



**ACU Human Resource Management Programme
Conference,
1-3 September 2006, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**

**By: Albert R. Mwaheleja,
Human Resource and Administration Manager**

Hubert Kairuki Memorial University, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



CREATING A STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLAN

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Succession Planning is developing leaders for the future of the University.

We need staff development and succession planning for many reasons and causes.



Driving Factors for a Staff Development and Succession Plan

Several factors are driving the need for leadership development in universities, especially in developing nations. Central among these are:

- **Pending retirement of many university top executive officers.**
- **Death, due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.**
- **Resignations and brain drain.**
- **Vacuums created by upward movement/Promotions.**
- **Today's educational environment of increasing reliance on technology, the critical issue of knowledge management, virtual learning, government regulation, partnerships, and many other components.**
- **Operating an educational institution is a complex process, requiring talent, skill, and quality leadership, at all levels of the organization.**



DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE:

Current Trends in Universities to fill leadership vacancies

- **To many Universities, it is common practice:**
- **To advertise openly leadership posts that fall vacant.**
- **Aspiring leaders are encouraged to apply, and to compete.**
- **Selection on who to be appointed the top executive is done on merit, in accordance with qualification, experience, special skills, and special talents.**
- **One approach is for the selected candidates to undergo special courses on leadership.**
- **Another trend adopted by some Universities is to rotate posts.**
- **An example is the holding of an office for a determined period for time, such as three years as Dean of Faculty/Head of Department, rotated amongst senior lecturers and professors, in order to give them the necessary training in leadership skills.**
- **In this way you explore talents of leadership existing in the institution, and you identify the best leaders of the future.**

There is another trend the University of Dar es

Salaam in Tanzania has adopted.

- **The late Ambassador Dr. Wilbert K. Chagula, the Vice Chancellor then, was effective in identifying and developing future leaders of academic departments while still undergraduates.**
- **The identification of prospective candidates was based on merit.**
- **He made plans for the identified future leaders to secure admission for further training in various Universities overseas. After their doctorate-level training, they returned to the University, and assumed leadership positions at various levels. Gradually, the returnees replaced some of the expatriate lecturers.**

These trends can be conceived as staff succession plans, which lead to sustainability in University leadership.



Systematic Leadership Development

- **Succession planning is not a clandestine strategy to immediately replace people in certain positions.**
- **It is a systematic process whereby professional and personal development is blended with a strategic plan to ensure that the organization is prepared to fill any position that becomes vacant, with the right person who possesses the right skills and attributes, at the right time.**
- **There are two options of making such preparations:**
- **One succession plan focuses on preparing one specific employee for an identified position.**
- **The other encourages several employees to engage in personal and professional development, in preparation for one or more positions that might become available, so that the candidates would be required to compete for the position, through an internal competition process.**

The latter is more advantageous because it gives an opportunity to more employees to vie for leadership vacancies as they become available, and it gives opportunities based on qualifications and merit.



Ensuring Smooth Transitions

- **Ensuring smooth transitions means preparing successors in good time:**
- **-The successors must have equal ability, motivation and commitment for sustainability of any university.**
- **-The successors must also share a common philosophy about the future direction they want an institution to take, and must have a history of resolving conflict constructively.**
- **Unplanned succession evokes several questions that need to get replies as soon as leadership vacancies occur. When identifying a candidate you have to ask:**
- **What are this individual's technical and managerial skills?**
- **What are this person's strengths and weaknesses?**
- **What needs to be done to let this candidate step in?**



PRACTICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS:

Philosophical foundations

In addition to the need for leadership development, there are some guiding foundation statements that assist in defining program parameters, as follows:

- **Leadership development is directly related to relationship development.**
- **Leadership opportunities exist throughout an institution: not in just so-called leadership positions.**
- **Leadership development is directly related to organizational development.**
- **Leadership development deserves an organization's investment in time and resources.**
- **Leadership development is an essential component of succession planning.**



Leadership Programmes

In order to make the above foundations take effect, various leadership programmes may be considered, as follows:

- **Leadership skills programmes, which put an emphasis on determining and understanding individual leadership styles and focuses.**
- **Formal education: includes all levels of formal training courses, from professional diplomas to doctoral degrees.**
- **Topic-intensive training: designed for individuals seeking to acquire a skill that would supplement existing education or experience.**
- **Experiential: whereby employees are introduced to mentoring, job shadowing, coaching, and personalized sponsoring processes.**
- **Special assignments, including assignments to task forces or work groups.**
- **Computer-assisted training.**

These activities must also necessarily be limited to available resources. However, creativity and resourcefulness should be used to ensure that those activities that can be achieved are pursued.



Leadership Development

Mcfarlin (1999), in an article on *Community College Review* for Daytona Beach Community College (FL), identified nine common background factors among outstanding university leadership development strategies, as follows:

- **A doctorate-level earned degree.**
- **Study of University Leadership as an academic major.**
- **A professional publication record tied to personal research.**
- **Preparation as a change agent.**
- **Previous leadership positions.**
- **An ongoing relationship with a mentor.**
- **Involvement in a peer network.**
- **Prior participation in leadership development activities; and**
- **An understanding of Technology.**



SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT AND PLAN STRUCTURE:

Succession Management

This is a planning tool designed to prepare an institution for the future by preserving its human resources, and to ensure that employees understand the purpose and goals of developing the plan. Plan development can be approached with the following points in mind:

- **Replacement planning is more expensive than succession planning.**
- **Succession planning allows for systematic organizational development.**
- **Succession planning allows an organization to identify knowledge gaps and develop employees to fill these gaps.**
- **Succession planning allows employees to express their aspirations for career advancement in a safe, positive, and comfortable environment.**



The plan should cover all leadership positions, and address important aspects as follows:

- **Identifies critical areas.**
- **Incorporates anticipated retirements and resignations.**
- **Determines projected internal promotions.**
- **Evaluates vacated positions that will not be filled; and**
- **Forecasts other personnel changes in conjunction with efforts to diversify the workforce.**

In order for the plan to be successful, some employees should be recommended for inclusion in the succession plan, while all employees are given the opportunity to nominate themselves.



Structure of the Plan

- **The succession management plan is a dynamic document.**
- **Employees may be added to the plan or removed as needs arise.**
- **As employees complete training or develop experience, they may be added to the plan.**
- **Employees can also change positions in the plan, or be removed.**
- **Generally, employees should be removed from the plan only at their request or when they leave the university. However, employees should be encouraged to be realistic about the progress they are making toward becoming qualified for intended positions.**
- **The philosophy behind this approach is not to promote unrealistic expectations, but to ensure that each employee has the opportunity to aspire to any position.**



EFFECTIVE SUCCESSION PLANNING & MANAGEMENT:

Plan Outline

Effective succession planning and management is a process that can be done in phases to identify the right candidates to fill positions which become available. As we have seen above, these candidates must come from within a university for best results. The following Plan Outline is recommended:

Phase I-Education

The first step is to make sure that all employees have a good understanding and should be able to distinguish concepts of “replacement planning”, “succession planning”, and “succession planning management”. These concepts can be introduced to all staff by holding a seminar or staff retreat where an in-depth explanation can be made.



... Cont EFFECTIVE SUCCESSION PLANNING & MANAGEMENT:

Phase II-Identify Key Positions

The second stage will be to identify key positions of the university, and to formalize them. This should be done by the Human Resources Manager by going through the organizational structure with the following considerations:

- **Positions essential to the organization's continued sustainability and growth.**
- **Skills and competencies employees need to perform the duties involved in those key positions.**

Phase III-Staff Assessment

Level 1: staff does self-assessment of core competencies:

- **In their present positions.**
- **In the university positions they aspire to attain.**
- **After self-assessment, the HRM, in consultation with relevant supervisors, should review staff self-assessments, and then assess what the employees need to attain their skills and competencies. The HRM should also identify employees with high potential for promotion and development.**



... Cont EFFECTIVE SUCCESSION PLANNING & MANAGEMENT:

Level 2: Assessment is done for all employees:

- **In their present position.**
- **In positions they aspire to attain.**
- **In positions of likely promotion.**
- **As future Vice Chancellors.**

Level 3: Prepare Readiness Profiles, e.g. assess each employee, as follows:

- **Could step in and assume specific positions immediately.**
- **Could step in now with minimal coaching.**
- **Could step in, in future with training-[estimate time frame, e.g. 2yrs, 3yrs, or 5yrs?].**

Level 4: Identify Future Talent Gaps:

- **Assess all positions for potential talent gaps.**
- **Estimate which positions may require recruitment of outside talent.**
- **Assess the organization's future needs for new skills or positions.**



Phase IV-Develop Succession Plan/Strategy

Level 1:

- **Identify employees who have high potential to succeed in specific positions.**
- **Assess each employee's level of commitment, whether willing or not interested in a specific position.**
- **Prepare professional development plans, training needed to attain core competencies, advancement goals, or career goals.**
- **Establish a time frame.**
- **Identify training resources.**
- **Prepare cost projections and budget.**

The succession plan is structured to provide, at a glance, all basic information needed by university leadership and employees. The recommended format is as follows:

- **Name of the position.**
- **A brief description of the qualifications required for the position.**
- **Name of the incumbent in the position, including any available information on retirement plans.**
- **Name(s) of potential replacements for the incumbent, when the position becomes available.**

Level 2:

Prepare a Budget for professional Development Plans with the following considerations:

- **Each employee's commitment.**
- **Cost of training.**
- **Availability of funding.**
- **Availability of training institutions.**
- **Timetable to achieve the training.**
- **Potential for achieving the training by each.**



Phase V-Replacement Planning

- **Identify which critical positions the organization can least afford to have an unforeseen vacancy.**
- **For each critical position, is there a current staff member who can fill the position in an emergency? Criteria used are to match most essential core competencies with staff assessments already completed.**
- **Prepare a backup training plan in essential core competencies for staff with most potential, if there are no available replacements.**
- **Develop cross-training, and employees' "shadow" positions.**



Phase VI-Management of Succession Plan

- **Make a follow-up on day-to-day management for key criteria for success of employees' level of commitment to the plan.**
- **Coordinate training.**
- **Monitor participation.**
- **Assess transfer of knowledge.**
- **Track attainment of core competencies.**

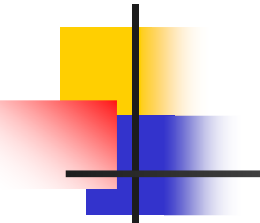
Phase VII-Updates to the Succession Plan

- **Update the plan, based on changing circumstances, staff leaving, and new staff coming on board.**
- **Report on Succession Plan updates to high authority for approval.**



The Role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Organizations

- **It is important at this juncture, to explain the role of human resource management in organizations.**
- **The main role of human resource management in organizations is to provide a broad range of developmental activities, coupled with formal leadership training, to enhance individual executive competencies, and to increase awareness and understanding of public issues, programmes and issues.**
- **Human resource management consists of the following elements:**
 - **A specific management philosophy that values labour as the major asset of an organization, and that regards human beings as being able and willing to grow and to develop.**
 - **Personnel administration (work design, staffing, and rewarding).**
 - **Personnel development.**
 - **The integration of the personnel functions into a strategic management.**

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- **To sum up, every aspect of an organization's activities is determined by:**
 - **competence,**
 - **motivation, and**
 - **general effectiveness of its human organization.**
 - **Of all the tasks of management, managing the human component is the central and most important task, because all else depends upon how well it is done.**
 - **It can be concluded therefore, that in order to create a successful staff development and succession plan, having a competent human resource manager in any organization is of utmost importance.**
 - **Each employee of an organization should understand his/her role and co-operate to implement all those activities laid out in the succession plan outline above.**



STAFF RETENTION:

An overview for staff retention

- **A staff development and succession plan in any organization cannot be sustainable where employees are not retained.**
- **Human resource executives need to better understand-and have all staff under them understand-how critical the recruiting and hiring process is, to finding and keeping good people.**
- **A leader's ability to contribute to an organization's mission, and ultimately to the bottom line, is determined by his or her ability to attract, retain and develop today's knowledge workers. It is the basis for a successful staff development and succession plan.**
- **Talent mismanagement must be avoided. Never let employees to become psychological casualties by disengagement, or let others to become physical casualties and actually leave the job. In both situations, you hurt the organization's performance and drive up costs.**



What are the Reasons for Staying or Leaving?

According to a study made by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, on “*Preserving Talent*”, employees are broken down into three categories: those who join an organization, those who stay for 3 years or more, and those who leave. The study has examined in each category: why people are attracted to join an organization, the reasons they stay, and the reasons they leave.

- **Those that join are excited about the prospect of being part of the institution. They also see opportunities for professional growth and development.**
- **According to the study, those who stay, stay because they like the values of the organization and the nature of the work. However, after a few years, they may develop dissatisfaction due to the lack of growth and development opportunities. Some may even have a feeling of being excluded, underappreciated, and unfairly treated.**
- **By the time people leave, they are thoroughly embittered, dissatisfied with opportunities for promotion and training, and are fed up with lack of challenges in the job.**



Remedies for the Embittered

According to the study, by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, remedies for bitter feelings are offered, as follows:

- **Improving the working environment and relationships with exciting work and challenge.**
- **Giving attention to employees, their learning and development, and career growth.**
- **Giving employees opportunities to advance, to move up the ladder.**
- **Making employees understand what the organization is trying to achieve and how they contribute to that success and being recognized, praised, trusted and respected.**
- **Providing supportive management and fair play.**
- **Mentoring, enriching the job, and helping employees find the work they love, sharing more information, rewarding them often, and providing good benefits.**



Keeping your Top People

- **For many organizations, winning the war for talent will require rebuilding the current culture. It sounds simple: Keep good people and run a successful operation. But in a competitive marketplace, the most critical challenges are finding, motivating, rewarding and keeping the most viable, talented and energized work force. In order to keep your top people you need these people to feel that what they are doing is important.**
- **Training is one of the incredible components of keeping people happy. Another component is compensating them, commensurate with their market value.**



Institution of Performance-oriented Incentives

- **In order to improve retention, human resource leaders need to build in a corporate culture, which emphasizes performance management. Performance-oriented incentive packages work wonders to motivate workers.**
- **Every employee's performance is described, with targets and performance criteria prescribed, and then reviewed, appraised, assessed and finally rewarded according to excellence in performance.**

This method ensures employees the following:

- **That they are recognized based on what they do.**
- **That they contribute to the organization's success.**
- **That what they do is appreciated.**
- **That those high-performing employees are valued and honoured.**
- **That they are rewarded for performing with excellence.**
- **That if they don't perform well they miss possible rewards.**
- **On the whole, performance-oriented incentives motivate employees to be retained, to work harder, and to instill and maintain a successful staff development and succession plan for an organization.**

CONCLUSION:

Coping with the Challenges

Increased productivity of the work force is the single most effective response to organizational challenges. It has a bearing on:

- **Employees' turnover.**
- **Haphazard recruitment.**
- **Staff retention, and on creation of a staff development and succession plan.**

All these affect the growth and prosperity to a university.

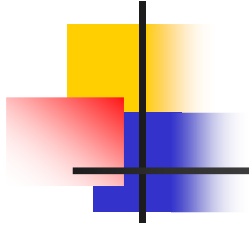
- **The various challenges facing Universities can be met by having in place in a university, a reliable Human Resource Manager.**
- **"The true employer of choice is the individual manager," says, Gregory L. Moore, in his published article of 2002. "Managers are a key to better retention. When employees feel that their manager cares about developing their talent, they also believe the organization cares. People join organizations, but leave managers", he warns.**



Expected Results

Expected results of a staff development and succession plan, which is well managed, are tangible outcomes indicated below:

- **All established posts are filled, and there are no leadership gaps.**
- **Acknowledged employees' appreciation for the university administrative support for the leadership development and succession-planning initiatives.**
- **Appreciated employees' productivity and satisfaction.**
- **A university being well positioned to meet future leadership challenges that it may encounter, and most of all:**
- **It is Creating Succession Planning: Developing Leaders for the Future of the University!**



Thank you for Your Attention!



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