

Promoting a Participatory Approach in Human Capital Planning

INTRODUCTION

The Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework (HCAAF) requires agencies to have a human capital planning system that “promotes alignment” of human capital strategies with agency mission, goals, and objectives. Building a participatory approach to human capital planning and execution is a key to success. A “guiding coalition” is required to promote alignment because human capital transformation is so difficult to accomplish. Human capital planning should be managed by a human capital steering group or similar collaborative body comprised of a Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) and senior leaders and managers from human resources, information technology, finance, and mission-specific program areas.

As people participate in the process, they develop a common consciousness of the situation and begin to “buy in” to the urgency for change. A participatory approach helps agencies determine the key committees and teams needed to lead and manage the development and implementation of the strategic human capital plan, as well as the resources and authorities needed to perform their roles. This participative approach:

- Increases understanding and acceptance of the change
- Encourages stakeholder involvement in decision making and problem solving
- Generates better ideas and sounder solutions
- Helps guarantee the necessary “critical mass” of commitment.

HOW To Do It

Every organization has its own processes for planning and implementing human capital strategies. A number of experts recommend organizations promote participation through establishing certain roles. The chart on the following page depicts five key roles, what they do, and who is typically represented in the role.

Promoting a Participatory Approach in Human Capital Planning (continued)

Role	What	Who
Sponsor: An individual or a group that acts as a champion and provides overall vision, direction, and resource support in developing and implementing the plan	Acts as a champion and provides leadership for others' efforts in making the plan happen	Typically, an executive leader or senior management and senior union officials
Steering Committee: A high level decision-making body that initiates and oversees the development and execution of the plan	Develops the plan, ensures the vision is incorporated and communicated, and orients the organization to the effort	A cross-section of senior representatives from management and organized labor and employees, who should possess qualities such as position power, expertise, credibility, and leadership
Design Team*: A group of individuals responsible for describing the change in operational terms	Develops a detailed blueprint of what the human capital strategy will look like and an implementation plan	Individuals from the ranks of management, supervision, the union, and employees, who are selected for their functional expertise, ability to influence and work with others, and knowledge of organizational processes and systems
Implementation Team*: A group of individuals responsible for setting the change in motion and dealing with related issues	Determines and carries out the master plans for launching the change and supporting people through the transition	Representatives from the groups which must carry out the change
Transition Monitoring Team*: A group that serves as the people's voice during change and transition	Serves as the organization's eyes and ears; assesses how people are responding to the change	A group of 7 to 12 people chosen from as wide a cross-section as possible, including the union

* These roles are particularly advantageous when significant change and innovation are included in the strategic human capital plan.