areas.

Assistance with important processes.

In addition to possessing certain characteristics and skills, there are several key tasks that will need to be executed. Consider succession planning team members who can assist with the tasks listed here:

- Lead and organize the succession planning effort
- Delegate and monitor succession planning activities/tasks and ownership
- Develop the business case
- Develop an appropriate approach to pipeline assessment
- Analyze the workforce and pipeline data
- Develop succession profiles
- Write the succession plan

For health departments who don't put together a robust team, the list of tasks noted here may still be helpful in understanding what activities may need to be simplified to work within the constraints of a smaller group. To fill voids, smaller agencies may consider reaching out to colleges of public health or even community members to assist with the tasks.

Project management role.

Due to the number of moving pieces this process entails, it is highly recommended that a **Project Management role** be incorporated into succession planning. Tasks and activities should be formally assigned and tracked. If you don't already use a project management software program, Excel offers several free templates.

Example:

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status (Assigned, In Progress, Complete)	Comments
Develop Pipeline Assessment Tool	John Doe	September 30		
Create Incumbent Knowledge Management Surveys	Jane Doe	October 15		
Populate Succession Profiles	Ron Smith	November 1		

Help from human resources.

If accessible, it is helpful to enlist the assistance of a human resources professional. HR can play an integral part in the succession planning process and may assume various roles depending on the size of the agency or resources available within an agency. HR may take on the role of a succession planning consultant and share the expertise with members on the succession planning team. Some of the ways that HR can help are listed here.

Human resource professionals can help:

- Identify key personnel who can assist.
- Share your goals with the organization.
- Get leaders involved in your planning process.
- Identify, capture, and transfer required information/ knowledge to upcoming leaders and mission critical practitioners.
- Provide access to data related to future public health workforce needs.
- Provide information regarding human capital trends and forecasts that impact the succession plan.
- Guide the team to any training and development opportunities to help prepare for succession plan development.

PREPARATION STEP 3: PREPARE YOUR TEAM

Training and documentation.

In this step it is necessary to equip your team with the training and documentation necessary to prepare them to develop the succession plan. To help the team prepare, consider providing:

- This course or the reference guide from it.
- A preview of the forms/documents that will need to be completed throughout the process.
- Your organization's strategic plan (mission, vision, values, and goals especially).
- Sample elements from completed succession plans and succession plan template.

A major output of the succession planning process is **a formal, written succession plan**. It is used to document and communicate:

- The findings and results determined during the Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy phases of the succession planning process.
- The Implementation and Evaluation plans.

This document can be filled in/completed as you work through the various phases of succession planning. Provide a copy of the proposed template and review the questions that will be answered during the succession planning phases.

Resource: Succession Plan Template (Can be downloaded from the eLearning course Resources tab.)

SUCCESSION PLAN STEPS: ALIGNMENT PHASE

Alignment Steps:

1. Understand the strategic plan and the workforce plan.
2. Develop the business case.
3. Determine the budget for succession planning strategies.

ALIGNMENT STEP 1: UNDERSTAND THE STRATEGIC AND WORKFORCE PLANS

The strategic plan.

The succession plan should be anchored on the overall organizational **strategic plan** (the roadmap for your organization).

The succession plan needs to strongly correlate with anticipated challenges the agency may be facing and what talent is needed to successfully address them. Taking a cue from your organization's approach to strategy and achievement, its goals and objectives will help you craft a succession plan that's aligned, effective and reflects your culture.

Consider the questions listed here in order to tie succession planning to something bigger, such as the organization's mission and vision. This helps create buy-in for the succession plan itself.

Questions:

- What is your organization's mission and vision?
- How would you describe the link between succession planning and the mission, vision, and values?
- What are your organization's strategic goals?
- What challenges or weaknesses is your organization facing that succession planning may help to address?
- How would you describe the link between your strategic goals and succession planning?
- How will succession planning benefit your organization (e.g. retirement bubble, competition for talent)?

Resource: NACCHO's Strategic Planning Guide

The workforce development plan.

You also learned in the previous module that your **agency's workforce development plan** should inform your succession plan.

You should be able to answers to these questions.

- What are your organization's workforce planning strategies?
- How would you describe the link between your workforce planning strategies and succession planning?
- What workforce data supports the business case for the succession planning goals (e.g. a chart or narrative explaining that 62% of senior leaders will retire within 5 years).

If your agency does not have a workforce development plan and is looking to create one, The Ohio State University has a template that has been used by several health departments and includes the elements required for PHAB accreditation documentation.

Resource: OSU Workforce Development Plan Template

Workforce data.

The use of an organization's **workforce data** is an essential component of succession planning.

This data can be used to:

- Identify prioritized leadership skills and gaps.
- Compare staff skills against organizational priorities.

A workforce development plan, such as those required for PHAB accreditation, is an effective way to regularly assess skills, provide a formal structure and accountability for implementing a plan to address skill gaps, and allow the agency to develop their own approach to workforce assessment and training by identifying competency frameworks, including an ability to prioritize leadership development.

ALIGNMENT STEP 2: DEVELOP THE BUSINESS CASE

Questions to consider.

Developing the business case or justification for succession planning is an important part of articulating why the organization is pursuing succession planning. A business case should be sufficiently presented in one to two paragraphs.

Given what we have discussed in the Alignment steps leading up to the development of the business case, here is a set of questions to guide its creation. You may notice that several of the questions are the same or similar to those listed in the succession plan template. The business case will be developed prior to the documentation and completion of your succession plan and will be shared with leadership and stakeholders to gain buy-in and commitment. Its contents will also transition well into your succession plan.

- What are your organization's strategic goals?
- What are your organization's workforce planning strategies?
- How would you describe the link between your strategic goals and succession planning?
- How would you describe the link between your workforce planning strategies and succession planning?
- How will succession planning benefit your organization (e.g. retirement bubble, competition for talent)?
- What is the workforce data that supports the business case for the succession planning goals (e.g. a chart or narrative explaining that 62% of senior leaders will retire within 5 years).
- What are the succession planning goals?

Example succession planning goals:
- To promote seamless staff transitions
- To preserve legacy of achievements and experiences
- To focus planning on critical vulnerabilities in the workforce
- To build pools of talent capable of competing for essential positions
- To encourage employee engagement, collaboration, and mentorship

Business case examples.

Example 1:

The first goal of the organization's strategic plan connects to succession planning. This goal seeks to establish and implement workforce planning that will enable the agency to accomplish the mission. We are concerned with losing institutional knowledge of senior level experts within various components of the agency. With the eligibility of retirement for that pool of employees, it is vital that we strategically work towards filling skill gaps by hiring new employees with extensive experience, education and knowledge. In addition, we must continue to implement and monitor various programs that develop employees with the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the duties that are critical to meeting the agency's objectives and goals.

Example 2:

The first goal of the organization's strategic plan connects to succession planning. This goal seeks to establish and implement workforce planning that will enable the agency to accomplish the mission. We are concerned with losing institutional knowledge of senior level experts within various components of the agency. With the eligibility of retirement for that pool of employees, it is vital that we strategically work towards filling skill gaps by hiring new employees with extensive experience, education and knowledge. In addition, we must continue to implement and monitor various programs that develop employees with the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the duties that are critical to meeting the agency's objectives and goals.

ALIGNMENT STEP 3: DETERMINE THE BUDGET FOR SUCCESSION PLANNING STRATEGIES

When it comes to succession planning, leadership often considers and plans for the impact of a change in management style and organizational vision, but frequently neglects to consider the financial impact of such a major transition. All succession planning activities should minimally consider –

- **Dual salaries**. Ideally, there will be some overlap between the new leader starting and the outgoing executive leaving to allow for some mentorship and orientation. This time period can be especially valuable in establishing a sense of stability for existing employees. The drawback is the need to pay two executive salaries for an established transition period.
- **Higher salaries**. It is quite common to pay a new leader more than the outgoing leader. A perfect example is when someone has been with the organization for a number of years and has only received incremental pay. A new leader will likely expect a salary more in alignment with industry standards.
- **Hiring costs.** Finding the right person to take over a top executive position may require the help of a recruiter. You may also need to pay for candidates to fly in for interviews and/or local visits.
- **Replacement costs.** Despite your best efforts, you will likely need to replace some employees who decide to leave or are let go due to incompatibility with a new leadership. Budget for these replacements even if you don't think you'll need it.

SUCCESSION PLAN STEPS: ANALYSIS PHASE

Analysis Steps:

1. Identify key positions for the succession plan.
2. Identify competencies key for your LHD.
3. Assess the talent pool and establish the pipeline.
4. Assess knowledge management.

ANALYSIS PHASE QUESTIONS

Questions asked during this phase include the following.

- How are positions identified for succession planning?
- What positions have been identified for succession planning?
- What is/was the process for identifying the talent pool?
- What is/was the process for assessing the pipeline?
- What are the summarized results of the assessment?
- How was knowledge management assessed and what are the summarized results?
- Who are the potential successors for each position?
- What is being done to develop them to compete?

ANALYSIS STEP 1: IDENTIFY KEY POSITIONS FOR SUCCESSION PLAN

There are many reasons why a position may be considered key:

- **Incumbent/Stand-alone positions**: There is only one person who performs the unique position duties in the office.
- **Key tasks**: There are critical tasks that would halt or hamper vital functions.

- **Specialized or unique skills sets:** Positions that require specialized knowledge and/or experience that is only acquired over time or through specialized education and training.
- **Geographic challenges**: If it is difficult for someone located elsewhere to carry out functions.
- **Difficult to retain, or high turnover.** A position or classification for which the agency has difficulty retaining employees due to factors such as environment, position stressors, knowledge drain, wage issues, travel or others.
- **Retirement vulnerable**: An employee will become eligible to retire within five years.

Key Position Categories and Questions

Category	Definition	Questions to Consider
Single Incumbent/Stand-alone positions	Positions in which the expertise is concentrated in one or a small number of incumbents, or there is only one person who performs the unique position duties in the office. Ex. Epidemiologist	What are the unique duties and why did you identify them as such? Can anyone else complete these functions if the incumbent is absent?
Key task	Performs critical tasks that would stop or hinder vital functions if missing.	Would the absence of the tasks prevent vital functions? Can anyone else complete these functions if the incumbent is absent?
Specialized or unique skills sets	Acquired over time or through specialized training or education; hard to replace.	Does the agency have the capacity to provide the required training or development to grow the specialized knowledge? Is there limited bench strength of individuals that can perform the function(s) that utilize this expertise?
Difficult to replace	Position for which the agency has difficulty finding qualified candidates.	Is a skill set needed that can only be gained by working over a period of time within the agency? Has it historically been difficult to attract a qualified applicant pool?
Geographic challenges	Difficult for someone located elsewhere to carry out functions.	Are there unique duties that require the position to be site-specific/dependent? Are there site/location-specific attributes that prevent the position from being elsewhere? For example, systems, accessibility, security classification, materials, safety considerations, privacy)?
Difficult to retain or risk of attrition	High turnover due to multiple factors.	Is there a high amount of turnover in the position? Is the position entry level and used to get a "foot in the door"? Is this position used as a "feeder pool" for other positions? Are there high performers or critical functions that are at risk of leaving due to role dissatisfaction or have high demand skill sets?

A Position Inventory spreadsheet can be used to categorize and identify positions that will be targeted in succession planning.

Resource: Key Position Categories and Questions (Can be downloaded from the eLearning course Resources tab.)

Position inventory.

Here is a simple example of a Position Inventory spreadsheet used to categorize and identify positions that will be targeted in succession planning. It can also be downloaded from the Resources tab of the eLearning course.

Unit	Department	Position	Brief Description	Single Incumbent/ Stand Alone	Difficult to Retain	Difficult to Replace	Risk of Attrition	Retirement Vulnerable	Mission Essential	Geographic Challenges	Key Task	Succession Plan Target (Y/N)	Knowledge Mgmt Plan Priority Rating (Consider complexity of task, urgency of knowledge transfer, expected departures, etc.) 1= Highest priority 2= Mid-level priority 3= Lowest priority

This list can also be used to prioritize which positions will be targeted first.

Final identification of key positions that will be targeted for succession planning should consider factors such as:

- Agency strategic priorities
- Workforce Assessment Data
- Challenges and trends

For example, your succession planning team may determine that Single Incumbent/Specialized Knowledge/Risk of Attrition positions be prioritized. Followed by Retirement Vulnerable / Risk of attrition.

Resource: Position Inventory Sheet (Can be downloaded from the eLearning course Resources tab.)

ANALYSIS STEP 2: IDENTIFY COMPETENCIES KEY FOR YOUR LHD

It is important to take this time to ensure that the competencies for each key position identified for succession planning are agreed upon and documented. If the competencies for the position were previously documented, now is a good time to review and refine if needed. These competencies will later be used to gauge the readiness of the talent pool, so it is important that they are well thought out and thorough. Members of the succession planning team need to understand the competency model that the agency has adopted.

The Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals is a common competency framework used and adapted by local health departments and was reviewed in Module 1.

When seeking to identify talent for advancement into the succession plan, whether for leaders or mission critical roles, the successful incumbents should possess these competencies or have an aptitude to increase them through a succession planning development initiative. When identifying individuals for placement within the succession plan for leadership or mission critical roles, you must also consider at which level of execution a successful incumbent will demonstrate these competencies.

Competency	Description
Analytical/Assessment Skills	Focus on identifying and understanding data, turning data into information for action, assessing needs and assets to address community health needs, developing community health assessments, and using evidence for decision making.
Policy Development/Program Planning Skills	Focus on determining needed policies and programs; advocating for policies and programs; planning, implementing, and evaluating policies and programs; developing and implementing strategies for continuous quality improvement; and developing and implementing community health improvement plans and strategic plans.
Communication Skills	Focus on assessing and addressing population literacy; soliciting and using community input; communicating data and information; facilitating communications; and communicating the roles of government, health care, and others.
Cultural Competency Skills	Focus on understanding and responding to diverse needs, assessing organizational cultural diversity and competence, assessing effects of policies and programs on different populations, and taking action to support a diverse public health workforce.
Community Dimensions of Practice Skills	Focus on evaluating and developing linkages and relationships within the community, maintaining and advancing partnerships and community involvement, negotiating for use of community assets, defending public health policies and programs, and evaluating effectiveness and improving community engagement.
Public Health Sciences Skills	Focus on understanding the foundation and prominent events of public health, applying public sciences to practice, critiquing and developing research, using evidence when developing policies and programs, and establishing academic partnerships.
Financial Planning and Management Skills	Focus on engaging other government agencies that can address community health needs, leveraging public health and health care funding mechanisms, developing and defending budgets, motivating personnel, evaluating and improving program and organization performance, and establishing and using performance management systems to improve organization performance.
Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills	Focus on incorporating ethical standards into the organization; creating opportunities for collaboration among public health, health care, and other organizations; mentoring personnel; adjusting practice to address changing needs and environment; ensuring continuous quality improvement; managing organizational change; and advocating for the role of governmental public health.

Source: (The Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health)

Core competency tiers.

The core competencies are further organized in three, progressively increasing, tiers, representing the career stages for a for public health professionals.

An example of the first competency, Analytic/Assessment Skills, and the advancement through the tiers is noted. At the Tier 1 level, the practitioner selects and uses data, at the Tier 2 level the incumbent analyzes and interprets data, and at the Tier 3 competency level the leader evaluates and integrates findings into policies, operations, and strategic plans.

Whether you use the core competencies or another recognized competency set, this tiered approach is very helpful in considering what different skills look like across professional stages.

Check all position descriptions and ensure that each captures the most up-to-date competencies.

The competencies should be used to assess the talent pool.

In addition to the key competencies for each position, it may be necessary at this time **to document all education, experiences, and other factors necessary for success** if it had not been done previously.

If there are current job descriptions in place, be sure **to update position descriptions** to identify specific competencies. Define the competencies and identify behaviors that demonstrate them.

ANALYSIS STEP 3: ASSESS THE TALENT POOL AND ESTABLISH THE PIPELINE

Identify the talent pool.

A **"talent pool"** is individuals who may succeed a current incumbent in a critical position and have indicated an interest in being considered for the position. The purpose of identifying a talent pool is to define the employees to be selected for development.

The talent pool can be determined by management or by employees opting-in in response to an invitation or announcement, or a combination.

- **Management/Succession Planners:** In this situation, the succession planners are the ones to define the population of the talent pool. For example, the succession planning team may determine that the talent pool for senior executive positions is all direct reports to the executives.
- **Employees Opting in:** In this situation, inclusion in the talent pool is determined by employees themselves, self-nominating to be considered for inclusion in the talent pool. If an employee wants to be considered, he or she may self-nominate in response to an email from management or the succession planning team. For example, during the succession planning process you may consider all employees for a set of career paths, rather than positions, in a certain department. The succession planning team would send out an email inviting employees to express their interest in selection.
- **Combo:** In another example, that combines the two approaches, succession planners may determine that the talent pool population for a certain position, to be all employees within a specific grade level. A notification is released to invite employees in that group to express interest in development for the position.

Determine talent pool readiness.

The next step in the analysis phase is to assess the talent pool. You will determine the readiness of those who currently make up the talent pool in order to establish the pipeline.

In "The 3 Indicators Corporations Use to Identify High-Potential Employees" LinkedIn article provides useful information on assessing employee potential by looking at Ability, Engagement and Aspiration.

- **Ability**: Competencies (soft and technical)
- **Aspiration**: Motivation to do what is required at the next level of responsibility.
- **Engagement**: Commitment to the organization and its mission.

It is likewise recommended by leaders in the human capital industry that ability, engagement and aspiration are included when assessing talent for all positions.

Tool to assess readiness.

Tools such as questionnaires can be sent to supervisors and/or employees to help assess readiness.

- For example: In a follow-up correspondence to those who opted-in, ask supervisors and/or employees to rate items related to Ability, Aspiration, and Engagement.

It will be important for you to determine which indicators are important in assessing your talent pipeline for succession planning purposes.

Additionally, it is beneficial to develop a **three-point scale, for example, (1, needs improvement, 2. competent, 3. expert)** for each of the parameters to assist in evaluating potential successors for leadership and mission critical roles. This parameter model can be used to evaluate both technical and general organizational competencies.

Here are examples of the types of questions that can be asked of the supervisors of those who opted-in.

Items under ability will vary per position, but aspiration and engagement may be the same for all. The Ability portion of the questionnaire should include the primary competencies that were finalized in the last phase and can be assessed/rated by the person who opted in as well as the supervisor and the person who opted in.

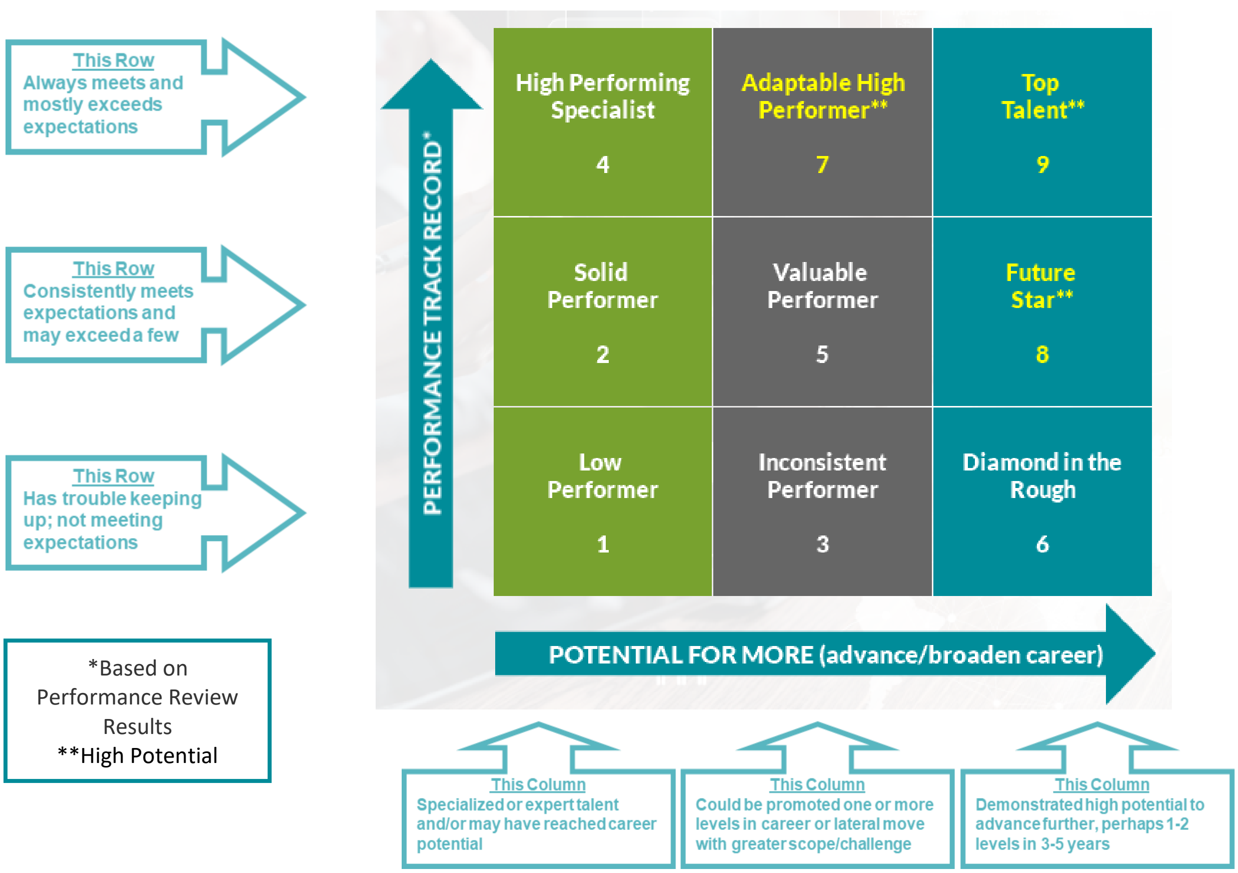
Questions that are less technical questions can be assessed by either or both the person and the supervisor.

Indicator	Example Questions
Engagement (Does the employee...):	• Work with others with varying perspectives to identify solutions and test theories? • Connect to the success of the organization and his or her team? • Set a high bar for excellence and motivate his/her team to exceed expectations? • Demonstrate a positive attitude about the organization and career trajectory within the organization?
Aspiration (Does the employee...):	• Aim to assume more responsibility? • Demonstrate a willingness to take risks and make difficult decisions? • Strive to make an impact within and outside the organization? • Does the employee display initiative to take on responsibilities outside his/her own role?
Engagement (Does the employee...):	• Work with others with varying perspectives to identify solutions and test theories? • Connect to the success of the organization and his or her team? • Set a high bar for excellence and motivate his/her team to exceed expectations? • Demonstrate a positive attitude about the organization and career trajectory within the organization?

Potential matrix.

Another tool that can be used to assess talent pool readiness is to use the Performance – Potential matrix, also called the 9-box. Each box is tagged with a name that describes the readiness of an employee depending on where they fall on both performance and potential. Within each box are indicators that characterize this employee. These may be used instead of, or in addition to the questionnaire proposed on the previous slides and can be given to supervisors or management to assess the talent pool. The results would then be mapped back to the matrix. Here's how it works...

Current level of performance is indicated along the y axis and performance potential along the x axis. The lower left boxes represent lower performers with minimal potential for advancement and the upper right boxes indicate high level performers with increased potential for advancement. Where an employee is placed on the matrix will depend on their performance review results. Employees who fall into boxes 7, 8, and 9 would be considered "high potential".



(4) High Performing Specialist * Consistently exceeding expectations in current role * Specialist likely to be a leader in their field of expertise OR * Solid general manager with strong results at their level * Shows limited interest in alternative or more diverse roles * Narrow or niche perspective * Not judged to have potential to take on roles outside current job family	**(7) Adaptable High Performer** * History of strong results * Demonstrated leadership within and outside of own area * Actively seeks more challenging work * Ready to take on stretch roles at same level * Judged capable of working at more complex levels given appropriate opportunities and development * Has yet to "hit the ceiling" of their potential	**(9) Top Talent** * Excellent performance track record * Demonstrated capability to work at higher and more complex levels * Demonstrates strong leadership capabilities across the business * Quick learner, strategic thinker and excellent problem solver * Drives self and others to greater achievement * Consensus view that this person is highly talented and a high performer
(2) Solid Performer * Consistently meeting expectations in current role * Does not demonstrate capability to handle increasing complexity and ambiguity * May not seek to broaden skills * Shows little interest outside own area * Adapts slowly to new situations * Not judged to have potential to take on roles outside current job family * Specialist versus utility player	**(5) Valuable Performer** * Consistently meeting expectations in current role * Demonstrates some capability to handle more complex and ambiguous activities * Adapts to new situations with time * Sees the bigger picture and acts with it in mind (business, industry, etc.) * Thinks beyond the day to day * Needs to be stretched to fully assess capability to work at higher level	**(8) Future Star** * Consistently meeting expectations in current role * Demonstrates capability and desire to take on more complex and ambiguous activities * Readily adapts to new situations * Naturally curious and a quick learner * Keen to build and broaden skills * May be new to role or level * Not enough track record to judge as "promotable" but shows potential
(1) Low Performer * Not meeting current role expectations * Skill set does not match the needs of the role * Struggles to produce results or shows little interest to do so * Expresses little desire to improve * May have been over promoted or promoted too soon * Fails to adjust to new situations	**(3) Inconsistent Performer** * Not meeting current role expectations * Demonstrates some capability to handle higher level work * Capable learner but may not translate learning to business results * May be new to role, organization, or in the wrong position * Not engaged with current role * Judged as having potential to progress but needs to perform at current level	**(6) Diamond in the Rough** * Not meeting current role expectations * Demonstrates clear capability to handle more complex and ambiguous activities * Demonstrates high potential but may be new to role/level or in wrong role * Strong, quick learner but may translate that to business results * Judged as having definite potential to progress but

Data and criteria.

- Once your indicators are identified and your data is collected, determine as a succession planning team who will aggregate the results in order to give you an overall picture of readiness.
- Aggregate the data collected from all individuals in the talent pool to produce averages for each indicator you select. Each position should have a rating sheet to give you a snapshot of its overall succession readiness.
- It is important to understand the overall picture of the talent pool to determine who be considered part of the current pipeline and to determine next steps including training, development, recruitment and retention efforts.
- It will be important to establish the criteria for individual level inclusion in the pipeline, as well as a communication plan. For instance, you may decide that those who scored 1 (needs improvement) on certain indicators, will be notified, or their supervisors notified, that at this time significant development is needed for them to be included in the succession plan with recommendations for development opportunities to be included in their career development plans. It will be important for supervisors to have direct discussions with those that opted-in about why they are not included in the succession pool. For example, discuss what they need to do to be considered in the future and what gaps need to be addressed.

  Likewise, those who scored a 2 or 3 (competent or expert) may have notification sent to their supervisors that their career development plan should include specific development activities to prepare them to compete for the position should it become available. In other words, once you have your vetted pipeline in place, a development plan for the entire pool can be established and communicated to supervisors of those selected to be in the pool. Consider a similar ranking structure if using the 9-Box.

ANALYSIS STEP 4: ASSESS KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge Management: Collection and management of information from one or more sources and the distribution of that information to one or more audiences.

Allows an organization to:

1. Capture/preserve the knowledge and work experiences of individuals in key positions.
2. Support the continuity of the work when those positions are vacated.
3. Establish processes and resources that support centralized documentation and retention.

It may be important at this time to circle back to your Position Inventory worksheet to list the level of priority for Knowledge Management Planning. Consider the complexity of the task, the urgency of the knowledge transfer, the number of knowledge holders, and upcoming or expected departures when determining the priority level.

Unit	Department	Position	Brief Description	Single Incumbent/ Stand Alone	Difficult to Retain	Difficult to Replace	Risk of Attrition	Retirement Vulnerable	Mission Essential	Geographic Challenges	Key Task	Succession Plan Target (Y/N)	Knowledge Mgmt Plan Priority Rating (Consider complexity of task, urgency of knowledge transfer, expected departures, etc.) 1= Highest priority 2= Mid-level priority 3= Lowest priority

Key questions to assess knowledge management.

There are several questions that can be used to capture and assess knowledge management for key positions, including identifying the knowledge and storing it in a centralized repository.

Questions should be answered by the incumbent and can be distributed via survey, emailed forms or asked during succession planning interviews.

Resource: Questions to Assess Knowledge Management (Can be downloaded from the eLearning course Resources tab.)

Questions to Prompt Employees in Key Positions to Think about Knowledge, Skills, Personal Experiences, and Lessons Learned

- Is there unique knowledge inherent to the success of this position? If so, please describe.
- Does anyone else have this knowledge in the organization? If so, who?
- How critical is it that this knowledge is documented and shared?
- What are the critical ongoing projects for this position? Where is the associated documentation and status reporting kept?
- Of the key meetings/committees/working groups you attend, which are most critical for achieving success in your position?
- What are some of the most important lessons you have learned in your time in this position?
- What are some of the key issues and challenges faced in accomplishing the work?
- What changes would you recommend (I wish I could...)?
- What has been the average number of direct reports for this position?
- What are the key resources necessary for the success of this position (i.e. compliance, laws, regulations, annual reports)?
- What trainings, certs, and professional development do you recommend for this position?
- Is there a repository of the (staff, budget, clients, any other operations records) and if so, where?
- What systems are frequently used and require access?
- Are there any resources or responsibilities that you would reallocate or realign?
- Are there any publications that you contribute to regularly as part of the position? If so, which?
- What methods do you suggest for transferring key knowledge for this role?

SUCCESSION PLAN STEPS: STRATEGY PHASE

Strategy Steps:

1. Develop knowledge management strategies.
2. Develop training, development and recruiting plans.
3. Develop succession profiles.
4. Determine what metrics will be used to measure success.

STRATEGY PHASE QUESTIONS

Questions asked during this phase include:

- What knowledge management strategies will be employed?
- What training and development strategies will be used, i.e. job rotations, leadership training, special assignments; coaching, mentoring, shadowing, learning groups?
- What are the strategies for knowledge transfer?
- When and how will you measure success? Consider the method and time frame.

STRATEGY STEP 1: DEVELOP KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Process and examples.

In this step of the strategy phase, you will:

Determine how succession planners will:

- Address gaps in documentation of policies and processes related to the position.
- Design a repository for position related documentation.
- Develop knowledge/information sharing/transfer processes

Examples include:

- Process, best practices, policy and rule documentation
- Videos and work diaries
- Job aids
- Job rotation
- Job shadowing
- Hire new person before old one leaves

The convergence of the organization's needs and the employees' interests can occur in this succession planning phase. Training and development strategies should be based on the position and the assessment of the strengths and needs of the talent pool.

STRATEGY STEP 2: TRAINING, DEVELOPMENT, AND RECRUITING PLANS

Options.

Options for training and development should be based on the position and the assessment of the strengths/needs of the talent pool.

This Leadership Development Matrix, developed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in partnership with George Mason University, summarizes recommended developmental activities for leadership competencies. The competencies are also relevant for other positions requiring leadership skills, such a team leaders, supervisors, and managers. This matrix may offer some additional ideas for you to incorporate into your training plans.

Resource: [Leadership Development Matrix]

Recruiting externally.

The bench strength of your talent pool may indicate the need to recruit externally. If this is the case, begin documenting strategies for doing so including, but not limited to:

- College recruiting in and out of sate
- Online posting plans
- Affinity group identification for related profession and plans to brand role to group
- Recruitment fairs
- Labor union identification
- Employment office notification
- External agency use, if allowed and required

STRATEGY STEP 3: DEVELOP SUCCESSION PROFILES

The next step is to create Succession Profiles which provide a snapshot of each identified position targeted for succession planning. Succession planning profiles:

- Capture the required competencies and the readiness of the current workforce.
- Assists in the process of assessing and developing staff for leadership and other key positions.
- Are succinct and help the organization's leaders to understand the succession planning efforts.
- Should be created for positions from first-level supervisor to the top executives of the organization.
- Capture information on positions, not on individual employees.
- Include strategies from the workforce development plan.
- Include portions that can be filled out by each incumbent for their own position.
- Outline readiness of the talent pool and strategies to identify and develop pools.

Resource: Example Succession Profile (Can be downloaded from eLearning course Resources tab.)

STRATEGY STEP 4: DETERMINE METRICS

In this step you will determine the metrics that will be used to indicate how well the succession management strategies are filling targeted needs and determine how frequently the program will be evaluated.

Qualitative objectives can be based on developing leadership competencies, such as communication and decision-making skills. A quantitative measure might be the number of vacancies filled from the talent pool compared to the number filled from outside.

Additionally, Key Performance Indicators aligned with succession planning will cascade from the performance measurements associated with each succession planned role, and the higher-level measurements to which they are attached. That is, a measurement of success for someone in a succession plan, is their performance in the new role. This would indicate whether development activities and knowledge management efforts were successful. It is ideal to review the succession planning scorecard or dashboard concurrently with strategic and workforce planning, and/or performance assessments.

Resource: Succession Planning Metrics (Can be downloaded from eLearning course Resources tab.)

SUCCESSION PLAN STEPS: IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

Implementation Steps:

1. Document the succession planning phases of Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy into a comprehensive, formal succession plan.
2. Manage the implementation of the succession strategies.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE QUESTIONS

Questions asked during this phase:

- Who is responsible for implementing the strategies?
- What are the time frames?
- How will information about the succession plan/succession strategies be communicated to the organization?

IMPLEMENTATION STEP 1: DOCUMENT THE SUCCESSION PLANNING PROCESS

The Succession Plan is used to document and communicate the decisions made during the Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy phases of the succession planning process. It also captures the implementation and evaluation plans.

Resource: Succession Plan Template (Can be downloaded from eLearning course Resources tab.)

- Used to document and communicate the decisions made during the succession planning process.
- Also captures implementation and evaluation plans.
- Fill in and complete as you work through the various phases.

As a reminder, this document can be filled in and completed as you work through the various phases of succession planning. In this phase however, it will be important to formalize and distribute the document to the necessary parties. Use the questions provided to document the succession plan.

IMPLEMENTATION STEP 2: IMPLEMENT SUCCESSION STRATEGIES

At the beginning of the process you identified a project manager to take on the role of ensuring completion and tracking of tasks. In the strategy phase, the underlying idea is the same, but this time applied to the implementation. This role ensures that all tasks within the development of the plan are assigned and tracked, but also ensures that the identified activities within the plan itself are executed and that ongoing documentation continues beyond the planning stages.

Task	Responsible	Due Date	Status (Assigned, In Progress, Complete)	Comments
Identifies training programs to fill gaps	John Doe	9/30		
Offer training to talent pool	Jane Doe	1/15		
Identify job shadowing opportunities	Ron Smith	3/30		

SUCCESSION PLAN STEPS PER PHASE: EVALUATION STEPS

Evaluation Steps:

Collect data on metrics determined in the Strategy phase and use it to:

- Measure the effectiveness of succession planning activities
- Communicate results
- Make adjustments to the succession planning process

EVALUATION STEP 1: COLLECT, MEASURE, COMMUNICATE, ADJUST

In this phase, the organization collects data and uses it to measure the effectiveness of succession planning activities against your goals. The best measurements are cascaded and are in alignment with the strategic plan. To that end, succession planning metrics are comparable to any measurement used to determine success in a role. As an aggregate measure, utilize whatever quantitative measures are used to conduct performance assessments for each role. When succession planning is successful, it ensures work is done, goals are met and there are not risks to knowledge management.

- Track progress using defined metrics.
- Communicate and celebrate program success regularly.
- Get stakeholder feedback on strategy success.
- Adjust or adapt programs based on evaluative results.
- Ensure top management stays engaged and provides support and attention to program.
- Make 3- to 5- year succession plans part of organization's strategic planning process.

NOTES

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MODULE 4: ENSURING SUCCESS

INTRODUCTION

The previous module covered a great deal of information to develop your own succession plan for your agency. In this final module, we will wrap up by sharing some strategies and reminders to set you up for success.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Explain how to institutionalize succession planning and what to avoid.

INSTITUTIONALIZE THE PROCESS AND CAPTURE STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

Make succession planning a priority

- Gain commitment from decision makers
- Demonstrate the need and its benefits
- Identify the connection to the strategic direction and goals of the organization

Align work with:

- Senior leadership initiatives
- HR models and requirements
- Union representative input; review collective agreements
- Employees groups (without giving the impression of negotiating, conduct focus groups to get employee input)

AVOID THESE PITFALLS TO SUCCESS

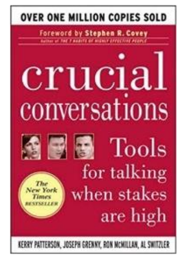
- Keeping succession planning programs and related processes a secret.
- Underestimating talent based on subjective evaluations.
- Narrow minded thinking.
- Focusing exclusively on hard, technical skills.
- Not offering training/development opportunities.
- Expecting employees to self-identify.
- Not holding managers accountable for succession planning.
- Considering only upward succession.
- One-size-fits-all programs.
- Producing too many candidates for too few spots.

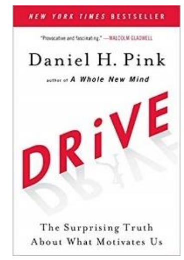
MANAGING DISAPPOINTMENT

Succession planning can provide substantial opportunities for those involved, but it's important to consider the individuals who are not ultimately selected.

In order to manage disappointment, remember the following:

- Ensure ongoing communication and transparency around the process during all phases.
- Consider how the process can open the door for supervisor conversation around growth, especially for candidates who self select.
- Ensure high morale for all high performers by articulating their value and looking for opportunities to challenge and reward good work.





Resources to Explore:

- [Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes are High]
- [Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us]

WRAP UP

> *"He who fails to plan is planning to fail."*
>
> **— Sir Winston Churchill**

During this course we defined succession planning and provided distinction between related terms, such as workforce planning and replacement planning. We discussed the business case for succession planning to include organizational, employee and client benefits, as well as its linkages to other important plans and processes. We demonstrated the steps involved in succession planning, provided sample tools and templates, and highlighted measurements as a foundational principal to succession planning. Lastly, we illustrated tips to institutionalize succession planning.

All organizations can benefit from the principles of identifying crucial job skills, knowledge, and organizational practices and passing them on to prepare the next generation of workers, thereby ensuring the seamless movement of talent within the organization. This process of passing the torch is foundational in succession planning and knowledge management. It is important within the public health arena. Poor succession planning and/or knowledge management within public health results in critical issues within communities. Utilizing the six phases of succession planning will help mitigate risks associated with open positions, lack of leadership and poor delivery of critical public health services. Embedding succession planning as a key process will result in consistent sharing of knowledge and when done correctly, it becomes a seamless, non-event.

"One of the things we often miss in succession planning is that it should be gradual and thoughtful, with lots of sharing of information and knowledge and perspective, so that it's almost a non-event when it happens."

-Anne M. Mulcahy
Former Chairperson and CEO of Xerox Corporation