

Succession Planning and Management Best Practices

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My dissertation research conducted as part of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Gillings School of Global Public Health executive DrPH program in health leadership found 25 succession planning and management best practices in the scientific literature. These best practices can help inform the types of activities an agency might want to include in a workforce development plan that prepares high performing-high potential staff for the next level of leadership in an agency.

Definitions:

When using the following table, consider succession planning to mean the systems and procedures used to identify, develop, and retain high performing-high potential individuals (HP-HP) for future management and leadership roles and how HP-HP are placed into those roles. This could mean developing field staff for their first supervisory job all the way up to preparing staff for the top job in your agency.

In addition, consider high performing- high potential individuals (HP-HP) to mean persons who are performing very successfully in their current role and for whom the organization deems as having strong potential for promoting within the organization.

The table below, which contains the 25 succession planning and management best practices, can help an agency determine what is currently being done in their agency.

Best Practice	Our agency does this agency-wide	Our agency does this in parts of the agency, but not agency-wide	Our agency does not do this	Not sure of the extent to which my agency does this
<p><u>Pre-employment activities:</u></p> <p>Q1 Our agency uses student internships and/or practicums as a means of identifying HP-HP for entry-level positions in our agency</p>				
<p><u>Activities for selecting HP-HP</u></p> <p>Q2 Our agency identifies HP-HP from our workforce</p>				
<p>Q3 Our agency assesses individuals for job competencies that are a level or more above their current position to help identify HP-HP</p>				
<p>Q4 Our agency assesses individuals for learning agility (an individual's readiness and ability to learn from experiences and be adaptive to changing environments)</p>				
<p>Q5 Our agency assesses individuals for problematic behaviors that may derail their career</p>				
<p>Q6 Our agency creates lists of individuals to be developed for higher level positions</p>				

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<p>NOTE: THE QUESTIONS BELOW APPLY TO PERSONS YOUR AGENCY HAS ALREADY IDENTIFIED AS HP-HP</p> <p>Activities for <u>competency/leadership development</u> in individuals identified as high potentials:</p> <p>Q7 Our agency rotates HP-HP through jobs in various parts of the agency or encourages lateral moves specifically to develop the high potential</p>				
<p>Q8 Our agency identifies cross-functional projects, task forces, or teams for HP-HP employees to serve specifically to develop their knowledge, skills, and ability</p>				
<p>Q9 Our agency sends HP-HP employees to technical and/or management/leadership trainings</p>				
<p>Q10 Our agency conducts 360 degree feedback assessments for HP-HP employees as a tool to help them identify areas of growth</p>				
<p>Q 11 Our agency develops individualized development plans with HP-HP employees specific to their preparation for new positions in the agency</p>				

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Q12 Our agency gives HP-HP employees exposure to general <i>organizational</i> management (as opposed to <i>program</i> management)				
Q13 Our agency purposively assigns HP-HP employees stretch projects/assignments to develop their knowledge, skills, and/or ability				
Q14 Our agency creates action-learning projects for HP-HP employees in which teams of people work on a project strategic to the agency's development and then has them formally report on the project to the highest levels of management				
Q15 Our agency creates and delivers internal workshops and courses specifically for HP-HP employees				
Q16 Our agency encourages development by having HP-HP lead training sessions				
Activities for <u>coaching and mentoring</u> Q17 Our agency assigns <i>new</i> employees a mentor or coach				

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Q18 Our agency offers <i>HP-HP employees</i> mentoring and coaching opportunities by someone other than their supervisor				
<u>Activities for individual HP-HP goal setting & performance measurement</u> Q19 Our agency uses formal meetings with HP-HP employees to define and further develop their job descriptions specifically to create developmental opportunities to help them prepare for new positions in the agency				
Q20 Our agency uses HP-HP employee and supervisor dialogues to set performance goals specific to their development for new roles/jobs				
Q21 Our agency evaluates a HP-HP employee's performance against their development plan and that evaluation is put in writing and verbally discussed with the HP-HP employee				

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<p>Retaining HP-HP Employees by Placing them into New Positions</p> <p>Q22 Our agency limits some or all recruitments to internal applicants only, specifically to help retain HP-HP employees, and then may or may not open the recruitment to external applicants</p>				
<p>Q23 Our agency sometimes creates new lateral-level positions specifically to give HP-HP employees the opportunity to gain new experience within the agency or to retain HP-HP</p>				
<p>Q24 Our agency sometimes creates new higher-level positions specifically to give HP-HP employees the opportunity to promote within the agency or as a tool to retain a HP-HP employee</p>				
<p>Q25 Our agency increases a HP-HP employee's pay specifically to retain the employee in the agency (either to prevent the employee from looking elsewhere or to retain the employee when the employee has been offered a position elsewhere)</p>				