SUCCESION PLANNING & KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER – free webinar

1:00 - 2:30 p.m. Pacific Time, Thursday, November 17, 2016

*** Advance registration required for this no-charge webinar ***
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3025118598595013889

Webinar topics:
1. What challenges do local governments face in succession planning?
2. What are effective strategies to attract, prepare, and retain needed future talent?
3. What insights and experiences can you gain from best practices in knowledge transfer?
4. What resources are available to support you?

Presenters:
* Frank Benest, Senior Advisor for next Generation Initiatives, ICMA
* April Lynch, City Manager, Ferndale, MI
* Sally Sherman, Deputy County Administrative Officer, Flagler County, FL

Audience: managers at all levels

1. Register for the Webinar:
There is no charge for participating in the webinars, but each requires advance registration.

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NOTE: Please white list "customercare@gotowebinar.com" to receive confirmation email for the webinar.

Can’t make the live webinar? Register for the webinar and get an automatic email notice when the digital recording is available.

2. Connect with the webinar and audio:
Use your logon information from the email confirmation you receive via email from GoToWebinar. We recommend the telephone option dial-in number provided by
GoToWebinar for sound quality. Depending upon your internet connection, VOIP option for audio (computer speakers) can have delays or sound quality issues.

3. Ask questions:

You may submit questions anonymously via email to ICMACoaching@donmaruska.com in advance or via the webinar during the panel discussion. As moderator for the session, Don Maruska will pose the questions.

4. Presenters’ presentation materials: We post these with the Agenda at “Agendas & Archives” tab of http://icma.org/coachingwebinars. The PPT will be available 24 hours before the webinar.

After a webinar occurs, a digital recording along with a PDF of the presentation materials and results of the polling questions will be available after 24 hours at the "Agendas & Archives" tab of http://icma.org/coachingwebinars.

Post-Webinar Group Discussions:

Many agencies are organizing groups to participate in the webinars (live or recorded) and discuss the topics among themselves after the webinars. Some are summarizing their discussions and distributing them to managers throughout their organizations. Use the Coaching Program as an effective way to enhance professional development in your agency. Here are some discussion starters for this session.

a. What are our agency's particular succession planning and knowledge transfer needs?
b. What strategies and best practices would we like to explore further?
c. What resources would we like to consider?

MORE RESOURCES--See http://icma.org/coaching for valuable resources to boost your career. Sign up for the complimentary email list at http://icma.org/coachinglist to keep informed of the details for future ICMA Coaching Program sessions and other resources.

Enjoy the resources and support to thrive in local government.

Don Maruska, MBA, JD, Master Certified Coach
Director, ICMA Coaching Program – thrive in local government
Author of “Take Charge of Your Talent” www.TakeChargeofYourTalent.com
**Frank Benest**, Senior Advisor Next Gen Initiatives, ICMA

Until August 2008, Dr. Frank Benest served as the City Manager of Palo Alto, California. Frank is a noted consultant and trainer on service redesign, entrepreneurial government, civic engagement, leadership development and succession planning.

Prior to his appointment in Palo Alto, Frank served as City Manager in Brea and Colton, California. He has a doctorate in management from Brigham Young University; a Masters in Public Administration from California State University, Long Beach; and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Yale University. Frank is a Credentialed ICMA Manager and serves as the Senior Advisor to ICMA on Next Generation Initiatives. Frank also chairs the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program.

Frank is Past President of the California City Managers Department and past Vice President of the International City/County Management Association. Frank teaches at Stanford University and has been inducted into the National Academy of Public Administration. In 2011, Frank was recognized by ICMA with its Distinguished Career Service Award.

**April Lynch**, City Manager, Ferndale, MI

April Lynch is City Manager for the City of Ferndale, Michigan, and has just completed her twentieth year in government. She has also worked as Human Resources Director/Assistant to the City Manager for the City of Grand Haven, Director of Human Resources for the City of Monroe, and Assistant City Manager/Human Resources Director for the City of Ypsilanti. With a primary foundation in human resources, she credits great mentors and development opportunities for her migration to the operations side of local government. April is dedicated to encouraging a culture of innovation, failing forward, and consistent professional development. Her current focus is retaining and attracting talent within the ever-changing environment of local government.
Sally Sherman, Deputy County Administrator, Flagler, FL

Sally Sherman is the Deputy County Administrator for Flagler County, Florida. With over 30 years of experience in local government, Sally is a dedicated public servant, experienced in management, administration, legislation, land planning, and human resources. She is a passionate advocate in the arenas of social services and economic development, working daily with citizens and CEOs, county colleagues and community partners, as well as, local, state and federal leaders to advance strategic initiatives.

Prior to joining Flagler County in September 2008, she served as the Assistant City Manager for the City of Deltona, Deputy County Manager for Seminole County, and the Assistant City Manager for the City of Leesburg.

Sally Sherman holds a Bachelor of Professional Studies in Business from Barry University, a Dual Master Degree in Public Administration and Management from Webster University, and a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Troy State University. Sally is an International Credentialed City/County Manager (ICMA) and serves as Florida City County Management Association (FCCMA) District II Director. She is also the recipient of the Florida City/County Managers Association Assistant in Leadership Award for the state of Florida.
Succession Planning and Knowledge Transfer

Webinar, November 17, 2016

ICMA | coaching program

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26 State Association Coaching Partners
Outreach Partners

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- ELGL LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS
- CAMA ACAM
  Administrative Excellence | L’art de diriger
- IHN INTERNATIONAL HISPANIC NETWORK
- LWG League of Women in Government
- WLG Women Leading Government
- NFPA National Forum for Black Public Administrators
  Achieving Excellence since 1983
Overview of Session

1. What challenges do local governments face in succession planning?
2. What are effective strategies to attract, prepare, and retain needed future talent?
3. What insights and experiences can you gain from best practices in knowledge transfer?
4. What resources are available to support you?

Presenters:
• Frank Benest, ICMA Senior Advisor for Next Gen Initiatives
• Sally Sherman, Deputy County Administrative Officer, Flagler County, FL
• April Lynch, City Manager, Ferndale, MI
• Don Maruska, Director, ICMA Coaching Program

…and polls and questions along the way.
Polling Question #1

How many people are participating at your location?
Succession Development Goals

- Create “leader-full” organization
- Ensure organization has competencies & capacities needed to meet big challenges
- Develop a pool of talent ready & able to step into leadership positions at top levels & throughout organization

(Private sector metric for succession is 3 inside qualified candidates for every key position)
The Importance of People Skills

80 percent of management failure is related to poor people skills
“My Powerful Development Experience”

1. Frank’s experience leading team that organized Job Center for Day Workers
2. Classic ingredients leading to robust learning & development experience
Day Workers in Brea

- Day workers congregating in downtown
- Council wanted to use police enforcement
- Organized diverse staff team
- Started conversations with stakeholders
- Proposed Job Center pilot
Day Workers in Brea

- Proposal generated intense community conflict
- Framed issue differently for different groups
- Addressed problems & concerns
- Built support
- Council approved Job Center on 3-2 vote
Key Ingredients

- Meaning & purpose
- Adversity
- “Stretching”
- Autonomy
- Team support
- Resources (especially time)
- Coaching
Accelerating Development

- Focus on “learning by doing” + coaching
- Understand 70/20/10 rule
- Seek “sweet spot”
Four-Prong Strategy

1. Accelerate development of talent in local government pipeline

examples:
- Interim management or special projects
- Training on how to conduct development conversations
- Management Talent Exchange Program (MTEP)
- Leadership Academy
- ICMA Coaching Program
2. Capture and transfer knowledge

Examples:
- Desk manuals
- Transition planning formats
- Wiki’s (“palopedia”)
- Videotaped interviews with retirees
- Expert yellow pages
Four Prong Strategy (con’t)

3. Re-recruit & retain talent, including early-, mid- and late-career talent examples:
   □ Learning & “stretch” opportunities
   □ “Stay interviews”
   □ Employee engagement efforts
Four Prong Strategy (con’t)

4. Attract young people into the pipeline

examples:
- Re-branding
- Job shadowing
- Internships
- Apprenticeships
- Management Fellowships
Polling Question #2

Which of these strategies would you like to employ?
Lessons Learned

1. Identify succession development as critical business necessity

2. Ensure leadership from top

3. Engage cross-section of employees who will serve as “champs” in developing plan & implementing it

4. Make “talent development” a primary responsibility of managers

5. Target efforts but make development opportunities available to all
6. Provide array of opportunities, including “soft skills” & coaching
7. Align all organization systems
8. Go beyond classroom training to provide job experiences that stretch aspiring leaders
9. Place responsibility on employee
10. Allow mistakes
Five Things To Get Started

1. Do workforce analysis
2. Identify key talent pool
3. Offer & promote menu of cost-effective development opportunities
4. Engage dept heads in talent readiness assessment
5. Train all supervisors in how to conduct development conversations
Polling Question #3

Which of these things would you like to do to get started?
SUCCESSION PLANNING

Are you Nurturing Your Current Talent?
SUCCESSION PLANNING

Are you Recruiting the Right Talent?
SUCCESSION PLANNING

• CRITICAL HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES IN PUBLIC SECTOR
  
  - A changing workforce
  
  - Need for a diverse workforce
  
  - Increasing turnover rates
  
  - Fast-paced changes in work place and service delivery
SUCCESSION PLANNING

Are you Nurturing Your Current Talent?

Are you Recruiting the Right Talent?
SUCCESSION PLANNING

• STRATEGIC APPROACH
  - Necessary Talent
  - Skills available when needed
  - Essential knowledge and abilities
  - What time commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Title</th>
<th>Incumbent Name</th>
<th>Job Description</th>
<th>Retirement Status</th>
<th>Criticality</th>
<th>Number of Staff Ready Now</th>
<th>Number of Staff Ready in 1-2 Years</th>
<th>Succession Planning Priorities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Growth Mgmt. Dir.</td>
<td>Sue Maple</td>
<td>Supervise and direct staff in the planning, development engineering, code enforcement and building departments in the review of development applications and proposals.</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>Airport Supr.</td>
<td>Juan Lopez</td>
<td>Coordinate and perform work in administrative and operational management of the airport facilities. Ability to assess airport operations related to airport safety, security and environmental needs. Enforce airport rules, regulations and minimum standards. Assists in airport planning; coordinates emergency procedures with emergency personnel; oversees wildlife management and issues NOTAM’s to ensure public safety.</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vet. Services Mgr.</td>
<td>Victor Ross</td>
<td>Planning, directing developing, and implementing all veteran service programs. Compiling reports. Adjutant for Advisory Council and liaison for various service organizations. Must be a veteran.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retirement Status:
- A: Retirement likely within 1 year
- B: Retirement likely within 3 years
- C: Retirement eligible within 5 years

Criticality:
- 1: Critical - Must "hit the ground running"
- 2: Very Important - Fully functional within 6 months
- 3: Important – Fully functional within 1 year

x Training/Assessing Current Staff  xx Recruiting
SUCCESSION PLANNING

EMPLOYEE POTENTIAL = ABILITY + ASPIRATION + ENGAGEMENT

The High-Potential Employee
SUCCESSION PLANNING

Beware of the Halo Effect When Hiring and Planning

People subconsciously bias themselves to like or dislike other people.

We tend to like people who are similar to us, and who we think will like us in return.

People who look like us.
WHAT ABOUT ME!
SUCCESSION PLANNING

BENEFITS OF SUCCESSION PLANNING

- Right people in the right place at the right time
- Qualified pools of candidates
- Stability in leadership
- Target necessary employee training and development
- Helps individuals realize their career plans and aspirations
- Employee can respond to changing demands
- The opportunity for timely institutional knowledge transfer
SUCCESSION PLANNING

Began with the end in mind
Polling Question #4

Where would you like to give more attention?
Knowledge is Power

Succession Planning and Knowledge Transfer
ICMA Webinar
Knowledge is Power

Layoffs have created paths for new opportunities

- Finding new, more efficient methodologies
- Focusing on knowledge
- Training employees across disciplines
The Success in Succession Planning

- Shift succession planning to all positions; don’t focus solely on leadership roles
- Concentration on knowledge transfer will assist in creating leaders
- Not all leaders will be managers

Succession Planning

- Adapting to personnel shifts
- Success of the organization
- Identifying & preparing new
- Remaining successful during change
Leadership and Management: Old vs. New

- Fewer employees
  - Broad skillsets
  - Embracing new technologies and methodologies
  - Shared, balanced responsibilities

- Many employees
  - Siloed skillsets
  - Reliance on old methodologies
  - Approaching responsibilities with tunnel vision
Not All Leaders Will Be Managers

• Government organizations don’t have a breadth of management positions—turnover continues to be low for long-term employees

• Employees are often forced to sit back and wait for retirements
Not All Leaders Will Be Managers

It is critical to:
• Build leaders within the organization, even when promotions may not happen
• Ensure that employees feel valued and have learning opportunities so they can contribute to the mission and vision of the organization
Case Study: Ashley

“How would you feel if every day you came into your office and were told you had to do the same thing, day after day?”
Cross Training

- Knowledge
- Training
- Technology
- Institutional culture

- Knowledge
- Training
- Technology
- Institutional culture
The More You Learn, the More You Earn

• Many employees value learning and growth opportunities over money
Program Design

- In order to implement successfully, departments need to assess where cross training makes sense
Employees are no longer hired as Code Enforcement Officers; they are now inspectors in three levels:

- Inspector I: Code Enforcement
- Inspector II: Housing Inspector/Assistant Building Inspector
- Inspector III: Building Inspector and/or Property Maintenance and Housing Inspector
Focus on Aptitude

• If you want the kinds of employees who will grow and lead, start the hiring process with a vision of the biggest doll!
• Focus on ability to learn, attitude, willingness to lead and participate in training
• Posting for a $13/hour code enforcement officer will net you a different applicant pool than posting with a range of $13-$25 and a focus on a variety of skillsets
Focus on Preparation and Training

“Work plans set the stage for success from the beginning. It holds not only the employee accountable but the management team as well.”
Focus on Preparation and Training: Workplans

Employee Work Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Job Duties, Areas of Growth, and/or Priority areas</th>
<th>Current Knowledge (Time on Job, knowledge of growth area)</th>
<th>Training Needed (College, certifications, hands on, publications, etc)</th>
<th>Time Frame/Status (expectation on completion or status of priority area)</th>
<th>Mentor/Responsibility to Ensure Success (who will be responsible for ensuring success)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Key For Current Knowledge:**
- **Proficient:** No need for further training. They could train someone how to do the job (no need for further explanation)
- **Intermediate:** They have or in the process of learning the requirements of the job. May need follow up or further training. Typically less than six months of learning on the job would make someone intermediate. Please provide more narrative on how you will get them proficient.
- **Beginner:** Typically new skills are being learned under 90 days of training would mean they are still a beginner. More narrative in the boxes explaining what training and time they need to move to intermediate, but ultimately Proficient.
- **Needs Improvement:** Has consistently been struggling to understand concepts or perform duties expected and communicated by supervisor. A monthly review process would be required for any of these items with specific goals/timelines to be addressed. Progress must be identified at the review stage, and/or barriers need to be discussed and a concrete plan of action needs to be established.

Please indicate any required certifications, training and/or further education needed to further professional development goals.
Talent Management

- Focusing on knowledge transfers, whether in the promotional process or employee-to-employee, takes time and effort
- Considering that local government is 100% service-oriented, we need to be invested in our employees

“Succession planning is more than preparing managers for leadership. It’s preparing all employees for being leaders.”
Polling Question #5

How would you like to enhance your talent pool?
Post-Webinar Discussion Questions

a. What are our agency's particular succession planning and knowledge transfer needs?

b. What strategies and best practices would we like to explore further?

c. What resources would we like to consider?
More Resources and Feedback

• Go to “Agenda & Archives” tab under “Webinars” at web site for a recording of this webinar (available in 24 hours) and other professional development resources.

http://icma.org/coaching

• Subscribe to “ICMA Coaching” at http://icma.org/coachinglist to receive latest updates about the ICMA Coaching Program.

• Please complete the follow up survey and offer your ideas for future topics and services.
presentation materials are in Agenda packet at [http://icma.org/coachingwebinars](http://icma.org/coachingwebinars)—note: you can use your browser to save and/or print items from the Agenda packet

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<td>Succession Planning and Knowledge Transfer [advance registration req'd -- see Agenda]</td>
<td>November 17, 2016 - 01:00 PM</td>
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**Archived Videos**

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<td>Survival Skills for Managers [see Agenda for presentation materials, resources, and polling results]</td>
<td>Oct 20, 2016</td>
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<td>Successful Supervision and Leadership [see Agenda for presentation materials, resources, and polling results]</td>
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**Video recordings**
Find helpful resources online
http://icma.org/coaching

ICMA Coaching Program: Thrive in Local Government

The ICMA Coaching Program launched in January 2016 with our new National Platinum Sponsor ICMA-RC. Expanding upon the success of the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program and 15 ICMA State Association Coaching Partners in 2015, we are bringing coaching programs and resources to all members and non-members of ICMA nationwide and even internationally.

Key Services to Thrive in Local Government

The **ICMA Coaching Program** delivers a suite of services to help you grow and enjoy your career.

- **6 live webinars per year** spotlighting best practices on key topics from local government professionals throughout the U.S. -- invite your whole team to participate.
- **Digital agendas and archives** with video recordings and extensive presentation materials and examples from dozens of sessions available in a convenient online library--delivering you "professional development in a box"--when you want it and where you want it.
- **1-1 Coaching resources** to provide personalized support.
- **Talent Development resources** to make greater use of your talent and have fun doing it.
- **Speed Coaching session at the ICMA Annual Conference** and templates for use at local level -- expand your networks.
- **Career stories of ICMA leaders** and rising stars offering career insights and tips.
- **Career Compass newsletters** that address critical career issues.

*All available without charge to promote professional development at all levels in local government.*

ICMA COACHING PROGRAM FLYER UPDATE
1-1 Coaching Resources -- new

Video guide

Being a Great Coach and a Winning Player

ICMA | coaching program
Platinum Sponsor: ICMA-RC
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Being a Great Coach and a Winning Player
Talent Catalyst Conversation – outline

**Topic:** [What topic would you like to discuss?]

*Confidentiality*

*Brief Background* about the Player: [What’s useful to know about you for this conversation?]

**Enliven Your Hopes**

Step 1: Connect with Your Hopes

*What are your hopes about the topic you’ve chosen for this Conversation?*

*Why are your hopes important to you?*

Step 2: Consider Your Concerns

*What’s standing between you and realizing your hopes?*

*Which of your concerns seems most important to address now so that you can make progress toward your hopes?*

Step 3: Tap Your Success Stories

*How have you successfully dealt with concerns like these before?*

*What did you learn from the situation that might help you now?*
1-1 Coaching Resources -- new

live, unrehearsed illustration

Talent Catalyst Conversation -- watch coaching in action
Talent Development
Would you like to make greater use of your talent and have fun doing it? Here are
resources you can use on your own, with a coach, or across your organization. Create
a culture of talent development in the profession.

DID YOU KNOW THAT 30 TO 40% OF TALENT LIES UNTAPPED?
Surveys of hundreds of local government professionals show that even in strong organizations there's more that people could be contributing. You probably have many ways in which you'd like to grow or develop to advance in your career or keep what you are doing fresh and engaging. Or, perhaps, your opportunities and workload are already overwhelming. There are tools to help you not just survive but thrive.

TAP KEYS TO UNLOCK THE GREATNESS IN YOURSELF AND OTHERS
In their book, Take Charge of Your Talent: Three Keys to Thriving in Your Career, Organization, and Life, Don Maruska and Jay Perry describe how everyone can make greater use of their talent and boost their job satisfaction as well. In the following videos, Don Maruska, MBA, JD, Master Certified Coach, and Director of the ICMA Coaching Program, briefly describes the keys and provides real-life examples of how they have made a positive difference for local government professionals and the organizations they serve. If you want to jump to a particular insight or resource, click on "Watch on YouTube" mode, which will give you access to an index of topics by time in the YouTube description. Click on the time segment for what you'd like to see.

To assist you in creating a rewarding new chapter in your talent story, Don has provided a downloadable copy of the Take Charge of Your Talent Participant Guide - ICMA special edition that's complimentary for participants in the ICMA Coaching Program. The Guide is set up so that you can print it out or use it as an interactive PDF that you can fill in electronically as you go along. Even better, share your guide with a coach and benefit from a catalyst for your growth.
Take Charge of Your Talent -- new

practical tools

Take Charge of Your Talent -- Key #2: Accelerate through Obstacles
Polling Question #6

How was the webinar of value for you and your agency? [click all that apply]
Contacts for Today’s Session

• **Frank Benest**, ICMA Senior Advisor for Next Gen Initiatives
  frank@frankbenest.com

• **Sally Sherman**, Deputy County Administrative Officer, Flagler County, FL
  ssherman@flaglercounty.org

• **April Lynch**, City Manager, Ferndale, MI
  alynch@ferndalemi.gov

• **Don Maruska**, Director, ICMA Coaching Program
  ICMACoaching@donmaruska.com

A PDF of the PPT, results from polling questions, and a video recording will be available in 24 hours. Go to http://icma.org/coachingwebinars and click on “Agenda & Archives” tab.
Local governments face shrinking financial resources, escalating demands, and intractable community problems. To address the complex challenges that we face now and in the future, local governments need to develop a comprehensive talent strategy. Just as local governments often develop a 10-year capital plan to address the physical needs of their communities, agencies must also craft a comprehensive long-term human capital plan.

Local agencies cannot address complex problems such as transportation, climate protection, economic vitality, affordable housing, and accessible health care without attracting and retaining talent, especially knowledge workers. The goal of this report is to provoke the thinking of local government leaders about the need for a talent strategy, what it would entail, and how we should implement it.

Contents

The Need for a Talent Strategy
Strategic Issues in Crafting a Talent Strategy
Focusing on Certain Talent Groups
Elements of a Talent Strategy
Implementation
Conclusion
Appendix A: City of Palo Alto’s Growing Our Successors Initiative
Appendix B: San Mateo County Workforce and Succession Management Program
Appendix C: City of San Jose’s Public Sector Career Initiative
ICMA IQ Report  
VOLUME 41/NUMBER 5  
ITEM NO. E-43509

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These reports are intended primarily to provide timely information on subjects of practical interest to local government administrators, department heads, budget and research analysts, administrative assistants, and others responsible for and concerned with operational aspects of local government.

IQ Reports are available as single copies or by subscription. IQ Report Online annual subscriptions (six bimonthly issues) are $119 (members), $149 (nonmembers). Single-copy online issues are $19.95 for members and $24.95 for nonmembers. Some issues prior to 2007 are available in print, at $21.95 for members and $26.95 for nonmembers.

To order, call toll free 1-800-745-8780 in the United States, or 770-442-8631 ext. 377 if calling from outside the United States. Recent IQ Reports can be purchased and downloaded from the ICMA Bookstore at bookstore.icma.org.

Recent Reports

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Creating a Multidimensional Talent Strategy to Avert Brain Drain and Other Future Disasters

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Local governments face shrinking financial resources, escalating demands, and intractable community problems. To address the complex challenges that we face now and in the future, local governments need to develop a comprehensive talent strategy. Just as local governments often develop a 10-year capital plan to address the physical needs of their communities, agencies must also craft a comprehensive long-term human capital plan.

My goal in this report is to provoke the thinking of local government leaders about the need for such a strategy, what it would entail, and how we should implement it.

The Need for a Talent Strategy

Local governments face the following realities:

• Institutions are overwhelmed by accelerating and discontinuous change. (For example, we did not anticipate the global economic meltdown and the impact on our budgets and services.)

• Problems are complex, emotion laden, and divisive. (For example, even if a local government has control of available land and financing, promoting low-income housing is politically challenging.)

• No one institution, including local government, can solve the problems. (As one example, climate protection requires involvement by all sectors.)

• No one institution has the necessary financial resources to solve any significant problem.

• Power is diffuse. (Any interest group, such as an organized neighborhood group, can block a project, such as a group home.)

• Citizens have lost confidence in all institutions, including local government, at precisely the point that we need strong institutions to solve our problems.

• To confront any significant problem, local government agencies must cross boundaries.

Given these realities, local agencies cannot address complex problems (e.g., transportation, climate protection, economic vitality, affordable housing, accessible health care) without attracting and retaining talent, especially knowledge workers.

Why Worry about Talent in Tough Times?

There are several compelling reasons that local governments should worry about talent even as we are eliminating positions and laying off employees during this economic meltdown.

1. With fewer employees, local governments need our most talented employees to help us maintain productivity and organizational performance in the face of continuing and even increasing demands.

2. Our most talented employees will help us redesign service delivery and otherwise develop creative solutions to our most difficult problems.

3. Local governments require ever-learning, flexible, engaged, and committed employees as we continually resize and restructure in the face of permanent fiscal stress.

Talent is the key ingredient to survive tough times and position our organizations for the future. Smart corporate leaders invest in research and development as well as leadership development in downturns so their organizations are ready for better times. Local government also must invest in physical and human capital so we can survive and thrive as times improve.
Creating a Multidimensional Talent Strategy

Who Are the Knowledge Workers?
As our society has moved from a brute-force to a brain-force economy, so have local governments. In fact, government is now primarily a knowledge industry. A 2007 study by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence documented that 68 percent of all state and local government employees are now classified as knowledge workers, compared with only 32 percent in the private-sector workforce.

Knowledge workers apply their know-how and learning skills to creatively solve problems and achieve results for their organizations and communities. As Peter Drucker has emphasized, they are “professionals” as opposed to employees. With their knowledge, they have become free agents who are not necessarily tied to their organizations. With their skill sets, knowledge workers are competitive in the labor marketplace and can easily leave their present employer. Formal education is usually a given, but continuous education and learning in a world of accelerating change is the key to their value.

At a time of constrained resources, local government executives must create a compelling rationale for investing in talent development.

The Big Questions
With their creative brainpower and commitment, talented knowledge workers are needed by local governments to help respond to the questions that challenge us:

- How do we continue to afford robust local government services, recognizing our increasing labor expenses?
- What core businesses do we need to keep in house and continually enhance?
- How will our organization be able to shed or outsource outmoded programs and thereby focus on a better defined set of core services and competencies?
- How can we use technology to better serve citizens, enhance productivity, cut costs, streamline operations, and engage citizens?
- To what extent can the organization eliminate non-value-added processes and promote a more nimble, risk-taking, entrepreneurial style of solving problems?
- How can we accelerate the development of a new generation of leaders so that they are able to replace the soon-to-retire baby-boomer management team?
- To cut costs and improve programs, how can the organization collaborate with other local governments in delivering services?
- To what degree can we partner with other sectors to promote economic development, transit, affordable housing, environmental sustainability, and other critical initiatives?
- Will we be able to free up revenue to invest in physical infrastructure and human capital initiatives?
- How do we engage citizens in changing their lifestyles and consumption patterns to protect our environment and climate?
- How do we spur on innovation in stodgy, silo-oriented organizations?

A Shrinking Talent Pool
Exacerbating some of the challenges facing local governments is the retirement wave of baby-boomer talent. Across the U.S. economy, 80 million baby boomers (born 1946–64) are exiting full-time employment, and only 40 million Gen Xers (born 1965–81) are poised to replace them. Because baby boomers are leaving long-held careers, most of the largest talent replacement gaps are in managerial and skilled professional levels.

These talent replacement gaps are a bigger problem in the public sector than the private sector. A greater proportion of baby boomers joined government than business, in large measure because they were part of the era of John F. Kennedy. (“Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”) They joined public service in large numbers, wanting to make a difference and improve society.

Not only are there insufficient numbers of Gen Xers who are ready to replace boomer managers, but a greater proportion of young people are joining the private sector. In the face of the baby-boomer retirement wave, young people are not replenishing our ranks.

Return on Investment for Human Capital Investment
At a time of constrained resources, local government executives must create a compelling rationale for investing in talent development. The rationale could focus on coping with the retirement wave, enhancing government performance and service, adapting to change and new demands, or transferring insti-
Institutional knowledge before it is lost. Leaders must support the rationale with data, such as a workforce analysis that documents employees eligible to retire in 3 to 5 years, time in position, and key skill sets of various critical positions.

In addition to a compelling rationale, local government executives must promote the return on investment (ROI) for talent development. Because local government is a knowledge industry, investing in human capital initiatives generates a bigger ROI than similar investments in physical capital. For instance, in a study of 3,000 organizations, researchers found that spending 10 percent of revenues on capital investments (including technology) boosted productivity by 3.9 percent. However, a similar investment in developing human capital (e.g., learning initiatives, training, leadership development) increased productivity by 8.5 percent—more than twice the ROI of capital investments.

**Indispensable Competencies for a New Era**

To develop a talent strategy, a local government must identify the key competencies needed by its knowledge workers so that public agencies can survive and thrive in an era of accelerating and discontinuous change. These competencies must inform recruitment, leadership development, and promotional practices.

Several competencies are indispensable:

1. **Boundary-crossing and partnering skills**  Any major challenge requires an effort across organizational boundaries and thus partnering skills.
2. **Learning agility**  In this new age, any technical knowledge quickly becomes obsolete. In the public finance field, for example, we have had to learn in the past 5 years how to value physical assets and replacement costs as well as future liabilities such as retiree medical obligations. Finance professionals are just beginning to learn how to value the costs of replacing talent as baby-boomer managers retire. Moreover, budget managers must now complement their technical skills by learning how to engage in the budget process employees from throughout the organization and citizens who have many interests in local government services.
3. **An active futures orientation**  Local governments need knowledge workers who have a futures orientation and an aptitude to shape change. Managing change is difficult and ultimately reactive. According to Peter Drucker, the best way to manage change is to proactively shape it. Demonstrating an openness about the future and having the courage to think and act in shaping change will be key competencies.
4. **People skills**  Employees are often promoted to management for their technical skills. However, managers fail because of their lack of people skills. As much as 80 percent of management failure can be attributed to poor people skills. Consequently, we need to promote the development of people skills in local government.

The best way to develop people skills is to engage high-potential employees in a series of stretching job assignments coupled with candid coaching. Such assignments may include formal supervisory roles, project leadership, interim management, and community or business engagement projects. Formal and informal coaches can provide feedback and help emerging leaders learn from these experiences.

**Creating a Leader-full Organization**

More than ever, successful organizations require leaders at all levels. Whereas management can address...
Technical problems, leadership is needed for “adaptive” problems. Today’s big issues are all adaptive problems; solutions are not known, diverse stakeholders are involved, and value conflicts abound. With their positional authority, managers cannot solve complex challenges such as affordable housing, economic vitality, environmental sustainability, transportation, family support, and educational achievement. Leadership is required to engage players in other sectors and create the political will to confront adaptive problems, test new approaches, overcome obstacles, and make adjustments as mistakes are made.

Furthermore, it is difficult to traditionally supervise or manage knowledge workers. Over-the-shoulder supervision simply is not effective with knowledge workers. A leader must learn how to help knowledge workers identify appropriate goals, secure resources for the enterprise, help overcome organizational barriers, and support intrinsic self-motivation.

Leadership is related to one’s ability to influence others in achieving organizational goals and is based on one’s interpersonal and even moral or spiritual attributes. Leadership is about capturing the hearts and minds of people. As author and poet Charles Lauer has stated, “Leaders don’t force people to follow—they invite them on a journey.”

Thus, the question is how we can hire people at all levels with the requisite interpersonal abilities and help them further develop those capacities. As management consultant Margaret Wheatley has suggested, to succeed we need to create “leader-full” organizations.

Promoting a Learning Culture
When the environment is characterized by accelerating and often discontinuous change, learning becomes essential if local government organizations are to adapt. Learning organizations are “organizations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations are set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together.”

In addition to enhancing adaptiveness, learning is critical to “growing” talent and future leaders over time. It is also a key value of next-generation talent and thus helps attract and retain talent. To promote a culture of continuous learning, leaders must:

1. Provide a strong rationale for learning
   Amid the escalating demands on local government, it is necessary to focus the attention of employees and the organization, as well as resources, on learning. Top management must provide an evidence-based and compelling rationale for continuous learning. For instance, as agencies cope with the retirement wave of senior managers leaving local government, leaders must emphasize the function of learning in accelerating the development of the next generation of managers. Other strategic rationales for continuous learning may include the need to encourage innovation, improve customer service, enhance productivity given constrained resources, or retain talent.

   It is helpful for continuous learning to become an explicit part of an agency’s long-term strategic plan.

2. Promote self-awareness
   To modify behavior and adapt over time, all employees—but especially leaders—must become more self-aware and reflective. As Jeff Immeldt, CEO of GE, has stated, “People can help you, but leadership is one of the great journeys into your own soul.” Reflection must precede corrective action and any enhanced behavior.

   To promote reflection, agencies have undertaken a variety of strategies:
   - Book club discussion groups
   - Practice run-throughs of presentations to governing boards or community groups to allow critiques by the employee team before the final presentation
   - Debriefings and after-action reports to learn from any significant experience
   - Case study presentations to learning forums organized by the chief executive
   - Learning reports on any seminar, professional meeting, or personal or work experience
presented by designated employees at the start of any staff meeting.

Of course, the best way that chief executives can promote self-awareness among other leaders and employees is to model learning, self-awareness, and self-examination and to share one’s self-critique.

3. Offer an array of learning opportunities Because of the diverse needs of employees and their different stages of development, an agency is wise to provide an array of learning and development programs. These opportunities may include special assignments, interim positions, job rotations, certificate programs, and supervisory and management academies. (See the Palo Alto case study in Appendix A.)

For instance, the local governments in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties in California offer high-potential employees a three-month assignment in another agency and a different department through the Management Talent Exchange Program (MTEP). MTEP provides new skills, relationships, and growth experiences. (See the San Mateo County case study in Appendix B for more information on MTEP.)

Borrowing a strategy from the corporate sector, some local governments may also assign emerging leaders to action learning teams outside their fields of expertise. Multidisciplinary teams focus on key issues facing the organization, conduct research, make recommendations, and implement recommendations after approval by the executive team or governing board.

4. Focus on doing Historically, learning has been viewed as classroom education or training. Classroom training works well for creating a theoretical or conceptual framework for new behavior, but it cannot actually create the new behavior. Adults learn by doing. Therefore, the contemporary view of learning and development focuses on providing employees with a series of challenging job experiences coupled with coaching.

Both MTEP and action learning teams rely on experiential learning. Although the local governments involved in these efforts provide learning forums as a classroom element to the experience, the focus is on learning by doing. MTEP also provides a mentor at the exchange agency so the employee can be coached and supported during the experience.

5. Provide coaching resources The positive impact of experiential learning is enhanced if it is coupled with coaching. Some large and medium-sized local governments have started formal or informal coaching programs. In California, the state city/county management association has developed a state-wide program of no- or low-cost coaching resources, such as one-to-one coaching match-ups (coaches are profiled on an electronic gallery), telephone panels and webinars featuring leadership and career development topics, “speed coaching” provided by Area Manager Groups, e-coaching, and workshops. (For more information on the Cal-ICMA coaching program, go to icma.org/cal-icma/ and click on “Coaching Corner.”)

A number of local governments have also taught their supervisors and managers to conduct development conversations with their employees. These workshops train supervisors to help their employees identify and reflect on their aspirations, overcome obstacles to their hopes and dreams, plan action steps to fulfill their dreams, and build a supportive “dream team.”

6. Encourage employees to develop an annual learning plan Some public agencies encourage or require employees to develop an annual learning plan in conjunction with their supervisor. The plans incorporate learning objectives, learning activities, and support needed from the organization. Employees may be evaluated and compensated in part on their achievement of learning and development goals. (See the City of Palo Alto case study in Appendix A.)

7. Allow for mistakes If senior managers encourage employees to take on new job assignments and engage in new learning experiences, mistakes will happen. Missteps will certainly occur if employees are assigned to project teams outside their fields of expertise; lead new groups; or make presentations to governing boards, commissions, or business or community associations. Learning cannot happen in a zero-risk, mistake-free environment.

To institutionalize the concept of learning through mistakes, some agencies have broadened the public safety practice of debriefings or post-incident reporting. Staff members debrief an experience, write up the findings and recommendations from the debriefing, and share them with all those involved as well as with other appropriate work groups and even the governing board. Other local governments conduct learning forums using case studies from the organization. People from throughout the organization critique the case study, identify missteps, and suggest lessons learned.

It is difficult to promote learning in the typical risk-averse political environment of local governments. Leadership must protect employees from political fallout and retribution if a learning culture is to develop and flourish. If employees commit to learning and excellence, top management must allow for mistakes and provide a professional safety net.
Big Organizations, Small Organizations

There are advantages and disadvantages for both big and small organizations in terms of their capacity to develop talent. Big local government organizations have more opportunities to move high-potential employees into special assignments, interim management positions, or rotational programs. They also have more resources to devote to training and professional development. However, bigger organizations tend to be more bureaucratic, burdened by rigid civil service rules or job classes, and overspecialized.

Smaller organizations may not have the financial resources to devote to formal training and professional development programs. However, they tend to be less bureaucratic and require employees to wear many “hats.” Because small organizations need more generalists who can serve several functions, they often can use low-cost ways to promote talent and leadership development.

Knowledge Transfer

As baby-boomer managers and professionals exit full-time employment, local governments must address not only a leadership crisis but also a brain drain of immense proportions. After working in local agencies and communities for 20 to 40 years, many professionals have acquired broad and deep institutional and community knowledge. Before these employees leave, local governments must capture and transfer this knowledge.

Two kinds of knowledge are critical to local government agencies. Explicit knowledge is related to specific processes, rules, procedures, and technical know-how. Explicit knowledge is more easily documented and is thus easier to share with employees.

Tacit knowledge is related to know-how learned by employees over long experience, including knowing how things are done, what works in different situations, ways of relating based on the culture, who’s a player and who’s not, and other political and organizational sensitivities. Tacit knowledge is in the minds of individuals and is easily lost when someone exits the organization.

A comprehensive talent strategy must include knowledge management approaches capturing both explicit and tacit knowledge. To capture and transfer knowledge requires a categorization system to identify the types of knowledge important to the organization.

Cost-Effective Approaches

Most talent development strategies do not require massive outlays of financial resources, but they do require leadership intent and will. Low-cost approaches that can be used by cash-strapped organizations include:

- Cross-training within or across units
- Making job classes and job descriptions more flexible to expand and enrich jobs
- Using internal trainers or “training the trainers” to minimize the cost of external training programs
- Integrating learning into everyday work through the use of run-through practice presentations, debriefings, learning reports, and critiques of real-life case studies
- Conducting brown bag lunches for emerging leaders to share career journeys and development strategies as well as the organizational resources available
- Using buddy systems so buddies cover for each other, thereby allowing everyone to participate in training at one time or another
- Teaching supervisors simple coaching skills
- Placing emerging leaders into interim management or special project leadership positions
- Incorporating an experiential project into classroom training, such as a leadership academy
- Structuring new assignments to include interaction with governing boards, commissions, and community advisory groups
- Modifying annual work plans so they include a learning or development plan
- Incorporating development conversations into annual performance reviews
- Collaborating with an area manager group or state association to establish cost-effective talent development programs available to all local governments, such as a coaching program, talent exchange, or regional training consortium
- Conducting talent readiness assessment sessions with department directors
- Including the assistant to the city/county manager on the executive team, rotating management analysts through the executive team, or encouraging department directors to bring a division chief to executive team meetings
- Establishing a formal succession plan for the organization, utilizing the talent and leadership development opportunities above
- Exchanging a management assistant or other aspiring manager with a neighboring local government.
Explicit knowledge can be preserved and transferred to other employees through the creation of procedural guides, desk manuals, or libraries of related documents. Some agencies have also developed transition planning forms that retiring employees complete before they leave. Such forms identify key documents and where they are located (e.g., shared computer drive), important dates during the year given the specific duties of the position, key players inside and outside the organization, needed skills and appropriate skills training, and professional support organizations.

It is more difficult to capture tacit knowledge. Approaches such as wikis, knowledge blogs, or other online archives of knowledge attempt to capture information, best practices, and stories (which are often the best way to learn). To further extract tacit knowledge, some agencies conduct in-depth and probing interviews of retiring interviews and post the videos of the interviews on their intranets. Identifying communities of knowledge across the organization or developing an “expert yellow pages” can assist newly promoted employees. Organizations can also bring back retired professionals to assist their replacements.

**Key Steps in Developing the Talent Pool**

An organization needs a purposeful talent and leadership development program to be successful in addressing all its challenges over time. A talent development process includes the following steps:

1. **Identify key talent** The executive team must identify specific high-potential employees who have the skills and aptitudes required to advance over time. The talent belongs to the whole organization, not to a particular department.

2. **Assess readiness** The executive team as a whole provides its perspectives on the readiness of emerging leaders to advance or take on new roles. For example, emerging leaders are evaluated as ready now, in 1 to 3 years, or in 3 to 5 years. All department heads also identify development areas for each of the high potentials.

3. **Offer an array of development opportunities** Organizations must offer, by themselves or with other local governments or educational partners, an array of special assignments, interim management, project leadership, training workshops, certificate programs, and professional development opportunities.

4. **Create development plans** Based on the development needs of the specific high-potential employees, managers create development plans with the individual employees, focusing on their targeted areas of development, such as people or leadership skills, community engagement skills, budgeting, or public speaking skills. The plans include specific development assignments, measurable objectives, and timelines.

5. **Measure progress** The executive team meets three to four times per year to further identify high-potential employees, assess readiness, and measure progress toward their development goals.

As local governments redesign service delivery and generally become more fluid, they will need flexible and ever-learning A players.

**Focusing on Certain Talent Groups**

**Differentiating among A, B, and C Players**

No organization can focus time, energy, and other resources on every employee. Therefore, local governments need to differentiate between A, B, and C players.

Certainly, local government agencies must attract, retain, and grow A players. These “stars” are 200 to 300 percent more productive than C players. These go-to people in the organization are not only highly skilled but also highly engaged.

The A players are especially important in tough times. As local governments eliminate some positions, A players help the agency maintain high performance and creatively solve problems. Moreover, as local governments continually resize, restructure, redesign service delivery, and generally become more fluid, they will need flexible and ever-learning A players.

A players are precisely the employees who are the “free exiters”—they have the talent, skills, and self-confidence to leave the organization and easily secure employment with another agency, often at higher pay. In contrast, C players lack the skills and confidence to put themselves into the competitive labor marketplace.

B players are also critical to an organization’s success. They are competent, steady, and stable. They are committed to the organization, maintain institutional knowledge as A players come and go, and provide continuity during transitions. The insurance carrier Aviva calls this large segment of B players “the vital many.”

A talent strategy calls for treating these different types of employees differently. It is wise to continually challenge A players; provide high-visibility and prestigious assignments; and lavish attention and
resources on them. New learning, challenges, attention, recognition, and upward mobility serve as the social glue that retains these stars.

However, an organization cannot ignore “the vital many.” Incorporating learning into the jobs of B players, engaging them in development conversations, involving them in new project teams, providing coaching, acknowledging their contributions, and providing lateral opportunities as well as upward mobility will keep the solid middle in place. As Gallup research demonstrates, engagement efforts dramatically increase the productivity of B players.

Managers must place higher demands on C players so they move into the B category. Alternatively, through frequent performance reviews, managers must make it uncomfortable for them to remain with the organization. Elimination of C players is difficult and time consuming in many civil-service public agencies, but it is possible. Tolerating C players is discouraging to A and B players and is detrimental to an effective talent strategy.

Winning Employee Value Propositions
Retaining talent requires an attractive employee value proposition. Providing competitive salary and benefits is necessary but insufficient if local governments are to attract and retain talent. The war for talent is won on the battlefield of culture. An organization’s employee value proposition outlines why a talented employee would consider joining and staying with an organization. An employee value proposition may also suggest why a talented employee would be reluctant to join or stay with an agency. A local government should emphasize the positive attributes of its employee value proposition, such as meaningful work, continuous learning, opportunities to exert influence on decision making, work-life balance, and an effective staff–governing body relationship. A smaller organization may offer fewer promotional opportunities but may provide more social support and a sense of family. Negative attributes such as a difficult political environment or negative relationships with the local media should also be addressed, but an agency must focus on organizational strengths.

An organization needs several employee value propositions—some oriented toward A and B players and others oriented toward early, mid-, and late-career employees. A successful local government will consciously craft compensation, benefit, and especially cultural opportunities to different segments of its talent pool. These positive employee value propositions then become the basis for marketing the organization and developing an employee branding effort to attract and retain talent.

Local government has a good product to offer, especially to next generation talent. We provide meaningful and challenging jobs and the opportunity to make a difference, build community, and even save the planet. The problem is that many of our human resource and other organizational practices are not aligned with next generation values. The long periods to hire staff, boring job ads, paper-oriented job application processes or non-interactive job Web sites, rigid job descriptions, stagnant learning environments, and lack of opportunity to influence decision making undercut the ability of many traditional local governments to attract and keep talent. It is for this reason that the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program developed a Hiring 2.0 guide of best practices to help agencies retool practices and better compete for talent.

In short, given the shrinking talent pool, local governments cannot successfully attract and retain talent without responding in tangible ways to their values and needs.

Re-Recruiting Employees
It is not enough to attract talent. As emphasized by the Hiring 2.0 guide, local government agencies must re-recruit employees on an ongoing basis. Based on the values and aspirations of individual employees, leaders need to spend as much time, attention, and energy in engaging current employees in key projects, endeavors, and organizational problem solving as we do in recruiting them in the first place. Effective re-recruiting approaches include conducting “stay interviews” to identify their hopes and dreams, providing new project opportunities, and even encouraging them to spend a portion of their time on research and development of their own ideas. As documented in the Gallup research on employee engagement, actively engaged employees dramatically increase productivity, generate more revenue or profits, and cut costs.

Attracting Young People to Local Government Careers
Given the retirement wave, local governments must not only accelerate the development of high-potential employees who are already in the pipeline but also attract young people into the pipeline.

The bad news is that according to survey and focus group research, university students at best do not know...
anything about local government. At worst, they think that local government service is bureaucratic, second-rate, mind-numbing work. (See the City of San Jose case study in Appendix C.)

The good news is that university students share many of the same public service values as the baby boomers who joined local government in great numbers in the 1960s and ’70s. Young people want to make a difference in the world, build community, and save the planet. The challenge is that they perceive that they can fulfill their values only by working or volunteering in nonprofit or voluntary organizations. We in local government must tell our story about the meaningful and challenging positions and careers that we offer.

Any talent strategy must include opportunities to hook young people on local government service. These opportunities include a continuum of experiences and entry-level positions:

• Job shadowing days for middle and high school students
• University internships (paid and unpaid) for undergraduate and graduate students
• Management fellowships for master’s-level graduates who work for cities and counties and rotate through departments during their year and are then hired permanently by the agency
• Apprenticeships (sometimes in conjunction with public sector unions) for technical positions such as utility linespersons or water quality technicians.

(See Appendix C for a case study about The City of San Jose’s Public Sector Career Initiative.)

Even in tough financial times, local governments must make investments in attracting next generation talent, or they will not perform over the mid- or long term.

**Elements of a Talent Strategy**

A talent strategy should be a written document (just like any strategic plan) that is comprehensive. The strategy needs to address all talent issues identified in this report, guide decisions, and shape organizational practices. In terms of key elements, such a talent strategy should:

• Identify key organizational challenges and opportunities now and in the future, with a focus on the external environment
• Highlight pivotal positions and indispensable competencies given the external challenges and opportunities
• Incorporate practices and approaches to attract and retain A and B players, including employee engagement and other re-recruiting efforts
• Consciously design different employee value propositions for different groups of talent, including A and B players and early, mid-, late-, and post-career employees
• Promote continuous learning through new stretch assignments; debriefing of all significant experiences, especially missteps; and informal and formal coaching
• Retool organizational practices that do not align with the values and needs of key talent segments
• Create knowledge transfer tools
• Develop approaches for connecting with alumni and retirees as well as attracting young people into local government careers
• Align all organizational systems—including recruitment, on-boarding, learning and training, job classification schemes, compensation and rewards, and promotional practices—to support the talent strategy
• Develop metrics to judge success
• Identify roles for leading and managing the strategy.

In local government, we find clusters of positive employee development activities and programs. Some local government agencies emphasize training; others focus on work-life balance initiatives; still others use employee branding in their recruitment and retention efforts. However, all of these elements and more must be integrated in a comprehensive, long-term talent strategy.

Implementation

Metrics
Any strategic plan, including the talent strategy, must include metrics to determine the level of success. Examples include:
• Number of qualified applicants for certain pivotal positions
• Percentage of top applicants hired for pivotal positions
• Length of time to recruit and hire
• Percentage of A players retained
• Percentage of successful internal promotions to fill key leadership positions
• Number of hours per year of training or professional development activities for each employee
• Percentage of operating budget allocated to learning, training, and professional development
• Percentage of professionals and managers who exhibit key competencies
• Levels of employee engagement
• Percentage of high-potential employees in the key talent pool ready to advance now or within 3 years
• Levels of success in addressing certain external challenges.

Challenges in Executing the Talent Strategy
Any strategy is meaningless unless it is strongly executed. Execution entails leading and managing the strategy, metrics, and accountability.

Leading the strategy Because talent is the key ingredient to success in the knowledge world, the chief executive must lead the strategy or at least convene the effort. The talent strategy should be designed in part by the department heads and “owned” by the executive team. Modeling is also a critical role: the CEO and department heads must become visible mentors, coaches, and talent developers if these roles stand are to spread to others in the organization.

Managing the strategy The human resource director and HR staff are the likely group to manage the day-to-day implementation of the strategy. To free up time and energy for the HR department, local governments must shed some of the ritualistic non-value-added activities of the typical HR department or at least automate and develop self-service approaches for typical HR transactions.

Reconceptualizing the role of managers Managers see their primary roles as pushing out work and overseeing staff. To address the talent crisis facing local governments, we need to help managers reconceptualize their primary functions to include talent development. The most practical ways to do so are to provide modeling, teach talent-development skills (e.g., how to conduct a development conversation with a subordinate), help managers incorporate talent development into everyday work (not as another add-on duty), and award salary increases and bonuses based on talent development success.

Gaining support of employees, unions, and the governing board To effectively implement the talent strategy, the executive team must educate employees, unions, and their governing board about the demographic challenges facing local government and the importance of talent to current and future success of the organization. To gain support for talent initiatives, local governments must provide a workforce analysis and identify specific indicators of a talent crisis so there is a compelling rationale to engage employees, focus their attention, provide scarce resources, and act. Unions typically will not oppose talent development efforts if positions vacated by union members moving into management are refilled with new members. Through study sessions and other communications with the governing board, they will see that the policy agenda of the board is impotent without talent to execute it.

Ensuring accountability It is the responsibility of the chief executive and department directors to ensure accountability. Using some of the metrics identified above, efforts to implement the long-term talent strategy can be judged and managers can be held accountable.
Conclusion

Local governments are overwhelmed with accelerating and discontinuous change. The problems we confront are complex, often divisive, and emotion laden. In these confounding times, talent becomes the key ingredient for success. Therefore, local government agencies need a comprehensive, multidimensional talent strategy owned and developed by the chief executive and the executive team. The strategy must focus on the current and future challenges facing the public agency, pivotal positions, key competencies, different talent groups, and tangible approaches for attracting, retaining, and growing talent.

It is particularly important in these tough economic times to focus on the talent issue. Even though local governments are cutting expenditures and eliminating positions, public agencies now more than ever require a talent strategy. In response to ongoing fiscal stress, local governments will continually redesign services and restructure and resize our organizations. In this environment, organizational success will be dependent on a pool of flexible, continually learning, and engaged talent.

Because of the infrastructure crisis in the United States, the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) was driven to issue GASBE Rule 45, which requires local governments to value the physical capital provided by the agency and measure the kind of investment needed to maintain it for the future. In the same way, perhaps we now need a new GASBE rule to value a local government’s human capital and the kinds of investments in talent required to promote successful local government performance for our communities.

Only by creating and executing a comprehensive talent strategy can we ensure vital local governments now and in the future.

Notes

Appendix A. City of Palo Alto’s Growing Our Successors Initiative

Jurisdiction
Population: 60,000
Total full-time Employees: 1,100
General fund budget: $129 million

Program Description
The City of Palo Alto’s Growing Our Successors Initiative is an ongoing effort to respond to the wave of baby-boomer retirements, especially among management and professional staff, and develop a long-term talent strategy for the organization. The initiative includes several interrelated elements: workforce analysis, employee survey, training in succession planning, identification of talent pool, providing leadership development experiences, and development of knowledge transfer tools.

Workforce Analysis
City management has analyzed the demographics of our current work force, including the average age of department directors and other executive managers (54 years) and division managers (52 years). Each department organization chart has been color coded, indicating which positions are likely to become vacant due to retirement within five years.

Employee Survey
To further identify the dimensions of our demographic and leadership challenges and suggest programmatic responses, the Growing Our Successors Initiative conducted a confidential employee survey via a third party. The “retirement wave” survey queried all employees regarding:

- Intentions and timing of retirement (35 percent of management and professional employees intend to retire within five years)
- Motivations for retiring
- Creative arrangements to maintain their involvement in the work of the organization after retirement
- Feedback about current leadership development programs
- Suggestions about helping employees develop their potential and move up in the organization
- The extent to which employees consider the City of Palo Alto an employer of choice.

Based on the survey, the third-party survey firm, Data-Cycles, provided a summary report and recommendations to the city’s executive team.

Training in Succession Planning
In response to the survey results, then City Manager Frank Benest conducted a training workshop on succession planning for the city’s senior management team, consisting of department directors, division managers, and other key managers. As part of the training session for the senior management team, the 60 participants conducted discussions addressing four key questions:

1. What are some critical development needs of high-potential employees in our organization?
2. What are the most important barriers to succession planning in our organization? How do we respond?
3. With respect to leadership development, what are we doing well? What are we not doing well?
4. To help us “grow” our leaders, who are some potential partners, and what could they provide?

The summaries of the discussion groups helped in formulating a final plan for the Growing Our Successors Initiative.

Identification of a Talent Pool
Based on the workforce analysis, the results of the employee survey, and discussion with key managers in each department, the executive team conducted several off-site meetings to identify and assess our talent pool. At these sessions department directors discussed and received feedback on anticipated vacancies due to retirement and high-potential employees who could be further developed to move into key management and professional positions. Directors also discussed and received feedback on learning and development activities for employees in the talent pool. Last, members of the executive team evaluated employees who could move into mission-critical vacancies in other departments. Based on these discussions, department directors met with the high-potential employees and together created employee development plans. The city manager also had coffee with each emerging leader to discuss their future in the organization and offer organizational support for their aspirations. At follow-up off-site sessions, executive team members reported on the leadership development experiences of aspiring managers and updated the talent pool and succession plans.

Educating and Engaging the Governing Board
The city manager scheduled a special study session in early 2007 with the city council to share the results of the workforce analysis and employee survey. The city manager also provided initial action plans to address the “Next Generation Challenge” facing the city. The council members had the opportunity to ask questions, probe the depth and seriousness of the challenge, and suggest other programmatic responses. A follow-up study session with the council was held in 2008 to provide an update on the organization’s progress to date in responding to the retirement wave.

Current Leadership Development Experiences
The city currently provides an array of leadership development and career-acceleration programs:

- Management Academy In addition to a wide array of skills-building courses, the city’s learning program offers a management academy for up-and-comers. The eight-week curriculum includes classroom training, experiential team projects, and peer-to-peer classroom learning and networking opportunities.
Creating a Multidimensional Talent Strategy

1. Developing electronic newsletter for alums and retirees to maintain connection and thereby provide opportunity to re-employ alums and retirees in some capacity
2. Expanding knowledge, skills, relationships, and big-picture thinking of aspiring managers by assigning them to action learning teams outside their fields of technical expertise
3. Expanding MTEP to include internal as well as external special assignments
4. Developing performance appraisal format for supervisors and managers to assess their performance as “talent developers” and reward them appropriately
5. Revamping knowledge transfer tools included
6. Conducting leadership forums for members of the talent pool using real-life case to better develop political skills of emerging leaders.

Knowledge Transfer Tools
As part of the leadership development team action plan, the team developed several knowledge transfer tools to capture, transfer, and thus preserve institutional knowledge before it exited the organization with the retiring employees. These knowledge transfer tools included

1. A transition planning format that is completed by retiring employees before they leave. The format asks retiring employees to identify where key documents and plans are stored; what are important planning dates during the year; who are key players inside and outside the organization; what are training, professional development, and networking opportunities relevant to the position; and when can job shadowing activities take place, and what have been some lessons learned by the retiring employee.
2. Palopedia, an internal wiki that serves as an electronic archive of knowledge that can be shared across the organization.
3. Roundtable discussions led by a retiring employee and involving other employees, other agency representatives, and community members who form a community of learning and practice. The pilot roundtable discussion was videotaped for future reference.
4. Videotaped interviews with critical managers and professionals before they leave. The leadership team created probing interview questions to generate answers about “gut-level” tacit knowledge. The videotapes are then posted on the city’s intranet.

Nextgen Web Site
To provide access to development resources and promote visibility and transparency for the city’s Next Generation responses, the leadership development team launched the Nextgen Web site on the city’s intranet. The Web site provides the following information:

- Retirement wave survey results
- An overview of the Next Generation challenge facing the city
- Development programs for all employees
- Presentations to the city council on the Next Generation challenge
- Videotapes of interviews with retiring employees
Creating a Multidimensional Talent Strategy

• Links to professional associations
• Personal stories of city executives.

Program Successes
The Growing Our Successors initiative has produced a number of positive outcomes for the City of Palo Alto. First, the workforce analysis and employee survey generated hard data to better address the talent challenge. Specifically, the data helped the city’s senior management team and city council understand the dimensions and magnitude of the next generation problem and develop a compelling rationale for action.

Second, the effort engaged the entire senior management team in creating program ideas, energy, and ownership of the problem.

Third, individuals in the talent pool who have been targeted for accelerated development are receiving a variety of resources, feel appreciated, and are more likely to stay.

Fourth, city management received valuable feedback from participants in the MTEP, the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program, and the Management Academy. Based on the feedback, the leadership development team modified MTEP and the Management Academy and enhanced participation in the coaching program.

Fifth, by including learning plans and development goals in employee annual work plans, city management has been able to ensure accountability.

Lessons Learned
The Growing Our Successors Initiative has suggested a number of lessons:

• To build a strong business case for “growing our own leaders” and developing a succession plan, it is necessary to conduct a workforce analysis and share results with elected officials, managers, and all other employees.

• Even though the leadership development/succession planning effort may be managed by the human resource department, it must be “owned” by the executive team. Without strong support and involvement by the chief executive and department directors, the effort will fail.

• Given the demands placed on local government organizations, leadership development/succession planning must be identified by the chief executive and executive team as a top priority. Otherwise there will be insufficient time, energy, and attention devoted to this critical function.

• Recognizing the equity values of public service, it is desirable to offer skill-building courses and leadership development opportunities to all employees. However, given an organization’s limited resources, it is necessary to target (at least initially) resources in high-potential employees who have been identified as part of the talent pool.

• To ensure political support for leadership development/succession planning, top management must share the workforce analysis with elected officials, provide articles discussing the demographic crisis facing local government, and promote the need to “grow our own leaders” if the council’s policy agenda is to be effectively carried out.

• Ultimately, local government executives need to reconceptualize the role of all managers so that talent development is a primary, not secondary, responsibility.

Future Efforts and Challenges
As the Growing Our Successors Initiative proceeds, the City of Palo Alto needs to respond to a number of challenges:

• What are the gaps in the city’s leadership development program efforts? How does city management respond? Who are appropriate partners?

• How does the city assess its progress in succession planning? Are there some private sector metrics we could modify and adopt?

• Does the executive team need specific criteria to identify high-potential employees for the talent pool?

• How does the executive team best target talent development efforts?

• Does the city need to identify core competencies for leaders in the organization and then align training and leadership development experiences to promote those competencies?

• While the city is experimenting with the transition planning format and Palopedia, what are the most practical and resource-efficient methods for transferring institutional knowledge from key employees to their successors?

• How does city management maintain an organizational focus on this critical issue?

• Recognizing that the best learning often occurs through failures, how does top management get council members, commissioners, other managers, and the community to tolerate inevitable mistakes as the organization pushes up-and-comers forward and accelerate their development?

Follow-Up Resources
For Cal-ICMA Coaching Program resources, go to www.cal-icma.org and click on “Coaching Corner.” For information the Management Talent Exchange Program, go to www.cityofpaloalto.org/mtep.

Lead Contact
Frank Benest, former City Manager, Palo Alto, CA, current ICMA Senior Advisor for Next Generation Initiatives
(650) 444–6261
frank@frankbenest.com

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Overview and Mission

The rate of retirements at the County of San Mateo is expected to increase over the next several years, especially at the leadership level. As shown in Table 1, 47 percent of director-level employees and 41 percent of mid-management employees are currently eligible to retire.

If the county does not effectively address this looming leadership “brain drain,” the county will face a significant loss of institutional knowledge and experience in critical functional areas, increased recruitment and training costs (notwithstanding the pressure to reduce budgets and cut costs), and reduced productivity and service quality due to prolonged periods of vacancy and transition.

In 2006, the county completed an organizational review that was conducted by an external consulting firm. The organizational review resulted in 30 recommendations related to succession planning and employee development. The review created a sense of urgency for the county’s leadership on the need to build and sustain a qualified workforce as the demographic shift from baby boomers to Generation Xers and Millennials occurs. The county subsequently created a Succession Planning Task Force responsible for prioritizing the recommendations, developing an implementation plan, and evaluating results.

Through the work of the Succession Planning Task Force, a Workforce and Succession Management Program (WSMP) was launched. The mission of the WSMP is to execute a systematic and multidimensional workforce management and succession strategy that promotes the county as an employer of choice, supports career growth and development of talent at all levels of the organization, and optimizes organizational performance to ensure the continuity and success of county operations and service delivery to the community.

Goals

The Succession Planning Task Force identified goals, strategies, and performance measures for WSMP, as shown in Table 2.

Recent Accomplishments

Significant progress has been made in achieving the goals of the WSMP. Some of the most notable accomplishments include:

- Implemented an Executive Leadership Academy. A total of 47 managers applied, and the inaugural class of 11 graduated in May 2009.
- Implemented a First Line Supervision Academy. More than 100 supervisors applied, and the inaugural class of 25 graduated in April 2009.
- Assumed coordination of the City/County Management Talent Exchange Program.
- Began a pilot program to support the creation of employee development plans.
- Developed the Reference Guide to Planning for Employee Retirement for use by departments to guide them through their transitions.
- Partnered with Cal-ICMA 2-County Next Generation Committee to develop and implement a Regional Internship Program for local government agencies throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.
- Conducted new-hire focus groups, streamlined the hiring process, and reduced the average time to hire.
- Linked all county-sponsored training programs to identify core competencies.
- Enhanced the employee suggestion program by providing incentives for implemented suggestions.

Anticipated Future Challenges

There are a number of challenges that may require the County to reprioritize specific strategies. The most significant challenge is the current economic situation and its effect on the resources available for employee development activities as the need for the County’s services in the community increases. Other challenges include:

- Overcoming negative or indifferent perceptions of government and government employment by young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 Retirement rates for San Mateo County</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-management</td>
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</table>
Creating a Multidimensional Talent Strategy

WSMP strategies reflect considerable analysis and input on the part of a cross-section of the county organization, not just the views of the county manager’s office or the human resources department—resulting in early support and buy-in from all county departments. Through the WSMP, the county has developed a strategic plan for attracting highly qualified candidates, developing talent at all levels of the organization, and accelerating the development of motivated employees into leadership roles, thereby minimizing the impact of the impending “brain drain” and establishing the county as an employer of choice today and in the years to come.

Further Information
The entire San Mateo County Workforce and Succession Management Program Report is available at [co.sanmateo.ca.us/bos.dir/BosAgendas/agendas2008/Agenda20080916/20080916_rpt_10.pdf](http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/bos.dir/BosAgendas/agendas2008/Agenda20080916/20080916_rpt_10.pdf).

For more information on the Management Talent Exchange Program, contact Myra Yapching, Human Resource Department of San Mateo County, at (650) 363–4365 or mgyapching@co.sanmateo.ca.us.

Ingredients for Success
In addition to a solid workforce analysis, the success of the WSMP is largely due to the sponsorship and support at the highest levels in the organization. The specific goals and strategies were developed under the direction of an interdepartmental steering committee, along with a series of subcommittees that focused on specific objectives. The responding to the differing motivators of Generation X and the Millennials
• The ability of the seasoned workforce to respond positively to change and changing conditions in the workplace
• The ability of current supervisors and managers to fully embrace the benefits of new concepts like core competencies, coaching, and the establishment of Employee Development Plans as a way of managing people more effectively
• The ability to use technology more effectively, and more quickly, wherever possible
• The willingness of leadership and the workforce to look for twenty-first century solutions to the community’s and the organization’s needs.

Table 2 Goals, strategies, and performance measures for the San Mateo County Workforce and Succession Management Program

<p>| Goal 1: Attract talent to the organization |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key strategies</th>
<th>Key performance measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a county brand and marketing program</td>
<td>• Number of qualified applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Update recruitment and selection processes</td>
<td>• Percentage of hiring managers satisfied with new hires</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Implement a coordinated, countywide internship program</td>
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</table>

<p>| Goal 2: Ensure leadership is developed to meet existing and future challenges |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key strategies</th>
<th>Key performance measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Establish an Executive Leadership Academy</td>
<td>• Number and percentage of internal promotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand the Management Development Program</td>
<td>• Percentage of employees with completed development and performance plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement a First-Line Supervision Academy</td>
<td>• Percentage of employees exceeding training hour targets</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Offer coaching services for managers and others</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish a countywide employee development plan program including 360-degree feedback</td>
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<p>| Goal 3: Provide a workplace culture that supports employee engagement and retention |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key strategies</th>
<th>Key performance measures</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Require talent development as a primary responsibility for managers and supervisors</td>
<td>• Turnover rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement cost-effective health and wellness programs</td>
<td>• Average length of service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement intergenerational communication and management strategies</td>
<td>• Employee engagement level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand visibility of employee award and recognition programs</td>
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</table>

<p>| Goal 4: Optimize knowledge management |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key strategies</th>
<th>Key performance measures</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish a procedure to overlap key positions during the time required for adequate training and knowledge transfer</td>
<td>• Number of days key positions are vacant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish processes and technology to capture explicit and tacit knowledge</td>
<td>• Percentage of customers and staff reporting organizational disruptions due to staff transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Structure jobs to accommodate newly retired individuals when appropriate</td>
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<p>| Goal 5: Improve individual and organizational effectiveness |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key strategies</th>
<th>Key performance measures</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>• Modify the performance evaluation process to a performance management system, which aligns individual goals to departmental goals.</td>
<td>• Number and percentage of departmental programs meeting performance measure targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement cost-effective health and wellness programs</td>
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WSMP \[ \text{goals, strategies, and performance measures for the San Mateo County Workforce and Succession Management Program} \]

- Key strategies
  - Develop a county brand and marketing program
  - Update recruitment and selection processes
  - Implement a coordinated, countywide internship program
- Key performance measures
  - Number of qualified applicants
  - Percentage of hiring managers satisfied with new hires

- Goal 2: Ensure leadership is developed to meet existing and future challenges
  - Establish an Executive Leadership Academy
  - Expand the Management Development Program
  - Implement a First-Line Supervision Academy
  - Offer coaching services for managers and others
  - Establish a countywide employee development plan program including 360-degree feedback
- Key performance measures
  - Number and percentage of internal promotions
  - Percentage of employees with completed development and performance plans
  - Percentage of employees exceeding training hour targets

- Goal 3: Provide a workplace culture that supports employee engagement and retention
  - Require talent development as a primary responsibility for managers and supervisors
  - Implement cost-effective health and wellness programs
  - Implement intergenerational communication and management strategies
  - Expand visibility of employee award and recognition programs
- Key performance measures
  - Turnover rate
  - Average length of service
  - Employee engagement level

- Goal 4: Optimize knowledge management
  - Establish a procedure to overlap key positions during the time required for adequate training and knowledge transfer
  - Establish processes and technology to capture explicit and tacit knowledge
  - Structure jobs to accommodate newly retired individuals when appropriate
- Key performance measures
  - Number of days key positions are vacant
  - Percentage of customers and staff reporting organizational disruptions due to staff transition

- Goal 5: Improve individual and organizational effectiveness
  - Modify the performance evaluation process to a performance management system, which aligns individual goals to departmental goals.
  - Implement a management audit team to build internal capacity
  - Offer employee incentives for implemented suggestions that reduce costs and streamline services
- Key performance measures
  - Number and percentage of departmental programs meeting performance measure targets

- Further Information
The entire San Mateo County Workforce and Succession Management Program Report is available at [co.sanmateo.ca.us/bos.dir/BosAgendas/agendas2008/Agenda20080916/20080916_rpt_10.pdf](http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/bos.dir/BosAgendas/agendas2008/Agenda20080916/20080916_rpt_10.pdf).

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- Responding to the differing motivators of Generation X and the Millennials
- The ability of the seasoned workforce to respond positively to change and changing conditions in the workplace
- The ability of current supervisors and managers to fully embrace the benefits of new concepts like core competencies, coaching, and the establishment of Employee Development Plans as a way of managing people more effectively
- The ability to use technology more effectively, and more quickly, wherever possible
- The willingness of leadership and the workforce to look for twenty-first century solutions to the community’s and the organization’s needs.
Appendix C. The City of San Jose’s Public Sector Career Initiative

By Holly Miller

Jurisdiction
Population: 1 million
Total employees: 8,000
Total budget: $2.6 billion

Program Description
As the capital of Silicon Valley, the City of San Jose is home to 1 million residents who expect a progressive and innovative local government. Therefore, the city strives to have the best and brightest putting their creative ideas to work on behalf of the community. The city seeks to attract and develop the next generation of public sector leaders and has developed a multifaceted talent strategy to achieve this goal and counter the staggering wave of retirees.

As a small unit within the human resource department, the Workforce Development Team, develops the current workforce, attracts new talent to the city, encourages the next generation to consider local government professions, and leverages diversity to facilitate creativity and innovation. Workforce planning and talent management are essential to the future of the City of San Jose and its constituents.

Workforce Analysis
City of San Jose workforce statistics demonstrate that over the next 4 years more than 32 percent of the city workforce will be eligible to retire, whereas 24 percent are likely to retire. In 10 years, more than 50 percent of city employees are eligible to retire. These sobering statistics, combined with the declining number of workers entering the workforce and fewer college graduates seeking careers in government, present the organization with a significant challenge. The Workforce Development Team will continue to develop and implement strategies to address the challenge created by the anticipated retirement of approximately one-third of the workforce over the next 4 years.

Public Sector Career Initiative
To help recruit the future workforce, the city and San Jose State University created a Students in Public Service pilot program in 2006 to encourage area high school and college students to consider careers in the public sector through a combination of specifically designed curricula, targeted outreach, and hands-on work experience. A number of focus groups were conducted with local high school and freshmen college students to gauge their perceptions of public sector careers and the City of San Jose specifically as an employer. Most of the feedback regarding public sector jobs was negative. Many expressed that the job would be low in pay yet offer good benefits. One student commented, “Once you’re in you can’t get fired, so you can take it easy.” Students perceived they would have difficulty getting things done due to bureaucracy and working under public scrutiny. When asked specifically for examples of city jobs, the comments ranged from “driving a white van” to cleaning parks. The results from the focus groups clearly demonstrate the disconnect between young people and meaningful local government careers.

The Public Sector Career Initiative (PSCI) further developed the effort to attract students to public sector careers and position local government as a meaningful and attractive career choice. The PSCI also strengthened the city-university partnership through sustainable programs that encourage the next generation to consider local government professions. The City of San Jose and San Jose State University (SJSU) commenced the PSCI to create student programming and internships in city government, increase contributions of city staff to campus education, build university collaboration on civic works, and encourage city employee enrollment in SJSU courses. The PSCI successfully collaborates with diverse SJSU disciplines and departments to maximize recruitment and outreach for these opportunities.

The PSCI has evolved to collaborate with other local universities and nonprofits and continues to be a key partnership linking city professionals, campus faculty, and students around service learning, civic engagement, and careers in local government. The PSCI links university students, professors, and city staff through internships, continuing education, guest lectures, special events, and promotion of public sector career opportunities. In the last year alone, the PSCI partnership attracted:

- More than 650 student applications for 45 new internship positions through the 2008–9 pilot Citywide Internship Program (managed by an MPA graduate intern). The program conducts two citywide recruitments per year as well as individual recruitments for departments as internship opportunities become available. Intern positions are posted on CityJobs, Calopps, and area university and community college career Web sites. (Available data shows that the city hosts approximately 150 student interns annually, and more than two-thirds of them are from SJSU.)
- More than 90 SJSU students to meet leading-edge city professionals at two Campus to City Hall panels, one on social policy regarding the city’s homeless strategy and the second on economic policy regarding the city’s green vision and business attraction and retention in San Jose.
- More than 100 SJSU students to the Second Annual “Explore Careers in Government” SJSU campus forum focused on the diversity of government professions, the value of internships, the nexus between college and local government management, and procedures for applying for city positions.
• More than 125 students and teachers to the Fourth Annual Citywide Job Shadow Day, exposing high school students in a hands-on way to a variety of local government careers, the growing role of youth in civic engagement, and the value of vocational and college education.

New 2009 PSCI programming accomplishments include:

• New student Web site “Students: From Campus to City Hall” is the city’s first online presence dedicated to the emerging workforce. The site is innovative and features Web 2.0 functionality. The attractive Web site is a PSCI partnership success story. The site was designed by an SJSU intern and city staff and garnered two key accolades: a Mayor’s Commendation and a feature story on PublicCEO.com.

• Social networking To promote civic engagement in a modern and interactive format, the Workforce Development Team created a City of San Jose Facebook page in February 2009. The page currently has more than 330 fans and is used as a communication tool to attract up and coming professionals, engage current city staff in thoughtful dialogue, promote special events, recruit management fellows, and demonstrate diversity and excitement of local government.

• Successful city-SJSU student project Planning Director Joe Horwedel, and Business Professor Dr. Dominie Garcia collaborated to have honors students work as unpaid consultants for the city. They created a business plan for a multidivisional joint venture and a new service proposal related to green building standard verification, storm water monitoring, and environmental mitigation monitoring.

• Diversity dialogues More than 215 participants attended the city’s first professional development diversity event, designed to infuse city staff with real-time knowledge about the nexus between diversity, inclusion, and service delivery. Dr. Michael Cheers, Dr. Bill Briggs, and SJSU’s communications/broadcast journalism students gave a multimedia presentation of their Deep South Civil Rights and Presidential Inauguration Tour, subtitled “Civil Rights and the Next Generation.” The city is also pleased to have been a financial sponsor of this trip.

• City staff as campus guest speakers The city is experiencing a growing number of invitations for city staff to connect with students. City staff has made classroom presentations regarding local government, finance, the green economy, careers in the public sector, the value of internships, and opportunities to integrate higher education with local government management.

• Intern mentoring program The initial intern mentoring program, launched in 2008, matched 26 staff with 26 student interns and ran for 4 months. The program begins with a kickoff event. Next, mentors and mentees meet one-on-one every 2 weeks for a period of 4 months to set career goals and receive coaching, skills training, and support. The program concludes with a celebration and sharing session including program evaluations. The next phase of the city’s pilot intern mentoring program includes 30 pairs of interns and city staff members.

Upcoming PSCI programming includes:

• The Third Annual “Are You In?” city intern networking and coaching event, held for more than 100 city interns, campus faculty, and city staff to broaden interns’ exposure to city careers and local government experts.

• An internship spring showcase event to highlight city intern accomplishments as well as attract new student interns and city staff internship hosts.

• A new Citywide Training course, “Internships 101: The Value of Student Help in Hard Times,” to be offered concurrently with the fall recruitment season of the citywide internship program.

Specialized Networking Events

Special professional networking opportunities have been integrated into a wider program including two unique events: (1) the Third Annual Women’s Leadership Summit sponsored by the Municipal Management Association and the City of San Jose, for more than 250 California local government leaders, and (2) with the Cal-ICMA a Speed Coaching and Networking Luncheon, partnering with 100 local government professionals for an afternoon of mentoring.

Citywide Diversity Strategy

As part of the larger PSCI, the Workforce Development Team strives to cultivate a diverse workforce and an inclusive workplace where all forms of diversity are maximized, including work style, leadership, generational, cultural, sexual orientation, and gender-related diversity. To attract and maximize the use of young talent, public sector organizations must embrace generational diversity to have an efficient and effective workforce.

A diversity working group has been working to fully integrate diversity as a core value and practice, along with a group of city executive leaders who make up the diversity advisory team. The city has incorporated generational diversity courses into leadership development programs such as the Art and Practice of Leadership and the Leadership and Coaching Academy. Cultural competency courses will be added to the citywide training curriculum in fall 2009, and a Diversity Hiring Toolkit will be developed to guide human resource practices citywide.

Management Fellows Program

For more than 20 years, the city has hosted Management Fellows in an effort to attract, develop, and retain talented individuals to the City of San Jose. Over the years, fellows have made invaluable contributions to the city. The highly regarded and competitive Management Fellows Program targets national MPA graduates for high-level projects with rotations in city departments. The program has yielded top talent and resulted in permanent employment for program participants.

Current Leadership Development Experiences

Once emerging professionals are attracted into the City of San Jose workforce, the city offers an array of leadership development and career-acceleration programs:
• Leadership and Coaching Academy for first-time supervisors
• Management Talent Exchange Program, 3-month rotations in other jurisdictions
• Art and Practice of Leadership, for emerging leaders at the highest levels
• Citywide Mentoring Program for paired career coaching

**Future Efforts and Challenges**
As the Public Sector Career Initiative proceeds, the City of San Jose needs to respond to a number of challenges:
• Proceeding with current programming and developing the initiative further to attract talent, despite the grim reality the city has an $80 million dollar deficit and hundreds of valued city employees are being laid off, are being bumped, or are in other states of transition

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Human Resources Department, City of San Jose
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(408) 975-1491

• Making the case that important talent development work does not stop in tough and uncertain times
• Continuing to educate the organization that promoting internships and student programming is not just a good thing to do; it is a business necessity
• Continuing to educate ourselves: knowing the workforce facts and understanding that our competition goes beyond local private sector companies and includes nonprofits and neighboring progressive local governments.
### Recent IQ Reports

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Creating a Multidimensional Talent Strategy to Avert Brain Drain and Other Future Disasters
Local governments are caught in a war for talent. As 80 million baby boomers (born 1946–1964) retire from their role in the U.S. economy, only 50 million Gen Xers (born 1964–1981) are available to replace them. Because most baby boomers have risen in their careers by the time they retire, the greatest talent replacement gaps are at key administrative, managerial, and professional levels. To make matters worse for local government, proportionately more baby boomers—part of the JFK era—joined the government sector than the private sector workforce.

The talent crisis is further exacerbated in the public sector because government agencies need more knowledge workers than the private sector. As indicated in a 2007 study by the Center for State and Local Government Excellence in Washington, D.C., 68 percent of all government employees are classified as knowledge workers compared with 32 percent in the private sector workforce.¹

Consequently, it is imperative that local governments “grow” their own leaders and other key professionals. To do so, local government agencies must retain and accelerate the development of emerging leaders at a time when talent can easily leave, given the shrinking labor pool.

**PREMISES**

My key premises include:

- Government is a knowledge industry dependent on talent.
- Government faces a talent crisis.
• Most next-generation talent tend to view themselves as “temps.”
• Turnover and employee disengagement are very costly.
• Providing competitive salaries and benefits is necessary but insufficient for retaining talent.

**BECOMING EMPLOYER OF CHOICE**

Providing competitive salaries and benefits is necessary but insufficient for attracting and retaining talented employees. Assuming that organizations provide good wages and benefits, they will either win or lose the war for talent based on organizational culture. In fact, a positive and engaging organizational culture must be viewed and marketed as part of the benefits packet.

To become “employers of choice,” public agencies must shape their cultures to respond to the values of employees, especially members of Generations X and Y. John Izzo, in his book *Values Shift,* identified five key values of the next generation:

**Meaning.** All employees, especially younger ones, crave meaning in their work. Meaning is the most powerful motivator of behavior. In fact, author Daniel Pink proclaims that “meaning is the new money.” Therefore, the role of organizational leaders is to link the work of the organization to people’s sense of meaning. Given the inherent nature of public service, this is an area in which local government has a competitive edge over many private sector organizations.

**Challenge.** Younger employees must be constantly challenged and stretched through new or evolving assignments and roles. The key for leaders is to stretch people but not overwhelm them.

**Learning.** The opportunity to continuously learn is a big value for Gen X and Y. In my previous city organization, Palo Alto, California, we provided and funded an array of learning opportunities even in these tough budgetary times. We called it the “Palo Alto Learning Commitment.” In a shrinking talent market, it was our “learning edge.”

**Partners in the enterprise.** Next-generation employees do not want to wait 20 years before they get a piece of the decision making. They want to be partners in the enterprise now.

**Balance.** Baby boomers have always been committed to career. Twenty-five years ago, when I was applying for my first chief executive job, I would have gone anywhere in California to become a city manager. Now executive recruiters report that they cannot pry loose talented up-and-coming managers and their families from their “home” metro areas. Gen X and Y managers are still committed to careers, but they also want time for family and personal pursuits.

The Hodes 2007 workplace study confirms the centrality of organizational culture to attract and retain employees. According to the study, employees are looking for positive organizational culture and benefit packets that include work-life balance and flexible scheduling.

**THE NEW SOCIAL GLUE**

The old social contract in the government sector was based on public agencies providing decent wages, good benefits, and especially security (in some cases, lifetime employment) to public employees. In exchange, public employees provided loyalty and commitment and stayed with their government organization. Because government is now in “permanent fiscal stress,” and agencies must sometimes resort to layoffs to balance their budgets, the old social contract is dead.

The new social contract between public agencies, as well as private organizations, and their employees is based on learning and development. The new social contract is that employees will stay with the organization as long as employees are learning and growing. Learning and employee development thus help retain employees and create organizational “stickiness.” Learning provides the new social glue.

A learning environment is not only important for retaining employees; it is also critical for attracting talent. In fact, one local government in California markets itself in all its job announcements as a “learning organization.”

**CREATING A LEARNING CULTURE**

How does a local government agency create a learning culture as part of its efforts to attract and retain talent? Here are some key approaches:

**Provide a strong rationale for continuous learning.** Amid the escalating demands on local government, it is necessary to focus the attention of employees and the organization as well as some resources on learning. Consequently, top management must provide an evidence-based and strong strategic rationale for continuous learning.

Palo Alto in 2006, for example, conducted a “retirement-wave survey” of all employees. The survey data indicated that 50 percent of all management and professional employees were eligible to retire in three to five years, and 35 percent stated that they would in fact retire. To combat this massive brain drain, the city obviously had to promote employee learning and accelerate the development of the next generation of leaders.

In addition to leadership development, other strategic rationales for continuous learning may include...
the need to encourage innovation, improve customer service, enhance productivity given constrained resources, or retain talent. It is helpful if continuous learning becomes an explicit part of an agency’s long-term strategic plan.

Offer an array of learning and development opportunities. Because of the diverse needs of employees and their different stages of development, an agency is wise to provide an array of learning and development programs. This menu of development opportunities may include special assignments, interim positions, job rotations, certificate programs, and supervisory and management academies.

Palo Alto has expanded development programs through two innovative approaches. First, in conjunction with the other local governments in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, the city offers high-potential employees a three-month assignment in another agency and a different department through the Management Talent Exchange Program (MTEP). MTEP provides new skills, relationships, and growth experiences.

Second, borrowing a strategy from the corporate sector, Palo Alto assigns employees to “action learning teams” outside their fields of expertise. Multidisciplinary teams focus on key issues facing the city, conduct research, make recommendations, and then implement the recommendations after their approval by the executive team or city council, or both.

Focus on “doing.” Historically, talent development has been viewed as classroom training. Classroom training is good for creating a theoretical or conceptual framework for new behavior, but it cannot in and of itself create the new behavior. Adults learn through actual experience and doing. Therefore, the contemporary view of talent development focuses on providing employees with a series of challenging and “stretching” job experiences coupled with helpful and candid coaching.

Both the MTEP and action learning teams rely on experiential learning. While the city provides learning forums as a classroom educational element to the experience, the focus is on learning by doing. MTEP also provides a mentor at the exchange agency so the employee can be coached and supported during the three-month experience.

Provide coaching resources. When Palo Alto conducted its retirement-wave survey, almost half of the employees indicated that they felt that they were ready or almost ready to move up in the organization as longtime employees retired. However, when they were asked “Does your supervisor think you are ready to move up?” most employees responded, “I don’t know.”

It was clear from the survey data that supervisors and employees were not engaged in “development conversations.” Consequently, the city conducted a two-part training program for all supervisors on how to conduct development conversations with direct reports. The workshop helped employees identify their aspirations, overcome obstacles to their hopes and dreams, plan some action steps, and build a supportive dream team. The next step is to train all employees on how to engage their supervisors in these types of conversations.

The city is also one of many local governments across the state to participate in the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program. This coaching program offers telephone panels and webinars on leadership and career development topics, one-to-one coaching match-ups (senior-manager coaches are listed on the Cal-ICMA Web site), e-coaching, intensive workshops, and other educational and networking opportunities. Through the city and county manager associations of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, emerging leaders can also access an annual networking and “speed coaching” event.

Encourage employees to develop an annual learning plan. All management and professional employees in the city are required to submit an annual learning plan. At the end of the year, supervisors evaluate them on their accomplishments, including their learning goals. In fact, their performance bonuses are tied in part to achieving their development goals.

Allow for mistakes. If senior managers are going to encourage employees to take on new job assignments and engage in new learning experiences, mistakes will happen. Missteps will certainly occur if employees are assigned to action learning teams outside their fields of expertise; step up to lead project teams; or make presentations in front of governing boards, commissions, or community groups. There is no learning without mistakes.

Learning cannot happen in a zero-risk environment.

To institutionalize the concept of learning through mistakes, Palo Alto’s employees follow the public safety practice of debriefing almost any experience. Staff often write up the findings and recommendations from the debriefings and share them with all those involved. In fact, the city’s leadership development team has recently initiated a series of forums at which a department shares a real-life case study and then key takeaways from across the organization critiques the experience and identifies lessons learned. The forums also help people in the organization put these lessons learned into practice with other current projects.

If employees commit to learning and excellence, top management must allow for mistakes and provide a professional safety net.

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**Providing competitive salaries and benefits is necessary but insufficient for retaining the best new talent.**

Because of the costs of living in the Bay Area, providing competitive salaries and benefits is necessary but insufficient for retaining the best new talent. It was clear from the survey data that supervisors and employees were not engaged in “development conversations.” Consequently, the city conducted a two-part training program for all supervisors on how to conduct development conversations with direct reports. The workshop helped employees identify their aspirations, overcome obstacles to their hopes and dreams, plan some action steps, and build a supportive dream team. The next step is to train all employees on how to engage their supervisors in these types of conversations.

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If employees commit to learning and excellence, top management must allow for mistakes and provide a professional safety net.
Reconceptualize the role of managers. Especially in these difficult times of constrained resources, managers see their primary roles as pushing out the work from their work units and overseeing staff. Typical managers do not perceive promoting learning and developing talent as key functions. To help reconceptualize the primary roles of managers, top management must not only provide a strategic rationale and program resources for continuous learning; we must also recognize and reward managers if they are going to expend their time and focus on these roles.

In Palo Alto, department directors and all other managers are evaluated on talent development and receive performance bonuses based in part on this key function. Moreover, as managers begin to focus on talent development and see how their people stretch and grow with support, they begin to appreciate the intrinsic value of these efforts.

**PROMOTING LIFE-WORK BALANCE**

In addition to learning, life-work balance is a key value. In the past, organizations have viewed employee life-work balance as a nice but discretionary effort, often related to the needs of women with young children. Today, balance initiatives must be viewed as a core business strategy if organizations are to retain most of their employees for long periods.

Life-work balance issues are important to Gen X and Y employees wanting an outside life as well as a career, parents of teenagers as well as young children, employees caring for elderly parents or an older spouse, and baby boomers who are eligible to retire but may be willing to work longer with some additional flexibility.

What are some practical ways to offer life-work balance? Here are some suggestions:

- Survey employees regarding their needs and interests in balancing work with family, leisure, and other personal pursuits, and form a citywide team to analyze the survey results and recommend programmatic responses.
- Develop and implement a policy promoting alternative work schedules compatible with the varied demands of local government.
- Encourage some telework for employees whose job assignments can accommodate it.
- Offer IT support so employees can set up home offices, including a computer from which they can do some of their work.
- Help organize support groups that meet at lunchtime for employees who care for frail parents or are grieving the loss of family members. The agency’s employee assistance program, a church group, or a non-profit group may be able to provide facilitation or other resources.
- Work with child care and elder care providers in your communities to provide information and other resources; consider ways to include child care and elder care resources as part of the benefits package.

Even small efforts can often make a big difference. In Palo Alto, for example, a city council protocol was developed that requires a councilmember to notify the city manager by noon before an evening council meeting if the councilmember is going to pull a consent calendar item for separate discussion. If there is no notification, the manager sends home the employee who has responsibility for the agenda item. Given the long commutes in Silicon Valley, this practice is much appreciated by employees who would normally have to attend a council meeting after working all day.

**FIVE STRATEGIES FOR WINNING THE WAR FOR TALENT**

To win the war for talent and create organizational stickiness, consider five overarching strategies:

1. Engage the governing board and employees in the talent issue. To gain the support of the governing board and the organization, the manager must raise the talent issue, provide workforce demographic statistics on the retirement wave, and generally provide a strategic rationale for focusing on employee retention and development. In Palo Alto, we conducted the retirement-wave employee survey and then convened a leadership development team consisting of managers from all departments.

   After sharing the employee survey data with all employees in large meetings, the team created an action plan to respond to the survey results. This leadership development action plan and update reports on the accomplishments have been shared at regular intervals during the past two years with senior managers.

   To gain support for the talent agenda and resources for program initiatives, it is critical to engage the governing board because leadership development and employee retention are not typical worries in the minds of elected officials. For the past two years in Palo Alto, the city manager and the Leadership Development Team have held an annual study session with the council.

   The first session focused on our next-generation challenge and provided results from our workforce analysis and employee survey. The second updated the council on our actions to become an employer of choice and attract, retain, and grow talented employees.

   To grab the attention of governing board members, I asked the council during the study session why they should care about talent development. After a dialogue in this open and televised session, councilmembers concluded that they could not achieve their policy agenda without staff talent. Councilmembers may have great dreams and ideas, but these ideas are worthless without organizational talent to execute them. As a result of these sessions, the governing board has been extremely supportive of our talent initiatives.
2. Retool the benefits package to reflect the values of the next generation. Providing competitive compensation is of course necessary in a tight labor market; however, that just keeps you in the talent game, it does not win the game. Therefore, local governments need to modify their compensation and benefit programs so they resonate better with next-generation employees.

Given that next-gen employees are more footloose than baby boomers, benefit portability is important. Certainly top management should work to ensure that their public agency has a pension program that is portable among public agencies within the state. Organizations also need to provide learning programs, professional development opportunities, and life-work balance initiatives and specifically define them as key elements in the benefits plan.

3. Fix up organizational cultures. If people feel unstimulated, uninvolved in key decisions, pigeonholed in narrowly defined jobs, or overwhelmed with work, the culture must be fixed before it is marketed as part of an organization’s “employee value proposition.”

Again, to gain support from department directors and the council in Palo Alto, I asked both groups to identify key issues that inhibit our ability to attract, retain, and grow talent. Both the council and the executive team acknowledged the need to reduce non-value-added process and counteract a hypercritical environment as part of our talent strategy.

4. Market culture as a benefit. To succeed in the war for talent, senior managers must engage in initiatives to enhance organizational culture and specifically market positive culture as a benefit.

5. Re-recruit employees on a continuous basis. Employee turnover and disengagement are costly, especially in lost productivity. Based on its survey research, the Gallup organization estimates that 72 percent of all employees in public and private organizations in the U.S. are “not engaged” or are “actively disengaged,” costing employers in absenteeism, workers’ compensation claims, and lost productivity.\(^8\)

Therefore, just as new talent is wooed as part of the recruitment process, existing employees must be reengaged as part of an ongoing process. Re-recruitment involves engaging employees in conversations and dialogues about the vision and goals of the organization; conducting “stay interviews” with employees regarding their individual hopes, dreams, and values and possible ways to fulfill their aspirations; offering people concrete opportunities to stretch and grow; and generally engaging them as part of an agency’s evolving “story.” Re-recruitment helps retain talented employees even though they could go elsewhere.

Amid all our political, financial, demographic, and technology challenges, we in local government must refocus on retaining and growing talent if we are to survive and prosper. \(\text{PM}\)

**Resources**

These publications are available for more information:


Talent development programs:


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Frank Benest, ICMA-CM, is former manager of Palo Alto, California, and co-chairs the Cal-ICMA Coaching Program (frank@frankbenest.com).

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To understand more about the current usage of formal succession planning by states and localities for workforce management, between the 9th and 23rd of September 2016, The Center for State and Local Government Excellence (slge.org) surveyed the members of the International Public Management Association for Human Resources (ipma-hr.org) online. This infographic information reflects input received from 295 respondents.

**Barriers:**
Main reason why formal succession plans have and/or will not be developed...

- **37%** not a leadership priority
- **19%** lack of internal expertise
- **12%** lack of financial resources
- **5%** general view that the organization does not need a formal plan

**Survey Respondents’ Organizations...**

- **11%** Have a process
- **27%** Are currently developing a formal succession planning process
- **33%** Will likely develop a formal succession planning process in the next 5 years
- **16%** Will not develop a process in the next 5 years
- **13%** Don’t know

**Structures:**
If a formal succession plan has been or is being developed, it is structured around...

- **75%** existing org positions
- **61%** future skill set needs
- **57%** future, anticipated org positions
- **57%** current skill set needs

**Stakeholders:**
Who is involved in formal succession planning development?

- **87%** HR STAFF
- **80%** DEPARTMENT LEADERSHIP
- **48%** APPOINTED LEADERSHIP
- **18%** INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES
- **16%** EXTERNAL CONSULTANTS
- **15%** ELECTED LEADERSHIP
- **12%** EMPLOYEE GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

**Knowledge Management:**

- **52%** of organizations have an informal or formal knowledge management program. Of those that do...

  - **6%** Have a formal process
  - **45%** Have an informal process
  - **49%** Have a combo of formal and informal

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**Center for State & Local Government Excellence**

**WWW.SLGE.ORG/RESEARCH/WORKFORCE**
Employee Work Plan

Employee:
Current Position:
Profession Development Goal:
Time Frame: *(Dates this work plan applies i.e. FY 2017, January 1, 2016-2017)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Job Duties, Areas of Growth, and/or Priority areas</th>
<th>Current Knowledge (Time on Job, knowledge of growth area)</th>
<th>Training Needed (College, certifications, hands on, publications, etc)</th>
<th>Time Frame/Status (expectation on completion or status of priority area)</th>
<th>Mentor/Responsibility to Ensure Success (who will be responsible for ensuring success)</th>
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</table>

Please indicate any required certifications, training and/or further education needed to further professional development goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Qualifications</th>
<th>Current Qualifications</th>
<th>Training/Education Needed</th>
<th>Time Frame/Status</th>
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</table>
I, **MANAGER**, understand and approve this work plan. I also understand it is my responsibility to ensure proper training and hands on experience is offered. I understand that this work plan may be modified to better meet the needs of my employee.

______________________________________    ______________________
Manager         Date

I, **EMPLOYEE**, understand and approve this work plan. I also understand it is my responsibility to attend any and all trainings that are provided, participate in experiences offered and to address any concerns to my supervisor if my work plan is not meeting my knowledge needs. I also understand that this work plan may be modified to better address my desire to obtain *(the status of higher position, certifications, etc).*

______________________________________    ______________________
Employee       Date

**Future Opportunity:** Desire for Promotion, certificate etc.
**Anticipated Time Frame:** How long is expected to take to achieve future opportunity (i.e. how long will certification take, when is the anticipated position that could allow for a promotion expected to take?)

**Key For Current Knowledge:**
**Proficient:** No need for further training. They could train someone how to do the job (no need for further explanation)
**Intermediate:** They have or in the process of learning the requirements of the job. May need follow up or further training. Typically less than six months of learning on the job would make someone Intermediate. Please provide more narrative on how you will get them proficient.
**Beginner:** Typically new skills are being learned under 90 days of training would mean they are still a beginner. More narrative in the boxes explaining what training and time they need to move to intermediate, but ultimately Proficient.
**Needs Improvement:** Has consistently been struggling to understand concepts or perform duties expected and communicated by supervisor. A monthly review process would be required for any of these items with specific goals/timelines to be addressed. Progress must be identified at the review stage, and/or barriers need to be discussed and a concrete plan of action needs to be established.
## Succession Planning Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position Title</th>
<th>Incumbent Name</th>
<th>Job Description</th>
<th>Retirement Status</th>
<th>Criticality</th>
<th>Number of Staff Ready Now</th>
<th>Number of Staff Ready in 1-2 Years</th>
<th>Succession Planning Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growth Mgmt. Dir.</td>
<td>Sue Maple</td>
<td>Supervise and direct staff in the planning, development engineering, code enforcement and building departments in the review of development applications and proposals.</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport Supr.</td>
<td>Juan Lopez</td>
<td>Coordinate and perform work in administrative and operational management of the airport facilities. Ability to assess airport operations related to airport safety, security and environmental needs. Enforce airport rules, regulations and minimum standards. Assists in airport planning; coordinates emergency procedures with emergency personnel; oversees wildlife management and issues NOTAM’s to ensure public safety.</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vet. Services Mgr.</td>
<td>Victor Ross</td>
<td>Planning, directing developing, and implementing all veteran service programs. Compiling reports. Adjutant for Advisory Council and liaison for various service organizations. Must be a veteran.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Retirement Status:
- A: Retirement likely within 1 year
- B: Retirement likely within 3 years
- C: Retirement eligible within 5 years

### Criticality:
- 1: Critical - Must "hit the ground running"
- 2: Very Important - Fully functional within 6 months
- 3: Important – Fully functional within 1 year

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x Training/Assessing Current Staff    xx Recruiting
Putting Success Back into Succession

Ashley Marshall walked into Ferndale City Hall each day for three years anticipating the same day she’d had yesterday: an endless line of customers, phone calls, checks to process . . . and a complete lack of connection to her job. Ashley was the cashier—the face, if you will, of Ferndale City Hall—but she felt invisible. She was caught in the middle of hearing from coworkers, “that’s not my job” and, conversely, “don’t do that because it’s my job”. She didn’t know her place and most days didn’t feel that she fit in. Working to earn her bachelor’s degree, Ashley believed her job would be short-lived. Somedays she delivered smiles, and other days it was just about a paycheck.

The Way We Have Always Done It

Ashley is the new face of a local government employee. She’s not planning on a pension or retiree healthcare. Her pay scale has been among the lowest in the union. City Hall is small and efficient, so she had no room for movement. She was essentially stuck in the “way we have always done it” rulebook that so many organizations follow.

In the past, getting into local government was a meal ticket, the crème de la crème of local jobs. You were hired, received decent pay, and earned outstanding benefits and the stereotypical “government pension”. You waited patiently until someone retired or left and you did your job and no one else’s. There was no succession plan, no time spent investing in professional development.

As organizational leaders, we are asked to grow and adapt to our changing environment. Why would we not expect the same from our employees? When city managers are asked why we like our jobs, many of us say that it’s because each day is different. Imagine if you walked in every day and lived Ashley’s story? How long would you want to stay in your organization?

We didn’t want this for our employees and, to be honest, with departmental layoffs several years ago, we could no longer afford for employees to continue on the same path. Morale, customer service, and efficiencies—the core values of our team—suffered daily, and we knew we wouldn’t succeed unless we improved. I would walk past the front counter and hear, “you’ll have to come back later, the person who handles that is at lunch”. I would see competent employees unable to provide superior customer service due to lack of training, and alternately, a reluctance to share information or improve efficiency because of job insecurities. These issues, among others, led to the creation of our new program: The More You Learn, The More You Earn.

The More You Learn, The More You Earn

We had two goals in mind as we worked to establish the new program: ensuring that no customers are turned away from the front counter due to lack of knowledge, and removing the invisible silos that were clearly present in our open-floor work environment. The challenges were apparent; job protection was such a concern that employees were avoiding cross training for fear of losing their jobs to one another.

Anyone who has read a government union contract will be familiar with titles such as Clerk I, Clerk II, Clerk III; Laborer I, Laborer II, Laborer III; and the like. Many times, budgets were planned around a certain number of employees per title. So what would happen if every employee in the clerical pool was motivated to move from Clerk I to Clerk III? What if every public works employee was able to move from a Laborer I to Laborer III? We decided to find out. Wherever possible, our employees would begin
moving down a path of professional development, with pay rate increases to reflect demonstrated and proven growth and knowledge. We believed that the more knowledge each employee possessed, the better customer service our staff would give to the community.

We began this strategy in spring of 2016 by focusing on two positions, customer service representative (CSR) and inspector. CSRs begin the process as cashiers and end with full knowledge of utility billing, taxes, building functions such as permit management, elections, and general city business. The position now provides front-counter customer service for parts of the week and rotates with coworkers to maintain variety and other necessary job functions. Likewise, all new inspectors begin by gaining a thorough knowledge of code enforcement and end by participating in full-scale rental or building inspections, depending on the chosen track. Code enforcement responsibilities remain a part of every inspector’s daily work.

The most critical piece of the program’s success is the employee work plan. The work plan focuses on four sections:

- Job functions or areas of knowledge needed
- Required training
- Mentor or individual responsible for training
- Timeline

We created a simple table that takes some time at the beginning but is easy to maintain. It holds managers accountable for timelines, prioritizes training, and most importantly, shows employees that they have a clear path forward. Both the manager and the employee must sign the document, ensuring ownership by both parties and an understanding of the teamwork expectation. In truth, while the work plan is meant for employees, it is helping to build skilled and effective managers as well. We plan on growing this strategy to other departments and set an organization-wide expectation that if you are part of our team, lack of growth/development is not an option.

We have hired two employees under this new strategy, and both have indicated that they look forward to seeing their paths within the organization. To new employees, it sends a message that our organization values their contributions and that we encourage learning, growth, and forward thinking.

As for Ashley, she embodies what we wanted to see in this experience. Once an employee who walked in just in time to open the front gate, she is now an engaged employee. She smiles regularly, flew through her training in CSR II, and within six months moved into a CSR III position. When asked about her change in attitude, her reply was simple: “I finally had an opportunity to contribute. I was always more than just a cashier, and I had a lot of talents that no one cared about.” She completed her bachelor’s degree this summer and says, “While I might not be a lifer here at Ferndale, I’m going to take my time finding a job in my field. I never thought I would say it, but I’m not in a hurry to leave.”

Success comes in many forms. For us, this was the defining moment.
Polling Results from “Succession Planning and Knowledge Transfer” – webinar

November 17, 2016

456 locations; 1069 estimated participants in live audience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many people are listening on your line?</td>
<td>73% - just myself, 48% - 2-5, 9% - 6-10, 2% - 11-20, 1% - 21 or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these strategies would you like to employ?</td>
<td>61% accelerate development of talent in local gov’t pipeline, 61% capture and transfer knowledge, 61% re-recruit &amp; retain, incl. early, mid., and late career, 55% attract young people into the pipeline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which of these things would you like to do to get started?</td>
<td>61% do workforce analysis, 61% identify key talent pool, 61% offer &amp; promote a menu of development opportunities, 41% engage DTS in talent readiness assessment, 67% train all supervisors in how to do development conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where would you like to give more attention?</td>
<td>78% nurturing current talent, 65% developing concrete succession planning (workshops, etc.), 61% recruiting the right talent, 29% avoiding the halo effect of picking people like us, 0% other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you like to enhance your talent pool?</td>
<td>83% build leaders even when promotions may not happen, 94% cross-train to broaden skills sets and agility of org, 73% hire for aptitude -- ability to learn, attitude, leadership, 67% support employee prep &amp; training with workplans, 0% other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How was this webinar of value to you and your agency? (check all that apply)</td>
<td>75% identifying effective strategies to attract, grow, &amp; retain, 74% offering concrete examples of useful programs, 72% giving you some clear next steps to consider, 74% providing resources in presentation and Agenda packet, 56% motivating you and your agency to take action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>