

# Succession planning and public agencies theses example

[Business](#), [Management](#)



# **California Lutheran University**

Rayan Azhari

Chapter I

## **Introduction**

Succession planning is the process of identifying, recruiting, and training employees of an organization in order to equip them with skills necessary for enabling them to take up future top management positions. It entails training and evaluation processes to ensure that the respective employees are capable of effectively and efficiently handling all the management and leadership issues, they may face in the course of duty.

Succession planning is an important part of everyday organization activities and, as a result, all organizations whether small; medium sized or even large must prepare for future succession possibilities. Effective succession planning ensures continuity in the life of the organization. It guarantees that there are no interruptions in the daily organization operations because of death, disability, retirement, or resignation of key employees (Todnem, & Macleod, 2009). Succession also plans also ensure that the process of filling the vacant positions is smooth thus guaranteeing continued organization success.

## **Background information**

Planning for change within organizations is inevitable as all organizations are at some point in their life faced with the possibility. The study of this procedure is important as it equips the researcher with knowledge

concerning the importance of having effective succession plans, as well as the objectives of these plans.

## **Importance of succession planning in organizations**

Succession planning facilitates the alignment of strategic organizational goals with the available human resources. The process of planning in this case creates the need for the firm to recruit or develop already available work force into the desired skills. It, therefore, creates the need for the firm to invest in relevant training and development activities to ensure the matching of all organizational activities with the skills required. Alignment of strategic goals with the available skills, therefore, facilitates the attainment of desired organization goals and objectives (Holbeche, 2010).

The second importance of succession planning is that it creates stability in critical positions particularly those of leadership and management.

Succession planning in this case creates a team of professionals that is ready to fill all vacancies that arise in the institution. Each vacant position has a readily available professional irrespective of the condition in which the vacancy existed. The process of succession planning, therefore, facilitates a smooth transitioning process from one leader to another. In addition, it ensures the minimization of interruptions in the process of public service delivery.

Succession planning enables the planning team to identify human resource training and development needs. During the process of evaluating the team of professionals for succession planning, the planning and development team is able to identify the different employee needs and requirements. The team

is able to determine the unique training needs of the employees in question thus facilitating their growth and development (Holbeche, 2010).

Facilitating succession planning within an organization is critical in enabling employees realize their career goals and aspirations. Training and development activities during succession planning equip employees with the knowledge and experience necessary to enable them take up higher leadership positions. Training increases employees' prospects of employment, thus boosting their level of motivation. In the end, the employees derive satisfaction and fulfillment from work, thereby fore, increasing their productivity.

Succession planning increases the employee level of flexibility and responsiveness. Organization environments undergo different cycles. In some instances, there is a high rate of employee turnover and in other instances a high rate of employee retention. During this period of employee exits, organizations need to have a pool of professionals on standby at the ready to facilitate a successful transition. Training of employees to enable them to adjust into these different situations increases their rate of flexibility.

Succession planning facilitates the transfer of corporate knowledge and information in a timely and cost efficient manner. In this case, the present leaders and managers of the organization interact with their other counterparts during training. The interactions are with the aim of equipping the trainees with the knowledge and skills necessary for taking up critical positions in the organization. The process saves the organization the time and money required for hiring a professional training team. It also ensures

that employees are ready for the transition as relevant situations arise (Holbeche, 2010).

Succession planning creates the need for the management of the organization to focus on the future survival prospects of the organization. It shifts the focus of the planning team from the needs of the high-level management to the medium and lower level staff. The management in this case is able to recognize the important role played by the lower cadre staff thus creating the need to focus on the fulfillment of their individual needs. Another importance of succession planning is that it fosters interdepartmental unity and organizational growth. Training of the team of professionals required to fill future vacancies within the organization encourages employee interaction. Development of work related relationships encourages them to work hand in hand in ensuring the attainment of the organizational goals and objectives. A team of employees is able to support each other's career development activities thus boosting the institution's capacity for growth and further development. (Karlsson, Johansson, & Stough, 2009).

### **Objectives of succession planning**

Organizations have different succession plans and approaches. However, all succession plans have common goals and objectives. Firstly, the plans have the aim of identifying employees with the capacity and potential to take up greater leadership responsibilities within the organization. The process ensures that the organization in question has a ready pool of qualified professionals for recruitment into any vacant positions (Bovaird, & Löffler,

2009).

Secondly, succession planning aims at providing the identified pool of professionals with training and development experiences. The training gives the employees practical hands-on experience of the situations that may arise in the course of duty. In addition, the development experiences equip the employees with the skills necessary for handling future leadership challenges and problems. The employees are, therefore, qualified and experienced to fill in any future vacancies within the organization.

Another objective of succession planning is to engage the leadership and management of the organization in supporting the development of highly developed and skilled leaders within the organization. Engaging the leadership of an organization guarantees the support of the management in all leadership development activities. It ensures that the management authorizes the release of funds to support training and development activities of the identified team of professionals. It also steers the organization towards greater success prospects due to increased levels of professionalism occasioned by the training and development experiences. Succession planning helps an organization create a database for use in making relevant staffing decisions. The database in this case contains all the desired combinations of qualifications and experiences needed to make necessary staff recruitments. It ensures the human resource team of the organization recruits only the best and most suited employee for the different vacant posts that may arise. (Karlsson, Johansson, & Stough, 2009).

Succession planning also improves the employee retention levels and

capacities of the organization. Globally, the demands of employees are evolving thus increasing the need for training. With these training and development experiences, the prospects of promoting employees into higher leadership positions increase, thereby boosting the firm's retention capacities. In addition, such training and development enable the organization to meet the career development expectations of its work force thus minimizing exits.

Effective succession planning activities enable an organization to minimize the costs associated with external recruitment of employees. The organization in this case has a wide pool of qualified employees with the capacity to fill any future vacancies. The costs associated with such internal recruitments are minimal compared to those associated with external recruitments. Succession planning, therefore, results in savings within the organization thus boosting its profit prospects.

## **Research Questions**

- How do the Ventura Health Agency and the Ventura County Library plan for leadership changes?
- What are the challenges of succession planning in the Ventura Health Agency and the Ventura County Library?

## **Important considerations for succession planning**

There are varieties of factors those institutions willing to undertake succession-planning need to consider. The factors are vital to the success of any succession planning activity and thus determine its effectiveness.

Firstly, the organization needs to consider the need for succession planning

within the institution. The process highlights the importance of the firm participating in succession planning activities as well as identifying the limitations. It also involves an analysis of what the organization expects to gain if it participates in succession planning. (Bovaird, &Löffler, 2009)

The second factor for consideration during succession planning is the basis of such planning activity. It includes defining whether the succession planning activities should take into account the long-term or short-term goals of the organization. This enables the planning determine the basis for training and development activities within the organization.

The third factor for consideration in succession planning is whether there has been consultation of the key stakeholders and leaders of the organization.

This step enables the succession planners determine whether they have the support of the management. In case consultation of the key leaders and stakeholders has already taken place, the planning team needs to determine whether they have the support of the leaders in question. (Bovaird, &Löffler, 2009).

The planning team also needs to determine whether it is possible to link the succession planning activities with other workforce planning activities, as well as human resource strategies. It involves determining with certainty, the needs and expectations of the human resource department and the succession planning team to facilitate their merging.

The next consideration involves identifying the human resource personnel and other stakeholders who that will participate in the process of succession planning. It also involves defining their key roles and responsibilities as regards the succession process. The process also involves the determination



of the key expectations of the succession planning team.

The other step for consideration in this process involves determining the measures put in place to ensure transparency, accountability, and fairness in the process of succession planning. It involves determining the present state of affairs within the company with the aim of determining the possibility of bias and unfair employee treatment. It also involves decision-making to create an environment of equal opportunity and accessibility in the process (Pasquerella, Killilea, & Vocino, 1996).

The other factor for consideration is the method of managing employee expectations of the succession planning process. The process involves determining whether employees are aware that the process is not a guarantee for promotion. It also involves designing methods and techniques for efficiently managing the transition process both in instances where there is consideration of the employee for promotion and in those situations that there is no consideration.

The final factor for consideration is determining whether the different organizational departments have the capacity to support the necessary learning and development activities. The process also involves determining how conducive the work environment is, concerning the process of succession planning.

## **Chapter II**

### Succession planning

The objective of this chapter is to review the comprehensively existing literature regarding succession-planning programs in both public agencies

and private institutions in the United States. It aims at explaining the different situations that arise in this public agency thus creating the need for the development of succession plans. In addition, the chapter examines the elements of a successful succession-planning model as well as the benefits and challenges that the public agencies face in the development and implementation of these succession plans.

The essence of succession planning is the need to prepare for the retirement of Chief Executive Officers and other top management office holders due to changes in the labor market. Many top executives reach the retirement age at the same time while there are were fewer professionals venturing into the same positions hence creating a vacuum in top management (Dresang & Dresang, 2009).

Succession planning is important because it is essential in meeting requirements in the dynamic labor market, mitigating potential labor shortage prior to experiencing the actual shortage, increasing mobility of labor, increasing eligibility for retirement, filling internal gaps that are connected to competency, retaining corporate knowledge, and enhancing career development within an organization.

Initially, replacement was not based on any planning, the only procedure included involved identification of a potential successor. The process was initiated only when there was a need to identify a person to fill a vacant seat in the organization. The main aim, while carrying out the assessment, was to carry out successfully out an identification of another person who had the same skills and professional qualifications as the outgoing manager (Rothwell, 2010).

Succession planning, on the other hand, identified and developed a pool of professionals who had the expertise and competency that was required when filling vacant positions within the organization. This is distinct from replacement planning because it primarily aims to preserve the long lasting sustainability and feasibility of an organization. Although there is no standard procedure that has been set out for filling vacant positions in succession planning, managers could be asked to identify, assess, or nominate persons who will then participate take place in the process or alternatively, candidates selected could be asked to engage in specific activities and assignments and the results are used to vet their respective qualifications. The process takes an approximate period of six to twelve months.

Succession management identifies employees with high potential as a method of talent management. These employees are developed to ensure continuity of talents that can meet the needs of any organizations in the future and whenever there is a need in all main leadership roles. This process is transparent and long term, covering a period of five to and ten years. The individuals taking part in succession management are, usually, given feedback on their performance at the conclusion of the project.

Succession management guarantees the best approach in managing and implementing change in public institutions because learning proceeds even after the conclusion of training. The activities undertaken teach, develop, and steer participants, are making them more dynamic and adaptable to the changing business environment as opposed to making participants ready to take up specific positions that fall vacant within the organization.

As put forward by Rothwel (2010) public agencies that have taken part in succession planning have realized a significant improvement in overall public relations in addition to a boost in reputation. Through employee engagement, they are given the opportunity to develop in their careers in addition to achieving self-fulfillment. This satisfaction at a personal level in turn improves the reputation of the agency as seen by other members of the public.

According to Dresang & Dresang (2009), in public institutions, however, there is a regrettable deficit of data in comparison to private institutions. Public institutions lack mechanisms that can sufficiently support succession-planning activities.

The concept of succession planning is highly familiar among businesses around the world. Throughout history, families and businesses have participated in the planning for different successors especially with regard to key roles in their businesses. As Michael (1989) explains, the need for succession planning developed due to the rising need to plan for the Chief Executive Officer's (CEO) retirement in the rapidly changing labor market conditions. It was due to the realization that many people reached retirement age at the same time, but there were few entrants into the job market, leaving a shortage of personnel in management positions.

### **Over time, the need for succession planning has evolved to include:**

- Conforming to the competitive labor market
- Potential shortages in skills
- Increased labor mobility and reduced population growth

- Increasing retirement eligibility
- Internal gaps related to competency
- Need to retain corporate knowledge and
- Need to enhance career development

## **Replacement planning**

In the 1970's, the concept of succession planning was referred to as replacement planning. Replacement planning is a traditional succession planning method used to identify a specific candidate with the expectation that they will fill a particular key position within the organization in the future. The method provided the organization with a source of backup in the case that a key employee left the firm without sufficient notice.

Replacement planning differs from succession planning in that it has the aim of providing replacements for senior top management positions in the organization. Compared to succession planning, replacement planning did not provide the identified individual with the necessary training and development opportunities. The successor in this case had to learn from the current senior manager or chief executive officer. The succession planning team in this case expected that by the time the key employee left the public institution, the potential successor would possess the required skills (Brady, Fulmer, and Helmich, 1982).

The process of replacement in this case did not involve any planning since upon the identification of the potential successor, the process of planning came to an end. The process could only begin if there was a need to identify a potential candidate for a potentially vacant key position. In replacement

planning, the management executive identified the specific individual expected to fill his position. The basis of assessing a candidate in this case was the qualities possessed by the current management executive. The process, therefore, had the objective of replacing the current candidate with another who possessed similar traits, qualifications, and competencies. It was with the expectation that the public organization would encounter no difficulties in the transition process.

## **Succession planning**

The term succession planning developed in the 1980's. Succession planning refers to the process of identifying and developing a pool of professionals with the expertise and competency needed to fill vacancies within the organization. Contrary to replacement planning, succession planning has the objective of preserving the long-term sustainability and viability of the organization. By ensuring that the pool of professionals created by the succession planning process fills the vacancies, the organization ensures the carrying on of the organization's ideas, visions, and missions from one particular employee to another thus avoiding confusion. Succession planning, therefore, helped the organization steer towards the attainment of its strategic goals and objectives.

In this approach, the planning team could use a variety of methods to identify the pool of potential candidates. Firstly, the team could ask the managers to identify, assess, or nominate people in this development process. In this case, only the nominated persons participate in the development process. In other instances, candidates participate in specific

activities or perform different assignments. The planning team uses the results of the assignments to identify those qualified for participation in the development process. They also aid the planning team in identifying the skills of each particular candidate thus the roles that he or she undertakes is are most suited.

The planning period for this method is, usually, six to twelve months following the determination of the potentially vacant positions. The process of succession planning also has the aim of aiding the organization in strategic planning. The process of succession planning provides some sort of insurance against future unexpected changes in labor. It ensures that the organization has a pool of professionals that is ready and willing to take up future vacancies within the organization on short notice (Michael, 1989). Similar to the replacement planning approach, the process of succession planning is not transparent. There is no standard procedure of recruiting or selecting individuals during the planning process. In addition, the two methods do not guarantee feedback to the participating employees.

## **Succession management**

The term succession management developed in the 1990's to the 2000's. Succession management is a talent management approach that involves the identification of high potential employees and their development so as to ensure that there is a pool of talent that is available and ready to meet the organizational needs in the future, and as time may demand. It differs from succession planning in that, the process of planning is long term and takes five to ten years. In addition, succession management is more

comprehensive since it involves making provisions for all key leadership roles within the organization. (Brown, 1982)

Compared to succession and replacement planning, the process of identifying the pool of employees to participate in succession management is transparent. The succession management team assesses the employees with a view to identifying key competencies among them that indicate their potential to take up senior management positions. A wide range of people participates in this process of identification and assessment. Examples include line managers, peers, and the senior management team among others.

Succession management activities have the objective of facilitating and implementing change within the organization. The participants of this process realize that the business environment is highly dynamic, thereby creating the need for succession management. They recognize that a firm's ability to survive and excel in the present market conditions is due to its ability to respond and adapt to the different business situations. Following completion of the relevant training and development activities by the participating individuals, the individuals are able to apply and get higher-level positions thus facilitating their career development. The process of succession management ends with the succession management team providing feedback to the participating individuals. It includes information on the criteria used to identify and select the employees with the potential to participate in the process. It also includes giving recommendations to those who did not qualify on the areas that they need to develop and improve on. It helps uphold the transparency of the succession management process as



well as reduce conflict within the organization due to dissatisfaction.

Succession management provides the best approach towards managing and implementing change within a public institution. The learning and development activities are steered towards enabling the participants of the succession planning process to acquire skills to that will make them more adaptable to the business environment. Rather than steer the participants towards taking up specific jobs within the public agency, succession management ensures that the process of learning continues long after the training ends. It guarantees the continued commitment of the participating individuals towards improving the performance of public agencies.

### **Purpose of the study**

Changes in labor and employment trends over time have necessitated the need for public agencies to plan carefully for the development and replacement of key personnel within their institutions. These changing needs of the labor force have also created the need for these institutions to ensure that these succession plans equip existing talent with skills that match both the present, and future needs of public agencies. The study of succession planning in this chapter aims at highlighting the importance of succession planning in public agencies.

Succession planning within agencies, both private and public, perpetuates a sense of continuity within the organization. It enables the public institution to plan and provide for the potential vacancy long before it happens. It ensures that there is no vacuum in leadership occasioned by the exit of key employees within the institution. (Brown, 1982)

Succession planning provides public agencies with emergency leadership plans aimed at filling vacancies created by unforeseen circumstances. The emergency leadership plans cover vacancies created by death, mental instability, and serious injury caused by accidents. Such plans ensure that there is continuity within the organization and that there are no gaps in the leadership process of the public institution.

Public agencies that have formal succession planning programs experience fewer cases of employee conflict and discrimination. Succession planning enables the public institution plan rigorously for its future needs. The process involves a critical assessment of the needs of the public health agencies as well as all the available potential public employers by the employees. It, therefore, eliminates discrimination and conflicts among them thus promoting a culture of equity and fairness within the institution.

Succession planning also provides public agencies with an opportunity of developing the talents of many employees rather than focus on the development of individual talent. Succession planning activities enable the planning team to identify employees with the potential for development thus enabling them to achieve their career goals and objectives. Focusing on the diversified needs of all the employees rather than particular individuals increase the ability of the firm to develop and retain talent thus securing its future employee requirements (Frisch, 2002).

Any public agency that invests in succession planning realizes savings attributed to reduced costs of recruiting employees from external sources. With succession planning, a public agency is able to fill most of its potential vacancies from the pool of professionals created by the succession planning

team. In this regard, the agency does not incur job advertisement and interviewing costs and is, therefore, able to control costs.

Succession planning activities reduce the likelihood of internal gaps related competency developing within the public institution. Succession planning activities provide the participants with a variety of training activities. The activities, which range from job rotation activities, group assignments, as well as mentorship programs provide the participants of the development process with the skills and experience necessary to guarantee their competency. In the event that the key positions fall vacant, the participants of the training take up the positions without difficulties. They are able to carry on the work of their predecessors thus ensuring the success of the public institution.

Succession planning in the public organizations eliminates disruptions in the day-to-day business activities. Public agencies with effective succession plans have strategies put in place to cater for any unprecedented exits by employees in critical positions. In the event that this happens, the pool of professionals created by the process fills in the vacancy, thereby fore, reducing the shortage of skills within the organization.

The development of effective succession planning programs enables public organizations to review regularly their goals and objectives thus reinforcing their commitment. During the needs assessment stage in succession planning, the succession planning team analyses the needs of public organizations alongside those of their employees.

The process of assessment enables the team to reviews the firm's future goals and objectives in order to align them with those of the succession-

planning program. The management of public agencies is, therefore, able to evaluate the success of the program with regard to facilitating the attainment of the set objectives. In the event that the succession program fails to enhance the attainment of the identified goals, the management of the agency reviews the succession program's objectives to ensure that they are in line with those of the agency. (Brady, Fulmer, and Helmich, 1982). The process, therefore, enables the management to evaluate the rate of attainment of the objectives with time.

Succession planning in public agencies creates a forum for educating the institution's employees as well as participants of the succession planning process regarding the benefits of the program. The majority of the employees of public agencies may feel uncertain about the process of succession planning. In such a case, the employees may sabotage the succession planning activities, thus limiting the success of the program. However, if the employees of the agency are educated about the concept of succession planning, there is likelihood that they will support the program. The process, therefore, enables the planning team to educate them, thereforthereby, increasing their level of awareness. (Carless and Sally, 2001)

Succession planning activities improve the methods of communication thus fostering employee unity and cooperation. During planning, the succession management team has to ensure that employees at all levels have the information regarding the process of succession planning. The flow of communication in this case is from the top executives to the lower level staff. Efficient communication of this information breaks all communication

related barriers, therefore, improving relations among the employees (Carless and Sally, 2001).

Succession planning within an institution results in an increase in the level of efficiency and success of the agency's operations. Succession planning activities enable the agency to prepare for any unexpected vacancies in the organization through the provision of training and development activities. Public agencies that participate in the succession planning experience an improvement in their public relations, as well as reputation. By engaging the employees in succession management activities, a public organization provides them with an opportunity of experiencing career development and fulfillment. At the end of the succession-planning program, the participating employees experience higher levels of personal level satisfaction thus improving the agency's reputation among other members of the public (Carless and Sally, 2001).

### **The succession-planning model**

Careful examination of existing literature on succession planning within organizations shows that there is a deficit in data concerning succession planning in public agencies in the country. It also shows that compared to private institutions, many public agencies do not have sufficient mechanisms to facilitate and support the succession planning activities.

However, data on both public and private institution's succession planning methods is applicable in this research for since both public, and private institutions share the goal of developing a qualified pool of professionals with the capacity to meet the future needs of the organization. Similarly, public

institutions can learn from the strategies adopted and challenges encountered by private agencies in order to develop more successful and adaptation plans.

Public agencies and private companies have different succession planning programs. The basis of developing such ideas vary varies with the goals and needs of a particular organization. However, on examining the different data available on succession planning, specific key characteristics stand out.

These include:

- Top management support
- Dedicated responsibility
- Needs driven assessment
- Professional development opportunities
- Focused individual attention
- Extension to all organization levels and
- Inclusion in the strategic plan

### **The top management and executive support**

The top management's support of any public institution is highly critical for the success of an institution's succession planning activities. The top management in this case refers to the public agency's chief executive officer, the board of directors, as well as any other individual with a senior management position.

Executive support of the public agency's succession planning program ensures that the succession team obtains the required support. The support in this case takes the form of approval of policies relating to the succession

management program, that is; approval of budgetary allocations to fund the activities of this planning team (Eadie, 1983).

The support of the executive is also essential as it facilitates an organizational-wide implementation of the program within a public institution. An agency-wide implementation of the program enables other subsidiaries or branches of a public agency to take part in the succession planning process thus enhancing the public agency's ability to cope with vacancies within a public organization (Eadie, 1983).

Executive support of the succession planning programs provides motivation to employees and other individuals willing to participate in the succession planning process. The support in this case makes the employees aware of the executive's commitment towards enhancing employee career development while at the same time promoting the overall growth and development of a public agency (Rothwell, 2005).

Generally, people expect that the executive board's support of the succession planning process is an indication that the senior management approves of the planning process. However, it is necessary to verify that this is true in order to obtain the full support of the management as well as avoid conflicts within the organization.

The senior management's approval of this process is essential since it creates a sense of ownership among them. A sense of ownership of the succession planning process acts as a guarantee of for the success of the process. In addition, it enables the managers communicate with other disgruntled managers who may not support the process and thus obtain their support (Eadie, 1983).

In the case of disagreements between the executive board and the senior management of the public agency regarding the conduct of the succession planning process, the management team could hold discussions to facilitate the deliberation of such issues. The opportunity for discussion enables the disgruntled managers give their views in the issues causing disagreement. (Rothwell, 2005). In addition, it provides the succession planning team with an opportunity to educate the management on the benefits of the succession planning program as well as the methods of conduct.

The opportunity to discuss also enables the senior management team to give recommendations on the conduct of the process. In particular, they are able to specify the nature of qualifications and competencies that they expect the participants of the process to possess. They may also assist the succession planning team in identifying the employees with potential for taking up senior management positions within the agency in the future.

However, if the discussions and meetings with the disgruntled managers are not sufficient to win their support, the executive board needs to take further measures to eliminate such feelings. It will ensure that the program takes place as planned, thereby therefore, eliminating the chances of sabotage by these senior managers. Further, it guarantees the credibility of the succession planning process (Rothwell, 2005).

### **Dedicated responsibility**

The element of dedicated responsibility within the managers and participants of the succession planning process is another essential element of this process. It relates to the efforts of the individuals eligible for training



and development, the senior managers, and top executives of the public institution (Rothwell, 2005). The concept of commitment towards the succession planning activities creates a sense of responsibility among the participants thus increasing their willingness to participate.

Regarding As regards the commitment of the top executive towards the succession planning activities, dedicated responsibility enables them avail all relevant resources and support required to make the process a success. It also involves obtaining their approval on all relevant policies.

The sense of dedicated responsibility among the senior managers' enables them participate in the process of identification and selection of the process of succession development. In particular, it enables them exert their influence among other lower level staff regarding their support for the process. It provides them with the opportunity to encourage potential employees to participate in the succession planning process thus increasing their chances of career development and job satisfaction.

### **Needs driven assessment**

Following the succession-planning program obtaining the top executive's support, the succession planning team needs to perform a needs driven analysis to determine the needs of the individual employees, as well as those of the agency itself (Noe & Noe, 2012)..

The first step in the needs assessment involves analyzing the future needs of a public institution. It involves analyzing the agency's goals and objectives in order to formulate key strategies for use in the implementation process. An analysis of the future resource requirements, as well as the future labor

needs of the institution, is highly necessary. Such analysis enables the planning team to determine the personality traits of the people to fill in the specific positions.

The second step involves analyzing the identified jobs to determine their competency requirements. The job analysis involves determining the key competencies, skills, and experience requirements of the individuals expected to fill in the identified positions in the future. The process ends with detailing job descriptions and person specifications in the succession management plan. (Shields and Patricia, 1998).

Thirdly, the succession planning team needs to conduct an analysis of its existing employees in order to establish the existence of gaps as regards the skill requirements of the public agency in the future. The process involves conducting performance reviews with in relation to the identified objectives of the business with a view to of determining the achievements of the employees. At the end of this stage, the succession planning team needs to determine not only the potential of the employees of a public agency, but also the career objectives, preferences, as well as factors limiting the achievement of such career objectives. Such analysis may involve the use of psychometric tests, group questionnaires, as well as occupational personality questionnaires.

The fourth step involves analyzing the learning and development needs of the employees within the agency. Following the analysis of the needs of the existing employees, the succession planning team needs to analyze the results of this assessment to determine the training and development needs of the individuals.

The determination of such training needs is geared towards enabling the institution to attain its future goals and objectives as well as enabling the employees realize their career goals and aspirations. The analyzing team in this case provides for the capacity for development in order to enable the employees of the agency to perform more complex and diversified tasks. The succession planning team also needs to conduct an intercompany analysis to determine the needs of companies with similar goals and objectives and have successfully implemented their succession plans. The inter-company analysis also enables the company to assess the challenges and achievements of the similar companies to enable them formulate policies and measures aimed at ensuring the successful implementation of the succession-planning program (Poister, Theodore & Gregory, 1999). The final step of needs assessment involves analyzing existing labor and business market conditions to determine changes in trends and practices. The analysis involves conducting research on the demand for people occupying critical positions within different public agencies in not only the Ventura County, but also in the United States. It involves establishing a public agency's potential to retain such employees, as well as the risks associated with their exit.

### **Professional development opportunities**

Following the performance of the needs assessment activity in a public institution, the next step involves acting on the information derived from the process. It involves establishing training facilities to provide the required training and development activities. Other methods of facilitating

professional development within a public agency involve job rotation and assignments (Orosz, 1991).

Job rotation activities provide the training and development team with an opportunity of obtaining practical skills regarding specific key positions within a public institution. In particular, it enables the individual to obtain exposure to the different circumstances and activities that characterize the daily business of a specific position.

Job mentorship opportunities are another form of professional development tool for individuals participating in succession planning activities. Job mentorship activities enable the current occupant of the critical position within an organization to interact with the potential candidate. It enables the potential employee learn and derive motivation from the current occupant's method of operation. It also provides the prospective employee with the opportunity to learn about any key activities or projects that are under implementation by the current occupant. The mentorship program acts as a link between the two employees thus providing continuity in leadership within an organization.

Further, the succession planning team needs to perform regular evaluation activities with a view to establishing the progress of such training and development activities. Regular evaluation enables the team to determine the objectives so far attained through training as well as those that are pending. It also enables them take measures necessary for ensuring that the training program is successful and that it meets the specified objectives (Noe & Noe, 2012)..

## **Focused individual attention**

Ensuring that the participants of the succession planning process receive focused individual attention is another important element of succession planning. Various activities within any institution act as a mechanism that facilitates the provision of focused individual attention on the employee (Ley, 2002).

Firstly, the succession planning team needs to ensure that before the implementation of any training and development activity, there is an interaction between the team and each individual participant of the process. The interaction enables the planning team to identify the goals and development needs that are unique to every participating individual. The process enables the succession planning team to tailor each training activity according to the needs of a specific participant. It ensures that the employees develop a sense of acceptance within the program and the agency in particular (Mollica, Kelly & Rocki-Lee, 2000).

Secondly, the succession planning team also needs to liaise regularly with the participating individuals with a view to establishing whether there is a change in their career development needs, goals, and objectives. The planning team should recognize that employee needs and goals might change with time, and they should, therefore, provide for the incorporation of such changes. Liaising with the employees from time to time increases the level of satisfaction and motivation among the participating individuals because it makes them feel accepted. It also helps them be aware of the institution's commitment towards furthering their career development goals alongside those of the agency (George, 2008).

Focused individual attention during succession planning also benefits the organization, whether private public or public. In this case, the succession planning team is able to assess the needs of the participating employees with a view to determining their level of satisfaction. Satisfaction in this particular instance refers to the level of employee job satisfaction. In this regard, the succession planners are able to determine the likelihood of an employee leaving the agency.

In the case of an unsatisfied employee, the planning team should conduct an analysis with the objective of determining the causes of distress as well as devise methods of solving the identified issues. Specifically, the team needs to ensure that the analysis is efficient in order to prevent the loss of a high potential employee.

While focusing on the individual needs of employees, the succession planning team needs to ensure that it does not ignore other critical requirements of the succession planning process. It ensures that the team remains focused on the goals of the succession planning activity, thereby therefore, ensuring its success (Sogunro & Olusegun, 1997).

### **Extension to all organization levels**

Extending the objectives of the succession-planning program to not only include senior management positions but also a lower level staff positions, ensures that the team is able to re-assess its mission and goals as well as determine the level of skill and talent required for the identified positions.

During this process, the top executive identifies talent in the level below it; senior management follows and identifies talent below it, and so on. The

process continues and ends at the employee at the lowest level. It ensures that the succession planning team identifies talent at all levels of the agency, thereby therefore boosting the employees' morale.

The extension provides an institution with an opportunity to re-examine its goals and objectives thus re-enforcing its commitment towards the attainment of the specific goals and objectives. It also ensures that agency aligns its succession planning activities with the future needs and objectives of the agency (Garrett and Orr, 1999).

Thirdly, extending the succession planning activities to all levels within the organization enhances communication among the different levels of staff. In this case, the succession planning team has the opportunity of communicating the requirements and objectives of the succession process efficiently. It, therefore, acts as a means of increasing the employee support for this particular program (Sackett, 2009).

Fourthly, the program fosters unity among the employees of the institution thus further guaranteeing their commitment and support towards this succession program in particular. During the communication, the succession planning team is able to allay all fears regarding the process of succession. In addition, the team is able to maintain a high level of transparency and credibility thus protecting and enhancing the organization's reputation (Sackett, 2009).

### **Inclusion in the strategic plan**

The succession planning of a public agency should have objectives that correspond to the strategic goals of the institution. Before implementing the

succession plan, the senior management of an organization should analyze the contents of the plan to establish its role in facilitating the agency's growth and profitability. Ensuring the inclusion of the succession plan into the agency's strategic goals ensures that the line of leaders created by the succession process shares in the goals of the institution. Specifically, it ensures that all current decisions and programs obtain the support and commitment of the incoming leadership team (Ley, 2002).

Another benefit of incorporating the goals of the succession program into the strategic goals of the organization is that it increases the agency's ability to cope with hard economic times. Particularly in the case of conducting layoffs, the process enables the succession planning team to determine the employees with the greatest value to the organization. At the end of the analysis, the succession planning team is able to rank the employees according to the value attached to them, thus ensuring that the retrenchment only happens to those with the least value. The process helps safeguard the future of the institution while at the same time protecting it from experiencing a shortage in skills (Ibarra, 2005).

During the conduct of succession planning activities, public, as well as private agencies, need to ensure that employees are aware that participating in the process of training and development does not guarantee recruitment into specific vacant positions. In particular, the management of the agency needs to refrain from promising or guaranteeing placement in such vacant positions. Refraining from such acts reduces the chances of the participant taking legal action on a public agency for failure to fulfill its



promise of employment. It also ensures that institutions comply with existing government regulation regarding fair employment practices.

## **Challenges facing the implementation of succession planning programs**

Government agencies like private companies encounter challenges during the implementation of the succession-planning program. While the challenges are specific and unique to the industry in which a given institution, there are those that are common to all agencies regardless of the industry in which they belong.

Firstly, the succession plan in most organizations lacks the total commitment and support of the top management. One of the critical elements of effective succession planning is the support of the executive without which there is no guarantee of the future of the program. In some cases, the leadership of this agency may not recognize the need for succession planning within their institutions (Ley, 2002).

In particular, they may regard the process as a waste of time, therebytherefore, failing to give it the attention it deservesdeserved. Some leaders may also feel that succession planning is suited for private companies thus rejecting its bid for implementation. Such actions totally limit the ability of the program to succeed and meet the set objectives.

Secondly, institutions may have budget restrictions thus affecting its ability to implement the program successfully. All projects within an institution require financial resources to facilitate their running. Specifically, succession-planning programs require funds to facilitate the establishment of training and recruitment programs. In this regard, institutions need to ensure that

the programs have the relevant authority's approval in order to facilitate their funding. The lack of financial resources to support this succession planning activity limits the ability of the institution to meet the future emergency employee requirements thus limiting its success.

Rapid changes in the leadership of organizations may also reduce the chances of the succession program succeeding. Each succession program requires the support of the leadership team. In this regard, the program requires the continued support of the management even in the event that there is a change in leadership. In public institutions, however, the new leader may not share the goals of the previous leader and thus may fail to support the succession-planning program. In such a case, the succession planning activities come to a stop and may heavily reduce the level of employee motivation. The employees in this case may feel that the present leadership does not share in their career visions and goals, thereby therefore, affecting their level of performance (Dresang & Dresang, 2009).

Unlike private institutions, public agencies have specific laws and regulations that govern the process of selecting and recruiting staff. In some instances, the laws may limit the agency's ability to implement succession-planning programs since existing provisions of the employment laws may conflict with those of the succession-planning program. Such restrictions highly limit the ability of agencies to implement the program thus compromising its future employee needs and requirements (Carless, 2001).

Existing rigidities in the management of public institutions may affect the agency's ability to implement a successful succession-planning program.

Leaders at most agencies employ traditional leadership styles in their

management and thus may feel uncomfortable implementing succession-planning programs within their institutions. Most of them may prefer the traditional replacement planning method for succession planning, thus fail to institute measures to support the program.

Another key challenge facing succession planning in organizations is the shortage of skills and personnel. Employees of the agency benefit from defined benefits plans, which highly limit their chances of staying on in the agency. Specifically, these plans enable the employees to contribute defined amounts to their retirement plans thus enabling them realize financial security long before others in defined contribution plans. The realization of financial security reduces the chances of these employees staying on in the same institution. Most of them retire early leaving few eligible candidates for the succession planning process. (Wallum, 1993). The lack of qualified and experienced employees who meet the planning team's requirements limit the probability of the succession program succeeding.

The inability of many institutions to attract and retain as many employees as their private counterparts is another challenge facing the agency. Unlike private institutions, some public agencies lack the support and commitment needed to oversee the successful implementation of succession management programs, thus limiting their ability to succeed. In addition, these institutions are incapable of offering their employees sufficient compensation in order to keep them from moving to other private institutions. In the end, the agency experiences vacuums in its leadership positions.

Existence of restricting policies within institutions, in particular public

agencies, is another challenge that the agency encounters in the course of implementing their succession planning programs. Restrictions occur in the form of rules or policies that limit the powers of the succession planning team. In other instances, the restricting policies prohibit the planning team from adopting specific methods of succession planning. In particular, the management of the agency may not allow the adoption of private company approaches towards succession planning. In the end, the development capacity of the institution is limited thus affecting affected its growth. Leaders of this agency should, therefore, allow the succession planning teams to implement whatever policies they deem appropriate for the development of the institution (Gilmore & Thomas, 1988).

Furthermore, many public agencies often experience disruptions in its management and day-to-day activities due to politics. The fact that national and county governments often own these agencies makes them prone to such interruptions. In order to avoid such pitfalls, these agencies need to ensure that they establish a support base for their its programs outside of government. By obtaining such support, public agencies will minimize the likelihood of interruptions and interferences occasioned by the change in political leadership and management.

Public institutions can also participate in the political process through identifying and supporting a political leader who will champion their ideas. By supporting a specific candidate in the incoming administration, the agency ensures that it has the support necessary to ensure a successful transition as well as guaranteeing a smooth transition from one leadership team to another (Wallum, 1993).

The agencies could also ensure that they document their achievements and details of the team that facilitated the achievement of such particular objectives. Documentation of these successes ensures present and incoming leaders are familiar with the achievements of the agency. The documentation also serves to inform the incoming leaders of the high expectations of the employees of the agency as well as those of other stakeholders of the institution. It also makes the participating team aware of their achievements thus further motivating them (Bryson, 1999).

## **Research questions**

- How do the Ventura Health Agency and the Ventura County Library plan for leadership changes?
- What are the challenges of succession planning in the Ventura Health Agency and the Ventura County Library?

In conclusion, the main goal of carrying out succession planning in both public and private institutions is to ensure that there is at any point, qualified and competent employees who have the capacity to meet future management needs of the organizations. The most important factors and characteristics to be taken into consideration while conducting succession planning are the support by top management, dedicated responsibility, carrying out an assessment to determine needs, provision of professional development opportunities while focusing on individuals, extension of all levels of organization and inclusion of succession planning in the strategic plans.

## **Chapter III**

### Chapter III: Method

#### Research questions

- How do the Ventura Health Agency and the Ventura County Library plan for leadership changes?
- What are the challenges of succession planning in the Ventura Health Agency and the Ventura County Library?

### **Overview**

In trying to gain access to data that can actually give more insight into how the demographics of succession planning are handled at venture county agencies, it is paramount to look in context the library and health agencies in the county. The methods of research will be reviewed with the background of justifying the succession planning approach that will be deliberated on. Perhaps, it must be understood that the course of establishing a replacement employee in any position in the organization is not an easy exercise since with every addition of a new personnel in whichever position; a dimensional growth is always anticipated.

### **Research Method**

Research method refers to the process of collecting, recording, and analyzing data. In this study, the research will deploy qualitative as well as quantitative methods of research.

## Research Design

The research is designed to establish the problem in the institution that led to the recruitment of a new hospital superintendent. The problem is justified by the fact that the current serving medical officer was almost running out of his contract and owing to the level of business in the institution, a vacuum should not occur. In fact, the panelist was weighing in the thought the new recruit should be identified early in time say two weeks to it. Part of the research design is to have the criteria of research complementing the core business, which is a succession in that, if in the previous search for a replacement; the process was costly and not efficient in terms of establishing the prime candidate. The research design is thus geared towards streamlining all the important issues that must feature in the succession process and establishing the optimal time in which things must be done (Wasserman, McLean, & Gale Research Company, 1973).

The research will be time sensitive, objective-oriented, and so, the method adopted is to deliver the results within one week of the last days of the old personnel. The objective will be to capture the right personnel for the position in a wholesome approach. Previous literature also highlight on a drawback basis, the fact that even though the post would be best utilized if it were restricted to the candidates within the organization, a few leaders who took over but were outsourced were associated with growth and that would then influence part of the decision being made.

## **Procedures for Data Collection**

I will introduce health informatics, which will be a key factor that will be sought after. By that, it means the health institution will likely achieve some scale of the paradigm shift as envisaged in their vision (Graffy, 2010).

I will also adopt previous reports to chart the course of collecting data; when reviews are made it becomes inherent that previous data can help define what the next candidate should contain in character and skill. Previous reports also help in dictating how who should constitute the panelist and that should be based on the kind of candidates that panel has recruited and the contributions of those people to the expectations attached upon their being recruited. The contributions of these reports are also important in the sense that, a successive recruitment exercise should not come short in expectation than the previous one (Elkind, 2011). I will record all useful data in an accurate and systematic manner. The data collection method I deploy will observe all ethical principles of research.

## **Procedures for Data Analysis**

Qualitatively, the research will be a library based with particular emphasis placed on the examination of materials that continue to shape the succession discourse. I will also use other available literature material regarding succession plans.

## **Assumptions and Limitations of the Study**

There is a myriad of challenges for any person who ventures in the literature that cut across the disciplines of succession plans. Such challenges are manifested in the ability to engage in an objective discussion on the



accuracy of the proposed plan. The challenge is even greater when the same debate is presented to a wide audience whose interest in the proposed succession plan may seem to be under attack. It is for this reason that I acknowledge the necessary assumption that the study need to make to achieve its objectives. I also acknowledge that the study is not perfect; instead, it is characterized by some limitations that control the scope of the study.

Some of the limitations of the study include, in the case of the health agency, the study does not take into account a challenge from a section of the team to accept the need to have younger and more educated individuals taking over the leadership roles while there are still a couple of the elder and experienced employees who have grown with the organization. The study ought to have outlined how the planners will navigate this issue. The study assumes that the plan will take care o