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"Incorporating Succession Planning into Your Organization"

Presentation Synopsis and Twenty Question Self-Assessment for Your Organization

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About Patrick Ibarra...

Mr. Ibarra is a strategic thinker, skilled project manager, accomplished trainer, and dynamic speaker who draws from more than 19 years of experience in business and government. Patrick objective, via his Mejorando Group, is to collaborate with executives and managers in translating the forces of change into action by developing, implementing and integrating strategies towards optimal organizational performance.

Offering consultation, facilitation, and training, his firm provides organizational improvement and human resource development services to client-partners that help achieve sustainable change and desired results. Their "instructor-led, participant centered" approach to training limits lecture and focuses on utilizing a variety of instructional methods with the goal for participants to master the knowledge, skills and behaviors emphasized in the training program.

Mejorando is Spanish for "Getting Better All The Time". This reflects our approach with client-partners who are seeking new ways to improve constantly.

As a **former city manager and human resource director** in local government, Patrick invested over 15 years of his career in the public sector and understands very well the particular demands and constraints placed on the people who serve in government organizations and how best to design and implement solutions to achieve optimal performance.

The Mejorando Group's clients include:

- City of Concord, CA
- City of Dublin, CA
- City of Newark, CA
- City of Tacoma, WA
- City & County of San Francisco
- County of Maricopa (Phoenix, AZ)
- County of San Luis Obispo, CA
- East Bay Municipal Utility District (Oakland, CA)
- Sedona Fire District (AZ)
- State of Washington Department of Personnel
- West County Wastewater District (Richmond, CA)

Patrick holds dual Masters Degrees: one in Human Resources and Organization Development from the University of San Francisco and a second in Public Administration from Arizona State University. A Speaker, Conference Presenter, and Educator, Patrick is on the adjunct faculty staff at several universities teaching courses on management development, human resources and labor relations.

SUCCESSION PLANNING: WHAT IT IS AND WHY NOW

Many organizations are, or will soon be, experience a leadership crisis as a large number of employees in upper and middle management positions, mostly Baby Boomers, will retire. About 80% of the senior and middle managers in the federal government are eligible for retirement now and the percentage of those eligible for retirement in state and local governments are unknown – but are expected to be alarmingly high. Add to that, by the year 2010, the U.S. will have 10 million more jobs than skilled workers to fill them and it demonstrates the urgency in which organizations must pursue succession planning.

Let us begin with the needs of your customers. After all, that's why your organization exists in the first place. Customer needs continually change as needs of communities evolve – containing sprawl, stricter environmental regulations, desire for safer neighborhoods, explosion of single-item ballot issues, budgetary restrictions and so forth. Adapting to these ever-changing needs is mission critical for responsive local governments.

Frequently, organizations concentrate their short- and long-term planning process on capital improvements and operational programs, without fully integrating the accompanying impacts on the development needs of the employees responsible for delivering services. Therefore, the capabilities of employees are not systematically developed to match the skills needed and a gap occurs between what the community requires and the ability of employees to respond.

Effective organizations do not passively wait for the future; they create it by investing their time, thoughts, and planning in order to ensure the continuity of their leadership talent. This process is otherwise known as ***succession planning*** which ensures the continued effective performance of your organization by establishing a process to develop and replace key staff over time.

Identifying and developing the best people for key leadership roles is basic to future organizational success. To ensure that success is indeed continued, organizational leaders:

- Need the excellent performance in their organization preserved, if not enhanced.
- Need important leadership positions identified
- Want to strengthen individual advancement.
- Want to have the right leaders prepared for the right positions at the needed time.

Unfortunately, planning for succession is often overlooked or occurs when it is too late – after key people have left the organization and there are no internal candidates to fill the leadership positions. If your organization executes succession planning correctly, it will have fully prepared frontline and management staff to step into positions left vacant because of retirement and general attrition.

The primary task of succession planning is to plan a sequence of personnel moves so that candidates for key positions are known in advance of actual need. This prior identification permits opportunities for mentoring and developmental activities to improve a manager's readiness to succeed to specific positions. It also provides concrete decision making information necessary to minimize the chance of poor selections or the adverse impacts of unforeseen vacancies that can disrupt the continuity of management.

Succession planning can help organizations foster "total people management," a dynamic component of an organization's desire to build a performance culture.

THREE TYPES OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

Currently, your organization may utilize one of three approaches to succession planning:

- ***Simple Replacement planning*** - a process that indicates possible internal replacements for critical positions.
- ***Developmental succession planning*** – a process that indicates not only possible internal replacements for critical positions but also provides for developing individuals to meet the challenge of future organizational change by grooming them for advancement possibilities and for exercising increasing technical proficiency.
- ***Talent pool planning*** – a process that indicates a group of possible internal replacements for critical positions and also provides for developing groups of people to meet the challenge of future organizational change.

A Four-Phase Approach*

An effective alternative to using one of the previously listed three types of succession planning is entitled: The **Four Phase Approach to Effective Succession Planning and Management**. This Four-Phased Approach is used to translate the forces driving the need for succession planning within organizations into the reality of actually executing it.

Phase 1. Establish the Scope

1. Review the organization's strategic plan.
2. Analyze attrition data and retirement projections.
3. Determine external factors.
4. Define parameters of succession planning.

Phase 2. Create a Succession Plan

1. Identify job functions.
2. Identify staffing levels needed and related KSAs (Knowledge, Skills and Abilities)
3. Determine availability of staff
4. Conduct gap analysis and establish priorities.
5. Create workforce plan with strategies and measures of success.

Phase 3. Implement the Succession Plan

1. Communicate succession planning process
2. Implement strategies and tactics for developing employees

Phase 4. Monitor, Evaluate and Revise

1. Monitor progress and make necessary interventions.
2. Evaluate implementation and revise plan based on lessons learned and new succession planning issues.

*American Society for Training and Development, 2004

Included in each Phase are several sequential actions which an organization must undertake. Resist the temptation to "cherry-pick" as it's referred to when organizational leaders select only certain components to analyze and implement as it can lead to a fragmented process and less than optimum results.

Most leaders concentrate exclusively on Phase 3, Step 2 – Implement strategies and tactics for developing employees – to build their talent pipeline by reaching down in the organization for capable people and helping bring them along utilizing a variety of techniques. Techniques such as on-the-job-coaching, job enrichment, task force assignments, to name a few. Each of these development strategies has enormous appeal and tremendous value, if executed well.

However, often employee development is handled in a rather casual and non-methodical way. The concern is what happens to all those talented employees who are denied those opportunities? Moreover, what's the implication for the continued performance of your organization? The main ingredient to leveraging the tremendous upside to employee development strategies is to ensure each of them are aligned with the organizational strategy and not done, arbitrarily.

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

There are several critical aspects necessary for succession planning to be effective in your organization:

- A commitment by the City/County Manager and senior managers, and alignment with organizational strategy.
- Fully utilizing the Four-Phase Approach.
- Competency models that provide a blueprint for high-performers now.
- A functioning performance management system that measures individuals against the competency models.
- Assessment methods that measure how well-prepared individuals are to assume additional, or specialized, responsibility.
- An individual development planning process that helps to narrow the present gap between current competencies and current performance and the future gap between future competencies needed and potential; and
- A measurement method that assesses how well the succession program is functioning over time.

FREE 20-QUESTION ASSESSMENT OF YOUR ORGANIZATION

To determine how well your organization is currently handling succession planning, complete the following questionnaire. Simply follow the instructions, complete it and when you're finished, contact Patrick Ibarra of The Mejorando Group for a free consultation.

Directions: Consider replacement, succession and knowledge transfer issues in your agency. For each item appearing in the left column below, check "yes" or "no" in the center column. Make any relevant notes in the right column. When you are finished add up how many times you checked "yes" and give each "yes" rating a "1." Give each "no" rating a "0."

Has the agency		Yes	No	Notes
Replacement Planning (Basic)				
1.	Planned for the loss of key people?			
2.	Planned for the loss of key data?			
3.	Planned for the loss of key things (such as resources, facilities)?			
Succession Planning and Management				
4.	Gained commitment?			
5.	Is the dedicated responsibility of at least one high-level management employee?			
6.	Extends to all levels rather than being restricted to top positions only?			

	Has the agency	Yes	No	Notes
7.	Is reinforced by a leadership that actively rewards for promoting (rather than holding on to) their best employees?			
8.	Identified competencies?			
9.	Integrated performance management with competencies?			
10.	Determined how competencies will change over time?			
11.	Measured individuals against present and future competency needs?			
12.	Identified individual development gaps?			
13.	Created a strategy to close gaps through organized methods such as leadership development, job rotation, mentoring and other such development programs?			
14.	Approached the development of employees through a systematic rather than anecdotal way?			
15.	Selected ways to measure program success and impact?			
16.	Is supported by frequent			

	Has the agency	Yes	No	Notes
	opportunities for employees to accept new challenges?			
17.	Thought beyond succession to other ways to get the work done (outsourcing)			
	Knowledge Transfer			
18.	Taken steps to identify the relevant knowledge that could be lost as people leave the agency as a result of retirement or other separation?			
19.	Taken steps to plan for collecting knowledge before it is lost?			
20.	Taken steps to communicate the knowledge gained from experience by job incumbents before it is lost?			

(Assign a "1" to every yes score and add up all the "yes" scores above). Place the sum in the box at right.

Contact Patrick Ibarra for a FREE consultation that will include an interpretation of your agency's score and potential next steps. Patrick can be reached at 925 518-0187 or patrick@gettingbetterallthetime.com