

A photograph of four business professionals in a professional setting, possibly a corporate building. They are standing on a set of stairs. In the foreground, a man in a dark suit and tie is looking towards a woman in a dark suit and patterned scarf who is looking down. Behind them, a man in a light-colored suit is walking up the stairs, and a woman in a light-colored suit is walking down. The entire image has a purple tint.

Succession Planning Guide

"An organization's people --- its human capital --- are its most critical asset in managing for results."

*Comptroller General of the U.S.
January 2001*

**A Special Section
of *Real Property
Policysite***

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GSA would like to thank the members of the Succession Planning Working Group for their efforts in developing this Guide.



Succession Planning Guide



A. Introduction

Who will succeed our current government workforce? With predictions ranging from one-third to one-half of today's workers eligible for retirement in the next five years, succession planning is a means to address what has recently been termed the "crisis in human capital."

In addition to retirement eligibility, factors such as downsizing, the lure of private company benefits, lack of younger recruits, and fewer overall new hires have all contributed to the current situation. Viewing employees as "human capital" means seeing them

as assets or investments to be valued and managed, rather than "human resources" which are consumed with the goal of minimizing costs. Once an organization's employees are viewed as human capital, their value is critical to the organization's success and even viability.

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Succession Planning Working Group members (L.-R.) Andrea Kuhn (GSA), Emma Greenfield (Energy), and Marjorie Lomax (GSA) at monthly meeting.



B. Federal Real Property Council Succession Planning Working Group

The Federal Real Property Council identified succession planning as one of its top challenges and formed a working group composed of federal agency representatives. The working group was chartered to study succession planning and develop tools and resources which agencies could use as they face an unprecedented, yet expected exodus

of experienced workers and managers in the real property field. The working group was chaired by Gary Arnold of the Social Security Administration (SSA) and facilitated by Marjorie Lomax and Andrea Wohlfeld Kuhn of GSA's Office of Real Property. Working group members are listed on page S3 and can be contacted for agency-specific information.

C. Working Group Activities

- Held monthly meetings following working group inception in July 2000
- Outlined agency problems and situations
- Examined existing programs for recruiting and training employees
- Evaluated programs outside the Federal Government
- Sought speakers who presented possible solutions

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D. Working Group Findings/Lessons Learned

- Problems originally thought to be unique were actually common among agencies
- Vast amounts of materials, programs and approaches already available among agencies are not widely shared or in many cases not even known beyond individual agencies
- Development of generic positions and skills sets was determined to be the best approach



- By working together, agencies can often achieve a better return on investment, attracting and retaining highly effective employees. However, there is no “one size fits all” solution and agencies may need to act independently
- The most important skills at the entry level are analysis/problem solving, communications, and interpersonal relations
- Additional skills, particularly real estate, finance, and business can be added through training
- The focus needs to be on a job that allows the incumbent to go (and grow) in many directions. The current structure of the personnel system’s many and frequently overlapping position descriptions does not always support that
- It serves no purpose for agencies to “steal” employees from each other
- Ideally, agencies should share resources and consider joint programs (e.g., assignments for interns, recruitment)
- The Federal Government is in competition with all employers, and the earlier it can identify needs and initiate recruitment the better (for example, waiting until a student’s senior year of college was determined to be too late)
- Evaluate current positions in light of future requirements; new hires may need different skills from those whose positions become vacant

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E. Generic Skills Set

The working group determined that competency in certain skills formed a basis for all positions, regardless of position description. As shown, the working group ranked general communications and analytical skills higher than specific, technical skills. The rationale behind this approach is that entry-level employees with good communications and analytical skills can be hired and then given on the job training to gain experience in the technicalities of the real estate field.

Working Group Ranking of Skills

- Communication
- Presentation Skills
- Computer Skills
- Problem Solving
- Interpersonal Relations
- Customer Service
- Team Building
- Analytical Skills
- Business Acumen
- Financial Analysis
- Real Estate
- Basic Appraisal Skills
- Acquisition/Disposal Skills
- Management/Leasing Skills
- Intergovernmental Coordination
- Political Acumen

F. Core Competencies/Skills Set for Managerial Positions

The working group built on the concept of the generic skills set and developed a similar set for the following managerial positions: Building Manager, Project Manager, Asset Manger, Space

Manager/Planner, and Real Estate Managers. A more detailed list of competencies and skills, including those found at varying levels and the recommended training for each level, can be found at the working group's succession planning website at: www.gsa.gov/successionplanning

Working Group Skills for Managers

- Analytical
- Communication (Oral and Writing)
- Contracting
- Customer Service
- Creative Thinking
- Decisiveness
- Flexibility
- Influencing/Negotiating
- Information Management
- Integrity/Honesty
- Interpersonal
- Leadership
- Liaison
- Management
- Organizational Awareness
- Planning/Evaluating
- Policy Development and Analysis
- Problem Solving
- Real Estate
- Reasoning
- Stress Tolerance
- Teamwork
- Technical Competency
- Vision

G. Recruiting

Recruiting is a key element for strategic management of human capital. Working group members concluded that recruitment must start early. Don't wait to target college students in their senior year as they may already have previous commitments. Coop arrangements (work/study) and internships, which cover several years, are ideal for providing benefits to both employers and students.

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1. Recruiting Tips and Tools

Benefits of Federal Employment:
When seeking new employees, the group concluded agencies would do well to emphasize the benefits of Federal employment, including the following:

- Rapid career growth (intern programs and career ladders can provide advancement to mid-level management within 3 years)
- Salary supplements including periodic pay raises, cost-of-living increases, and possible cash awards for superior work performance
- Special salary rates which may be higher than basic pay, depending on area, location, or occupational group
- On-the-job as well as classroom training
- Student loan repayment program
- Tuition assistance for college-level and advanced degree programs
- Immediate health and life insurance benefits
- Retirement plan featuring investment options and portability
- Generous vacation, holiday and sick leave benefits
- Transportation subsidies
- Flexible work schedules, possibly including alternative work schedules, teleworking from home or a center, flextime, etc.
- Family-friendly environment, including family leave policy and flexible hours, and in some cases, childcare subsidy and on-site day-care
- Employment transferability throughout the Federal Government with nationwide locations
- Credit union availability
- Fitness centers and health programs



“...Strategic human capital management is a pervasive challenge in the Federal Government. At many agencies, human capital shortfalls have contributed to serious programmatic problems and risks.”

Comptroller General of the U.S., January 2001

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Recruiting Strategy: Each agency needs to develop a recruiting strategy:

- Develop a “brand,” or corporate image for your agency
- Create an image that students can relate to (i.e. photos which include minority groups, females, persons with disabilities, and college students)
- Have brochures and literature which reflect this brand
- Send recent graduates as recruiters to college campuses
- Dress casually when recruiting at colleges

- Promote an on-line application process
- Emphasize Federal employment benefits (as shown on page S7)
- Emphasize public service opportunities, and the chance to “make a difference”
- Train recruiters

Recruiting Tools: Agencies should use a variety of recruiting tools, including:

- Centralized web-based job listings through OPM at www.opm.gov

- Develop your own agency-specific web-site with detailed information on mission, programs, etc.
- Sample agency brochures and a generic brochure developed by the working group are available for agency-specific modifications at www.gsa.gov/successionplanning
- OPM Service Center (see detailed description under OPM section)
- Intern Programs (see detailed description under OPM section)



H. Agency Programs

1. Office of Personnel Management www.opm.gov

Mission

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) supports the Federal Government's ability to have the best workforce possible to do the best job possible. OPM leads Federal agencies in shaping human resources management systems to effectively recruit, develop, manage and retain a high quality and diverse workforce. The agency serves Federal agencies, employees, retirees, their families, and the public by providing technical assistance, employment information, pay administration, and benefits delivery.

OPM Service Center
www.opm.gov/employ/html/servcntr.htm

OPM provides its reimbursable staffing assistance through a nationwide network of Service Centers. Each of the Centers

provides advice and assistance in all areas of staffing and human resource management, including: examining for internal and external selection, workforce restructuring and downsizing, assistance in recruiting and employment information, and technical assistance in other areas like organizational design and succession planning.

Intern Programs

- The Student Educational Employment Program is designed to help agencies recruit and attract outstanding students at all levels: high school, vocational and technical, associate degree, baccalaureate degree, graduate degree, and professional degree students. Under the Student Career Experience Program component, students may be eligible for permanent placement within an agency.
- The Federal Career Intern Program (www.opm.gov/careerintern/index.htm) is designed to help agencies recruit

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5 Step Workforce Planning Model

<http://www.opm.gov/workforceplanning/index.htm>

1 SET STRATEGIC DIRECTION

- Organize and Mobilize Strategic Partners
- Set Vision/Mission/Values/Objectives
- Review Organizational Structure
- Conduct Business Process Reengineering
- Set Measures for Organizational Performance
- Position HR to be an Active Partner

2 SUPPLY, DEMAND & DISCREPANCIES

- Analyze Workforce
- Conduct Competency Assessment and Analysis
- Compare Workforce Needs Against Available Skills

3 DEVELOP ACTION PLAN

- Design a Workforce Plan to Address Skills Gaps
- Set Specific Goals
- Develop HR Infrastructure to Support the Plan

4 IMPLEMENT ACTION PLAN

- Communicate the Workforce Plan
- Gain Organizational Buy-In
- Conduct Recruiting, Hiring, and Placement
- Conduct Succession Planning
- Restructure Where Needed
- Implement Retention Strategies

5 MONITOR, EVALUATE & REVISE

- Assess Success & Failures
- Adjust Plan as Needed
- Address New Workforce and Organizational Issues

and attract exceptional individuals into a variety of occupations. Intended for positions at grade levels GS-5, 7, and 9, individuals are appointed to a 2-year internship. Upon successful completion of an internship, interns may be eligible for permanent placement within an agency.

- The Presidential Management Intern Program (PMI) (www.pmi.opm.gov/) was established by Presidential Executive Order in 1977. It is designed to attract outstanding graduate students from a wide variety of academic disciplines who have an interest in, and commitment to, a career in the

analysis and management of public policies and programs. It is a two year internship program, which enables graduate degree students to be appointed to Federal positions as PMIs and to also have the opportunity to be converted to a permanent Federal civil service position following their successful internship.

Workforce Planning Model

Recognizing the importance for agencies to begin workforce planning efforts now, the Human Resource Management Council and OPM designed a **Workforce Planning Model** (immediate left) to ensure that Federal agencies have the information and tools necessary to devise successful workforce plans. A new website with retirement statistics and projections is available at: www.opm.gov/feddata/retire.

2. Department of Defense

Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA)

In terms of Succession Planning, a significant event for members of the Defense acquisition workforce was passage of the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) of 1990. The Act calls for professionalism of the acquisition workforce, including education, training, experience, and career management.

Facilities Engineering Career Field

Currently, a proposal for a new facilities career field is under consideration. If approved, this will serve the dual purpose of creating new education and training opportunities for employees in facilities related career fields, and mandate certification requirements at DAWIA-established levels.

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Defense Acquisition University (DAU) www.dau.mil

The Defense Acquisition University (DAU) provides mandatory, assignment-specific, and continuing education courses for military and civilian acquisition personnel. Its mission is to provide the acquisition

community with the right learning products and services to make smart business decisions.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command's Professional Development Center cmcell.navfac.navy.mil

This three-year intern program provides training, rotational assignments and a career ladder with permanent placement after program completion. The program has proven particularly successful in recruiting generalists who can be trained for realty specialist positions. Unlike other career fields, there is no college degree program that provides specific training for Department of Defense (DOD) realty specialist career fields. Similar intern programs are operated by other Navy and DOD components and have proven successful in recruiting recent college graduates and providing education and training opportunities to ensure competency and advancement.

3. General Services Administration www.gsa.gov

The General Services Administration (GSA) is addressing succession planning by facilitating working groups such as the FRPC-sponsored one, and by instituting an educational and training program for employees. The Public Buildings Service (PBS) is providing leadership growth opportunities to employees through PBS Academy, which links training and developmental activities to PBS business goals.

Components include corporate sponsored training (through universities or the Federal Executive Institute), developmental

assignments, and details to national and regional GSA offices, customer agencies, and the private sector. Many of GSA's Office of Real Property recent hires are in the 300 job series, which has enabled the Office to hire generalists with varied backgrounds.

GSA Online University

This Internet portal provides access to a virtual campus with 300 courses, including basic skills, computer software and managerial skills. By using a computer with a modem and internet connection, GSA employees can register and take courses online.

Federal Acquisition Institute www.faionline.com

A selection of online courses is available for contract specialists and others interested in the Federal acquisition process. Current offerings include Contracting Orientation, Market Research for Acquisition Officers, Contracting Officer Representative Mentor, and Acquisition Planning for Contract Specialists. These courses are not limited to GSA employees.

4. General Accounting Office www.gao.gov

The General Accounting Office (GAO) is the investigative arm of Congress. The agency's mission is to help improve the performance and accountability of the Federal Government for the American people. In this context, GAO has brought the crisis of human capital to the attention of Congress by providing testimony and issuing reports such as "Meeting the Governmentwide High-Risk Challenge" and "Federal Employee Retirements."

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5. Department of Energy www.hr.doe.gov/pers

The Department of Energy (DOE) provides the framework for the comprehensive and balanced national energy program through the development, coordination and administration of the energy initiatives undertaken by the Federal Government. The Department is primarily concerned with the long-term, high-risk, high-payoff research and development of nuclear and non-nuclear energy technology; the marketing of Federal power; energy conservation; a central energy information program and environmental restoration and waste management activities. The DOE is also responsible for the Nation's nuclear weapons program and site restoration management activities.

In order to address this mission, the Department introduced the Workforce for the 21st Century Initiative (Workforce 21). Under this initiative, the Department prudently and effectively manages its current resources, and engages in vigorous workforce analysis and planning for the future.

The DOE Office of Administration's recruitment brochure and other information can be accessed at the Working Group's Succession Planning website at www.gsa.gov/successionplanning

6. Social Security Administration

The Social Security Administration's Office of Facilities Management (OFM) is developing core

competencies, skills sets, training goals and career paths for facilities operations and maintenance positions. At the same time, OFM has rewritten job descriptions to reflect recent changes in job requirements, notably the addition of CAD capability as a baseline requirement for virtually all jobs. The changes have been successfully negotiated with the union.

Federal Recycling Program  Printed on Recycled Paper



Succession Planning Working Group members (facing L.-R.) Cynthia Ehinger (CIA), Steve Van Rees (OPM), and Gary Arnold (SSA), Working Group Chair, at monthly meeting.

I. Resources

National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA)

www.hrm.napawash.org

The Center for Human Resources Management (CHRM) is designed to help organizations strengthen their capacity to develop and deliver effective human resources programs. The Center provides research, information, education, and consulting services. The Working Group found their publication "Managing Succession and Developing Leadership: Growing the Next Generation of Public Services" to be a good resource.

National Academy of Sciences, Federal Facilities Council

www4.nationalacademies.org/cets/ffc.nsf

The Federal Facilities Council (FFC) is a cooperative association of 21 Federal agencies with interests and responsibilities related to all aspects of facility design, acquisition, management, maintenance, and evaluation. The FFC's mission is to identify and advance technologies, processes, and management practices that improve the performance of Federal facilities over their entire life-cycle, from planning to disposal.

Government Executive Magazine

www.govexec.com/humancapital

The recent series on human capital provides information on policy, federal agencies' approaches, and resources available.

FPMI Communications

www.fpmi.com

International Facility Management Association (IFMA)

www.ifma.com

Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA)

www.boma.org

Building Owners and Managers Institute (BOMI)

207.114.2.97/index.html

National Association of Colleges and Employers

www.naceweb.org/index2.cfm

Within five years, up to half of the Government's 1.6 million full-time employees will be eligible to retire or take early retirement, according to OPM data.

GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy
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This Guide is available online at:

www.gsa.gov/successionplanning