
Tips and Tools for SUCCESSION PLANNING

Northern California
City Clerk's Association

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Why is this important now?

- Baby Boomers retiring in record numbers
- Early retirement buyouts and pension incentives have compounded the problem
- Fewer numbers of Gen X and Y workers to replace them; fewer choosing to join public service
- Budgets are constricting

POP QUIZ:



**WHAT IS SUCCESSION
PLANNING?**

Succession Planning is:

- Engaging current staff in the process to plan for their departure and ensure a smooth transition for the organization
- Grooming junior employees for senior positions
- Documenting institutional knowledge before it is lost forever

Succession Planning Best Practices

- Providing leadership from the top down and providing sufficient resources to develop and implement a comprehensive program.
- Engaging “up-and-comers” in substantive conversations about the arena of leadership
- Giving aspiring managers a broad range of assignments
- Assigning aspiring managers the lead authority on special projects.
- Giving priority in training and leadership development programs to people who expect to be with the organization for a significant number of years.

Succession Planning Best Practices

- Structuring assignments to include interaction with elected officials, boards/commissions, and executive management.
- Encouraging and financially supporting aspiring managers to become involved in their professional assn.
- Rotating aspiring managers into exec. team meetings.
- Providing teaching by executive managers for aspiring managers on how to deal with difficult political situations or individuals.

Are you ready?

How Do You Create A Succession Planning Program for Your Organization?

Step 1: Determine Need

- Identify critical positions
 - Which positions are those for which a smooth transition is important?
- Project turnover
 - How many employees do you predict will be leaving and in what timeframes?
 - In what job classes will these vacancies occur?

Step 2: Identify Approach to Succession Planning

- Identify the core competencies needed for success
 - Organizational competencies
 - Position-specific competencies
- A backbone to many succession planning approaches

Step 2: Identify Approach to Succession Planning

- Document important information
 - Job requirements and tasks
 - Roles and responsibilities
 - Work elements unique to the position
 - Governing regulations or codes
 - Resources (people and documents)
 - Competencies
 - What else??

Step 2: Identify Approach to Succession Planning

Create opportunity

- Mentor or coach your “up-and-comers”
- Promote targeted or leadership training
- Ensure staff have necessary credentials
- Encourage self-assessment
- Offer individual development plans

Step 2: Identify Approach to Succession Planning

Create opportunity

- Provide rotational assignments/cross-training
- Expose “up and comers” to higher level situations
- Assign special projects
- Promote involvement in professional organizations

Step 3: Ensure a Smooth Transition

- Understand position needs and pick the right person
- Plan for transition
- Provide necessary resources
- Consider ways to bring the new/promoted person onboard (orientation; shadowing; overlap)

POP QUIZ:



**WHAT ARE TYPICAL
COMPETENCIES NEEDED
FOR CITY CLERK STAFF?**

EXERCISE: Let's Brainstorm!

- What skills and abilities are necessary for success?
 - Break into small groups and discuss the following questions:
 - What important roles and responsibilities are associated with the position of City Clerk?
 - What skills have helped you (or the City Clerk in your city) to be successful?
 - What competencies are necessary for success?
 - As a group select top competencies
 - Report out

Discussion

- What common competencies were identified?
- What makes these important?
- Which are universal to the City Clerk profession?
- Are the top competencies important for all to possess or are they position specific?

Application of Core Competencies

- Clarify and document expectations
- Coach/mentor
- Assess individuals
- Enhance performance evaluations
- Determine training needs
- Implement/refine a training program
- Improve position recruitments

Discussion and Debrief

- What are the opportunities to improve succession planning in your organizations?
 - In the City Clerk profession?
- What are your training “Take-aways?”
- How will you apply these tools?
- What was most/least helpful part of the session?

Thank you!

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