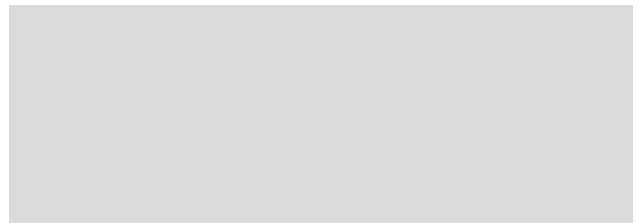




# SUCCESSION PLANNING TOOLKIT

2020 Pilot





## INSTRUCTIONS

Succession planning is the process of identifying the critical positions within your agency and developing action plans for individuals to assume those positions. Taking a holistic view of current and future goals, this process ensures that you have the right people in the right jobs today and in the years to come.

A succession plan identifies future staffing needs and the people with the skills and potential to perform in these future roles.

In the long term, succession planning strengthens the overall capability of your agency by:

- Identifying critical positions and highlighting potential vacancies;
- Selecting key competencies and skills necessary for business continuity;
- Focusing development of individuals to meet future business needs.

Included in this toolkit are templates and tips for:

- Ensuring succession planning is closely tied to business strategy and goals;
- Understanding the importance of engaging executive and senior leaders in the process;
- Clearly defining the development of key talent; and
- Ensuring staff understand their role in the process and know what is expected of them.

*If you need assistance in getting succession planning started in your organization, contact the Office of Financial Management at [shrplanning@ofm.wa.gov](mailto:shrplanning@ofm.wa.gov) or your agency HR department.*

Beware of unconscious-bias's you may bring to your succession planning. It is well documented that hiring managers tend to hire and promote people who are like them.

The state of Washington strives to foster an inclusive and diverse workplace.

We strongly recommend that your succession planning is a collaborative process within your agency with a broad array of leaders adding input into the identification, selection, and mentoring process.



## ASSESS

- Identify significant business challenges in the next 1–5 years
- Identify critical positions that will be needed to support business continuity
- Identify competencies, skills and institutional knowledge that are critical success factors



## EVALUATE

- Consider qualified and interested employees
- Select the competencies individuals will need to be successful in positions and to meet identified business challenges
- Categorize skill or competency gaps
- Predict the likelihood for attracting a robust and qualified candidate pool



## DEVELOP

- Capture the knowledge that individuals possess before departing the organization
- Develop a pool of talent to step into critical positions through targeted career development strategies



# STEP 1

Identify significant business challenges in the next 1–5 years

Your agency's strategic plan is a great place to start in identifying current and future challenges. If your agency doesn't have a strategic plan or it is not drilled down enough to your department's specific strategies and priorities, an environmental scan can provide you with enough information to start the succession planning process.

## Environmental Scan Worksheet

*Environmental scans can be conducted during a brainstorming session at a team meeting, as part of a management retreat, through surveying or talking with stakeholders, or by a combination of these methods.*

Participants:

Date:

What's happening inside and outside your agency...

Right now?	In the near future?	In the distant future?



# STEP 2

## Identify critical positions that will be needed to support business continuity

Since the next step involves identifying critical positions that your succession plan will be built around, we recommend your agency's HR Manager and/or assigned HR consultant be involved in this part of the process.

### Critical Position Worksheet

*Review positions at the manager level and above to determine which positions are key. Also, consider including individual contributor positions that require a particularly unique skillset, are traditionally hard to recruit for, or have a high turnover rate. Evaluate the impact each position has in achieving the strategic goals and objectives, as well as the vacancy risk and marketability of the incumbent.*

Participants:

Payroll Title:

Position Status:  Filled  Vacant

Position Impact:  High  Medium  Low

*Assessment of "Position Impact" should be based on a prioritized list of the department's mission, goals, objectives and strategic plan.*

Vacancy Risk:  High  Medium  Low

*Assessment of "Vacancy Risk" should be based on factors such as the incumbent's retirement eligibility, marketability, etc.*



# STEP 3

Identify competencies, skills and institutional knowledge that are critical success factors

After you determine which positions are mission critical and have a significant vacancy risk, identify competencies, skills and institutional knowledge that are critical success factors for each of the positions that require a succession plan.

## Critical Success Factor Worksheet

Position Title:

Payroll Title:

Education:  
*(degrees, certifications, licenses)*

Work Experiences:

Other Skills:

### IDENTIFY UNIQUE INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE OR RELATIONSHIPS

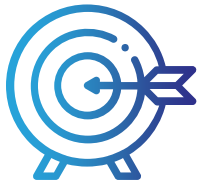
What unique institutional knowledge or relationships are inherent to the success of this position?

Does anyone else have this knowledge in the organization? If so, who?

How critical is it that this knowledge is documented and shared?  High  Medium  Low

### PLAN FOR SHARING KNOWLEDGE:

process documentation  mentoring  job aids  job rotation  job shadowing  
 other:



# STEP 4

## Consider qualified and interested employees

After you have evaluated which positions require a succession plan, the next step is to consider if there are current staff members ready to successfully assume the role or have potential to grow into it over time.

Working with leadership, your HR Manager or assigned HR consultant, determine which staff members are currently eligible or may be eligible within 3-5 years for prioritized positions.

**Note:** If you are conducting this succession planning exercise as a leadership team, be aware that qualified and interested employees are often not distributed evenly within an organization. Be willing to have honest conversations and remember that just because an individual is not identified as high potential doesn't mean that they are not a strong individual contributor, nor should they be denied access to professional development activities.

### Qualified and Interested Employee Identification

Name:

Position Title:

Department:

Years in Job:

Current Supervisor:

Target Position:

Target Position Key Competencies:

Ready:  Now  within 1 year  within 2 years  within 3-5 years

**ACTION PLAN:**



# STEP 5

Select the competencies individuals will need to be successful in positions and to meet identified business challenges

Preparing an individual to progress in the organization is not a cookie-cutter process. It often takes a combination of formal training, thoughtful coaching, trusted mentorship, and key assignments. Managers and executive leadership play a key role in creating access/removing barriers to key assignments and providing honest feedback along the way.

Managers should be having ongoing career development conversations with all employees in addition to their annual performance reviews. Career Development conversations with qualified and interested employees should be focused on closing the gaps and/or strengthening existing skills and competencies.

*Career development should be a part of your organization's regular HR practices and not only reserved for qualified and interested employees.*

## Career Development Plan Worksheet

Name:

Position Title:

Department:

Current Supervisor:

### LONG TERM GOALS

What are your long term career goals over the next 3–5 years? Describe how your long term goals align with the goals and priorities of your department?

1.
2.



# Career Development Plan Worksheet *(page 2)*

## SHORT TERM GOALS

What are your long term career goals over the next 3–5 years? Describe how your long term goals align with the goals and priorities of your department?

1.
  
2.
  
3.
  
4.

## SKILL AND COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS

*What skills or competencies do you need to build to reach your goals?*

*This career development plan provides an opportunity to demonstrate your career potential and is not a guarantee of a promotion. The plan should be evaluated at least every six months and adjusted as needed based on organizational and/or personal priorities.*

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Employee signature & date

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
 Supervisor signature & date



# MORE RESOURCES

In the following pages you will find optional support materials that may help you when completing the main, 5-step process. These materials are intended to provide additional assistance but are not required to complete the Succession Planning pilot.



## ASSESS SUPPORT

- Competency definition sources
- Individual Succession Planning Questionnaire



## EVALUATE SUPPORT

- Supervisors quick checklist for unexpected vacancies
- Succession planning do's and don'ts



## DEVELOP SUPPORT

- Manager Prep Checklist for Development Conversations



# ASSESS SUPPORT

## Competency definition sources

Your agency's may have a competency framework in place for position management. If you don't, below you will find a few lists of competencies that can give you a good starting point.

### WASHINGTON STATE ENTERPRISE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

[https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/Training/LeadershipDevelopment/Leadership\\_Competencies.pdf](https://des.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/documents/Training/LeadershipDevelopment/Leadership_Competencies.pdf)

### ENTERPRISE DEI COMPETENCIES – ALL EMPLOYEES – A PATHWAY FOR SUCCESS

<https://ofm.wa.gov/state-human-resources/workforce-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-resources/dei-committee-documents>

### COMPETENCY EXAMPLES WITH PERFORMANCE STATEMENTS

<https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/shr/HRleaddev/governance/eocc/CompetencyExamples.pdf>

### Putting Competencies to Work

Competencies don't just have to be saved for succession planning. A solid competency framework can be used for any of the following areas:

- *Talent acquisition*
- *Learning and development*
- *Performance management*
- *Career planning*
- *Culture*



# ASSESS SUPPORT

## Individual Succession Planning Questionnaire

Instructions: The questions below are designed to assist in identifying contacts, processes and procedures, institutional knowledge, and competencies needed for your position. The knowledge, experience, and competencies should reflect the actual needs of the position, which are not necessarily the knowledge, experience, and competencies you bring to the position. This questionnaire should be updated as needed or a minimum of once a year.

### SUCCESSION PLANNING QUESTIONS

1. Over the next five years, what are/will be the key responsibilities of this position?

2. What key competencies are needed for this position?

3. What expertise and experience are needed for this position?

4. What are the interim key responsibilities to be reassigned until this position is filled?

5. What information would have been useful for you to know when you first came into this position?

## Individual Succession Planning Questionnaire (page 2)

6. What information have you learned since that would be helpful for others in this position to know?

7. What do you consider to be the most valuable and/or unique knowledge that you hold in your current role? Do you have knowledge that is hard to replace or that no one else has?

8. Who are the people you interact with most frequently (internally and externally)? Is there anyone for whom you are the main or only point of contact?

9. Is there any key documentation that you find particularly useful to your role? Are these readily available to others? Procedures, manuals, software, reference materials, websites, newsletters?

10. In your position, what is generally likely to go wrong, and how do you usually respond to or resolve problems? How have you identified and managed potential risks or problems in the past?

11. What mistakes do you think have been made in the past that you think could be avoided in the future?

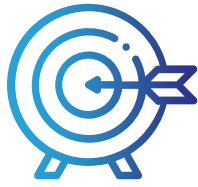
## Individual Succession Planning Questionnaire (page 3)

12. Are there other roles that you perform (officially or unofficially) in the organization?

### SUCCESSION CANDIDATE DEVELOPMENT QUESTION

Identify 10 experiences, training courses, or developmental opportunities that would prepare someone to perform this job well.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.



# EVALUATE SUPPORT

## Supervisors quick checklist for unexpected vacancies

As much as we try to plan, sometime vacancies occur unexpectedly. When there is not enough time to take a more comprehensive approach, use the checklist below to make sure no balls are dropped in the transition.

Identify the most important parts of position that is becoming vacant. Try to keep this to around 4 main buckets of work.

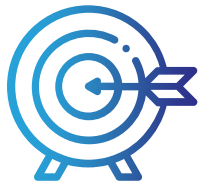
Identify who would pick up the elements of work that are most essential?

Bias check: Ask yourself, am I distributing this work fairly and equitably?

What development, coaching or assistance needs to be provided to get there?

Consider using the table format below to record essential work and next steps...

Name	Description	Stakeholders	Status	Next Steps
Name of project, program, committee, etc.	What is this?  What is the historical context?  Where are existing files located?	Who is involved? <i>(Think about team members, stakeholder groups, and sponsors)</i>	What is happening currently? <i>(Think about upcoming meetings, open initiatives and tasks that are in progress),</i>	Who will lead this effort?  What development might they need?  What are their first steps <i>(if known)</i> .



# EVALUATE SUPPORT

## Succession planning do's and don'ts

Succession planning is the cornerstone to consistently fulfill your agency's mission. It provides managers with the ability to home in on the specific competencies necessary to fill any position. It also provides an opportunity for managers to have meaningful conversations with employees on their goals, competencies and valuable work they provide every day. Here are some do's and don'ts on utilizing the succession planning pilot tools/resources in an effort to maximize your approach.

### DO

### DON'T

take the opportunity in one-on-one discussions to talk about an employee's goals – both present and future -- and how you can help with their development. If those discussions lead to the employee's retirement plans, that is the appropriate time to learn more.

go around asking employees when they plan to retire.

ensure employees of all ages and years of service are considered in the succession plan.

presume an employee's retirement plans based on age or years of service.

treat all applicants and employees the same and fill positions with the best person for the position based on the established competencies and the applicant's or employee's skills and attributes.

pass over an employee for development or promotional opportunities based on an employee's age or eligibility to retire.

review the list to understand where the workforce competencies are to ensure the appropriate development opportunities or recruitment strategies align.

review the list of employees and compare or discuss status with other employees.

ensure the competencies necessary for the position match the position description and classification so you find the best fit for the position.

build competencies based on a particular person





# DEVELOP SUPPORT

## Manager Prep Checklist for Development Conversations

Before going into a career development discussion or collaborating on the Career Development Plan Worksheet, managers should prepare by reflecting on the following questions:

- What are the employee's career goals? Are they realistic? Are they compatible with the organizational goals and needs?
- What actions has the employee completed so far? How successful were they?
- In what areas do you think the employee needs to develop new or more refined skills?
- Are there additional skills or competencies the employee should focus on to achieve their desired career goal?
- What resources, training, or experience can you provide to help them reach their goal?
- Is there additional knowledge, certification, or education the employee needs to acquire?
- What shifts in current priority or workload can you accommodate to ensure the employee has bandwidth to pursue development opportunities?

### NOTES