

CHAPTER 3: SUCCESSION PLANNING AND RETENTION STRATEGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Effective succession planning will determine the department's success and sustainability in the development of its employees. It is imperative for the department to put in place a viable, interactive and comprehensive succession planning strategy that is driven by the quest for the creation of value competitiveness and the need to enforce dominant logic and or strategic similarly across the department. This strategic approach can only be enforced through the erosion of the current fiefdoms, which tend to operate in silos than in cooperation with other business units in pursuit of the corporate objectives of the department.

3.2 PURPOSE

- 3.2.1** The purpose of this policy is to develop the present skills of employees who are employed by the Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDaT), and to prepare them for higher posts, through equal and fair competition.
- 3.2.2** To ensure that department has the ready supply of right people in the right jobs at the right time, this simply means identifying one or more successors for key posts or groups of similar key posts when they become available.
- 3.2.3** To ensure the active development of a strong talent pool for the future which will be seen as the most important for the department and vital to the attraction and retention of experienced, skilled and qualified employees. The emphasis should be on keeping or retaining the current talent within the department whilst building future capacity.

3.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The department must use succession planning to achieve the following objectives:

- (i) To identify management development initiatives that addresses both the present and future needs of the Department.
- (ii) To highlight the gaps in the Department where no suitable successors are available.
- (iii) To identify individuals who can be developed to address the gaps, matching them with key job requirements.
- (iv) To identify skill shortages that may require targeted recruitment or management development programmes. Attracting specific excellent employees to fill key positions in the Department.
- (v) To ensure that appropriately experienced and qualified internal candidates compete on an equal footing when senior positions are filled.
- (vi) To track key groups of employees, such as graduates, specialists or high-potential staff, to monitor their career progression and reduce the risk of losing these valuable resources.
- (vii) To foster a corporate culture through developing a group of people who are seen as a corporate resource and who share key skills, experiences and values seen as important to the future of the department.
- (viii) To ensure organizational effectiveness.
- (ix) To ensure employee satisfaction and commitment.
- (x) To retain competent staff in the department and improve their productivity.

3.4 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy is applicable to all employees department.

3.5 CHALLENGE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

The major challenge for succession planning is the difficulty of providing the necessary talent to run the Department successfully, both present and in the future.

- (i) What are our key positions?

- (ii) Who is currently in these positions?
- (iii) Do we have candidates for these positions?
- (iv) What are the skills / competencies required for these positions?
- (v) Who is a candidate for more than one position?
- (vi) How are our key players performing?

3.6 CAREER PLANNING AND EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

3.6.1 Career planning and executive development is not just about employee retention and satisfaction: it is about maximizing the workforce department has, and if the Department does not act on the planning and development of its employees, it will lose its high flyers.

3.6.2 Career planning and executive development improve employee retention by giving development and advancement opportunities greater visibility across the department. It helps the department to identify high-potential achievers for development and promotion, should such opportunities become available.

3.6.3 It empowers both employees and their managers to proactively plan their next career moves and establish a solid strategy to achieve it. It in turn helps ensure that training and education efforts are relevant and on-target for both personal career goals and company objectives. Succession planning should also support the leadership development of the department's management team by:

- (i) Recording individual development needs and searching for appropriate courses.
- (ii) Building individual development and career plans.
- (iii) Tracking and administer the whole range of leadership development activities, including on-the-job training, assignment to teams and task forces, job rotation, internal and external training programmes.
- (iv) It is therefore important that in our endeavor to develop employees, the major focus should be on orientating them to the corporate objectives of the department and government in particular. This approach would instill the culture of ownership amongst them and further enhance the success of the succession planning strategy.
- (v) The development of previously disadvantaged people is associated with a high rate of staff turnover due to their marketability as a result of the newly acquired skills and their

demand in the labour market precipitated by race and gender to achieve employment equity targets.

- (vi) Although all employees would be eligible to participate in this programme, it is important to earmark specific individuals for accelerated development. Participants in the accelerated development programme in this regard should be given special developmental experiences, educational opportunities and difficult assignments to stimulate their intellectual capacity.

3.7 HOW ARE SUCCESSION PLANS PRODUCED

Succession plans normally cover both short- and long-term successors for key posts, and development plans for these successors. Where a number of jobs are of similar type and need similar skills, it is preferable to identify a "pool" of successors for this collection of posts.

Activities that are covered by succession planning include:

- (i) Identifying possible successors.
- (ii) Challenging and enriching succession plans through discussion of people and posts.
- (iii) Agreeing job (or job group) successors and development plans for individuals.
- (iv) Analysis of the gaps or surpluses revealed by the planning process.
- (v) Review, i.e. checking the actual pattern of job filling and whether planned individual development has taken place.

3.7.1 The process of producing succession plans, should start by collecting preliminary views from senior managers, and then these views be tested and amended in a number of dialogues. All employees should understand that a process of succession planning exists within the department; this will reduce the level of secrecy.

3.7.2 Those covered by the process should have an opportunity to make an input about their own career aspirations, preferences and constraints. They should also get feedback from the process in terms of how they are viewed by the organization, their perceived development needs and the kinds of jobs moves for which they would be considered.

3.7.3 This succession planning programme should take the form of fast-tracking and or acceleration pool system, which would ensure that, qualified and competent employees who graduated from this programme fill key positions in the department.

3.7.4 This can be achieved through establishing a pool of employees with basic skills at a time and fast-track them through continuous training, development and job experiences to maximize their potential contribution to the department in general and not to specific positions. Various training and development programmes would then be identified in line with the skills needs of the department and the developmental needs and professional interests of the participants.

Succession planning must be linked with the following:

- (i) The objectives of senior managers and the overall human resource plan of the department, e.g. the mix of internal development and external recruitment.
- (ii) Strategies for skill development of those skills which will be needed over the coming years.
- (iii) The job filling process, which needs to use succession planning information when a senior or key vacancy arises or when there is an opportunity to make a developmental move for someone.
- (iv) Individual developmental plans for those identified as part of the "talent pool".
- (v) Assessment processes, which need to feed information into succession plans, for example from appraisal. This part of the move to base judgments of potential on evidence against skill criteria needed for the job.

3.8 KEY LINKAGES / STRATEGIES

- (i) Succession planning should be linked with the department's strategy and objectives.
- (ii) The need to build and retain required levels of skills, discipline and commitment in the department cannot be over-emphasized given the turbulent skills environment within which the department operates.
- (iii) The succession planning strategy would be implemented without creating expectations for future promotion to higher posts among participants and without derogating from the principle of equal competition.

- (iv) The programme would also serve as the pool for internal recruitment of strategic positions in accordance with the public service regulations.

3.9 RETENTION STRATEGY

- (i) It is imperative that the department's retention strategy be built around the need to grow our own talent in accordance with the needs of the department. The departmental retention strategy would be aligned to the principles of the succession planning framework.
- (ii) The emphasis in this regard should be on building leadership across the department. Although all participants would have the opportunity to be retained, their retention would be subject to their contribution and consistence performance and the unique skills that they possess. As such negotiations for the retention of employees in this regard would be done on individual level.
- (iii) Each case would be treated on its merits and hence employees would be retained on their unique terms.
- (iv) One-size fits all approach should therefore be discouraged. Integral to these retention measures is the need to proactively deal with the reasons for people to leave the department. It is therefore important that the department should understand the context within which people leave the department in order to put appropriate measures in this regard.
- (v) The emphasis in the retention of employees should not be limited to meet extrinsic needs of the employees but to substantially address their intrinsic needs through this succession planning programme and other departmental empowerment programmes. Most intrinsic needs of employees can be realized through inculcating the culture of collective and individual commitment and loyalty to the department and government in general. The current stopgap approach of recruiting ready-made employees from other organizations, though important to infuse a new way of doing things, will not be in the interest of the department in the long run.
- (vi) Retention measures will specifically entail the following activities:
 - Create conducive working environment by promoting values of fairness and striving to become a decent employer at all times.

- Institutionalize exit management to verify reasons for losing talent and addressing those reasons.
- Counter-offer highly skilled and competent individuals to retain scarce talent and skills in the department.
- Offer developmental opportunities to staff.
- Subject all occupational classes to job evaluation and ensure correct grading of posts in line with job weights to ensure equal pay for work of equal value.
- Develop and implement health promotion programme and conduct health and safety inspections.
- Developing and implementation of an Employee Health and Wellness Programme.
- Ensure implementation of Diversity Management Programme in the Department.
- Create cultural awareness among employees, including managers through training, communication, team building and cultural events.

3.10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Succession planning is learning process for all involved.

- (i) Senior managers have to learn what kind of succession planning process will work best in their components. They also need to learn how to hold these rather difficult discussions about the strengths and weaknesses of their people and how to best support their career development.
- (ii) The succession planning process usually evolves over time as structures and needs change. The HOD's role in succession planning is giving priority to succession and in insisting on high quality, objective learning.
- (iii) HRM has a critical role in supporting the line managers. This can be by means of career counseling for individuals, advise those doing the planning, information support, etc.

3.11 INTERNAL RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

- (i) This department is committed to be an open, equal opportunity employer.
- (ii) Fairness, equity and transparency will be the core values and principles of staff recruitment and selection.

- (iii) Educational qualification should not, alone, determine suitability but competency, experience and demonstrated potential as well. The objective is to choose the individual who can successfully perform the job from the pool of high potential candidates within the organization.
- (iv) All promotional posts up to level 12 may be advertised internally through our internal communication system first to give internal candidates opportunity to compete for internal promotion.
- (v) Prospective candidates will be selected on the basis of the requirements of the post which include amongst other qualifications, experience and the potential to function in the post as well as leadership qualities as well as the results of previous performance evaluation and future promise.
- (vi) The selection process will be conducted in a fair and transparent manner in eliminating candidates who do not meet the critical inherent requirements of the post.
- (vii) Potential candidates will be given a fair opportunity to compete for an advertised vacancy.
- (viii) Identified employees shall be appointed with remuneration to act in vacant positions from deputy director and above for a period not exceeding three (3) months before the post is filled.
- (ix) The mere fact that a candidate has acted in a similar position previously does not automatically guarantee appointment.
- (x) In deciding the suitability of the candidate the following criteria will be used:
 - a) Formal qualification
 - b) Prior learning
 - c) Requirements for the post
 - d) Experience
 - e) Qualifications
 - f) Potential
- (xi) Should a suitable candidate not be found, the posts shall be advertised externally
- (xii) The promoted employee shall be appointed on a probationary period of 12 months and should he / she underperform even after counseling, corrective action and coaching, he / she will be demoted or dismissed.

3.12 MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Supervisor must ensure that:

- (i) The performance management and development system, especially for members of SMS and MMS, contains a portion aimed at managerial development, not just performance evaluation.
- (ii) Long term accelerated management training and development must be provided to potential candidates.
- (iii) The skills development plan and individual employees' career plans must be supported and adhered to by managers.

3.13 MENTORING

- (i) A mentorship programme for all sections in the organization shall be established either formally or informally.
- (ii) Experienced senior managers shall be obliged to provide guidance to junior managers as well as would-be managers to facilitate their personal development.
- (iii) The mentorship programme may be established and be regularly monitored by the HRD unit to ensure that:
 - a) The protégé is guided through his / her work.
 - b) Some of the responsibilities of the mentor are delegated properly to the protégé and monitored.
 - c) There is deliberate intervention in areas where the protégé shows lack of skills.

3.14 ACTING IN HIGHER POSTS

- (i) Acting in higher vacant posts will be used as part of succession and retention planning;
- (ii) Employees who are appointed to act in higher position for a longer period (more than six weeks) should meet the ordinary requirements for appointment to such higher posts;
- (iii) Employees who act in a higher vacant and funded post for longer than six weeks will be paid an acting allowance in accordance with the Acting Allowance Policy of the broader Public Service;

- (iv) Employee who act in a higher post which is not vacant or funded will not be remunerated but will be recognized in terms of the Performance and Management Development System (PMDS);
- (v) Acting in a higher position does not entitle a person so acting to appointment or retention on such or any post, and this should be communicated in writing when acting appointment is made; and
- (vi) At the very least employees who act in higher positions will be given a fair opportunity to compete for those positions when they are advertised, and if they meet the requirements of the post as advertised.

3.15 MISCELLANEOUS

- (i) The department must afford employees opportunities to be multi-skilled by means of:
 - a) Job rotation: Placing employees on different jobs for periods of time ranging from few weeks to few years, or indefinitely. This may also take the form of temporary assignments of managers to various sections to facilitate understanding of various operations of the department.
 - b) Enlarged job responsibilities so that the employee can learn a lot about the job, sections and the whole department so that they develop a generalist approach.
- (ii) Managers must constantly coach the employees to develop their confidence through involvement and timely performance feedback.
- (iii) A fully fledged orientation of the new employee must be undertaken with emphasis on the following:
 - a) Proper induction by the supervisor of the new employee. Skill gaps must be identified at this stage, the training programme must be devised. Orientation and induction by the HRD unit that reflects the organizations' core values, mission, vision and objectives as well as practices and procedures of the organization.
- (iv) The organization through all its managers must create a climate of open communication, transparency, trust and a sense of belonging in all its practices and approaches.

- (v) A management succession chart must be prepared for each chief directorate and directorate indicating possible successors for each position in the management hierarchy. This shall take into account a combination of current performance data and judgment of potential for promotion.

NB: The final determinant, however, shall be success through the recruitment process



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