

# Succession Planning & Management in Local Public Health

John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH, CPH  
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# Definitions

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## Succession Planning and Management (SP&M)

The systems and procedures used to identify, develop, and retain high performing-high potential individuals for future management and leadership roles and how those individuals are placed into those roles

## High Performing-High Potential (HP-HP) Employees

Persons who are performing very successfully in their current role and for whom the agency deems as having a strong potential for promoting within the agency

# Why Research this Topic?

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- Workforce turnover in the top local public health official position
- Accreditation: Domain 8
- Unprepared managers and leaders impact the effectiveness of the public health system

# The Research Questions

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1. What are the best practices in SP&M?
2. What elements of SP&M are being implemented in LPHAs and do LPHAs have a comprehensive SP&M program?
3. For those implementing SP&M, how is it being implemented, what are the barriers to implementation, what are the facilitators to implementation, and what are the lessons learned?

# Methods

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1. Systematic Literature Review
2. Web-administered survey
  - a. All 35 health departments in Washington State
  - b. 100% response rate
3. Semi-structured interviews in 3 case agencies
  - a. Small (<35 FTE) – 4 interviews
  - b. Medium (35 to 100 FTE) – 5 interviews
  - c. Large (100 or more FTE) – 5 interviews

# Variables

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## Independent Variable:

- ▣ Composite Succession Score
  - range: 0 to 100
  - based on the 25 best practices
  - 4 points if LPHA implemented “agency-wide” and 2 points if implemented “in parts of the agency”

## Dependent Variables:

- ▣ LPHA descriptors
- ▣ Director descriptors

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# Best Practice Findings

Literature Review

# Q1: Three Common Elements

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1. Developed talent pools
2. Had CEO leadership
3. Linked to an organization's strategic future

# Q1: Best Practices – 25 in Total

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Categorized into Six Areas:

1. Pre-employment activities
2. Selecting HP-HP
3. Competency/leadership development of HP-HP
4. Coaching and mentoring
5. Goal setting and performance measurement
6. Retention of HP-HP

# Strategic Future

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1. Key business issues the organization is likely to face, which if addressed would strengthen business strategy.
2. What roles will be key to the future

|                             |                         |                     |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Business performance driver | Change sponsor          | Coach               |
| Cultural leader             | Executive-at-large      | External influencer |
| Internal influencer         | International executive | Strategist          |
| Talent manager              | Team leader             | Visionary           |

# LPHA Implementation Findings

Web Survey

Case Agency Interviews

# Findings – Turnover Potential

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50% of the top local public health officials are considering leaving their current positions within the next 5 years

# Findings – Best Practice Use

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- 85% identified high performing-high potential employees for development
- 79% had performance goal conversations specific to development for new roles
- 76% provided training, 70% used cross-functional project teams, and 67% used stretch projects

# Findings – Least Used Practices

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- 15% have HP-HP deliver internal workshops/courses
- 21% increase HP-HP pay to retain employee
- 24% sometimes create new lateral-level positions to retain HP-HP
- 27% 360 degree feedback assessments
- 29% rotate HP-HP through jobs in various parts of the agency

# Composite Succession Score

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Predictors of increased CSS were:

- ▣ Having an agency-wide SP&M program (although not necessarily a comprehensive one)
- ▣ Having a written, summary profile of the workforce by length of time to being eligible for retirement

# Findings – Implementation

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- Only 3 health departments had any kind of written succession planning and management plan
- Selection of high performers-high potentials was done without guidelines and standards, risking “executive cloning”
- Sustaining succession planning activities was a challenge

# Findings – Barriers

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- Had too many competing demands/lack of time
- Believed small staff size did not make this a worthwhile effort
- Believed that union contract issues would prevent it from working

# Findings – Facilitators

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- Having a top local public health official who was fully engaged
- Having profiled the workforce by age to retirement
- Having committed to preparation for voluntary accreditation

# Thoughts to Improve our Practice

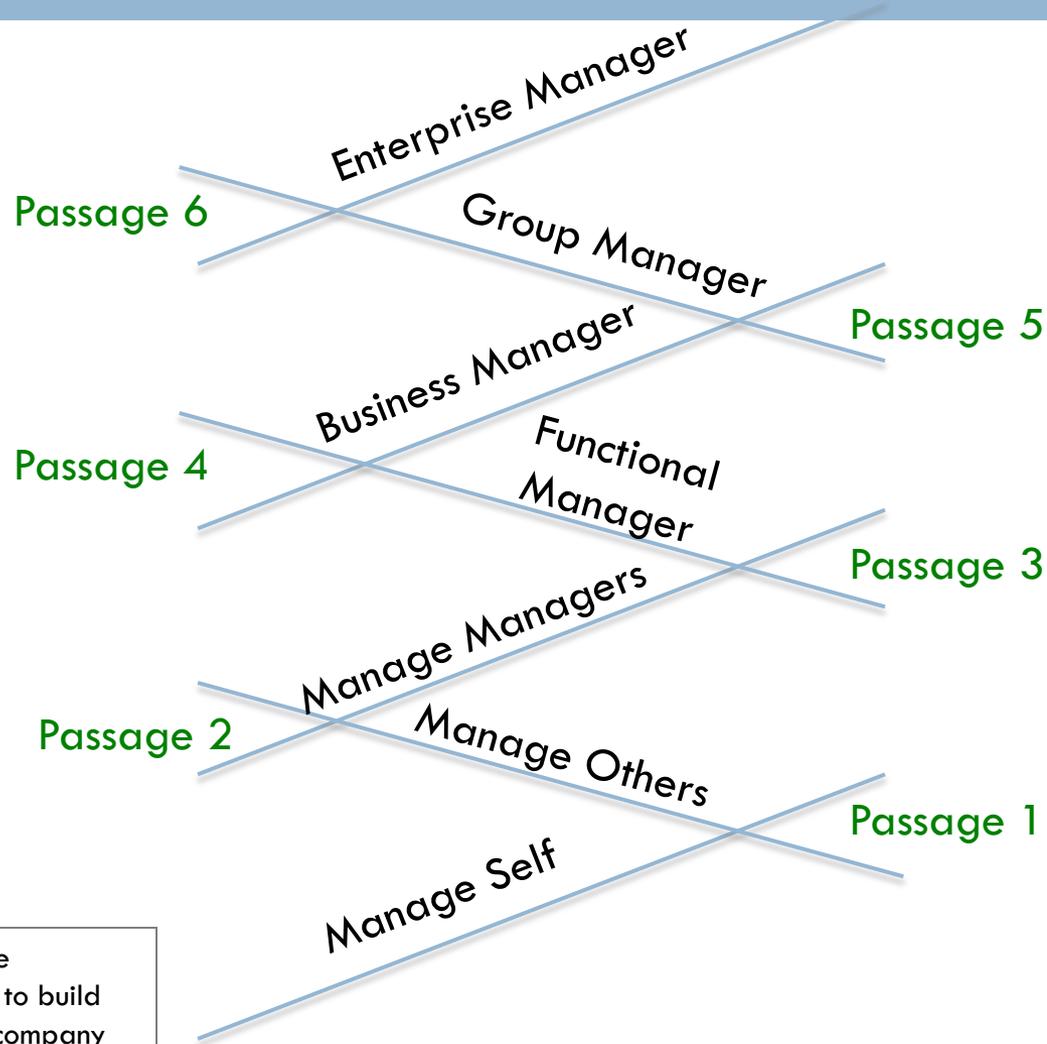
Adopt the leadership pipeline model

Ideas for getting started

Ideas for smaller-sized agencies

# Model - Leadership Pipeline

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Charan, Drotter, Noel. The leadership pipeline: How to build the leadership powered company (2011).

# Ideas for Getting Started

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1. Profile your workforce's age to retirement
  - go to: <http://www.naccho.org/about/president.cfm> for an excel spreadsheet
2. Take a leadership role
3. Assess your agency's use of the 25 best practices
4. Develop a workforce development plan that has two tracks (for accreditation, domain 8)
  - a technical/professional development track
  - a management/leadership track

# Ideas for Getting Started

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5. Incorporate employee development plans into your organization
  - annual development plans
  - performance reviews

**Most of all**

Keep it Simple

Start Small and Grow It

Involvement from all levels

# Ideas for Smaller-Sized Agencies

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- Join forces with other community partners or across LPHA jurisdictions to develop a talent pool and create action-learning projects
- Create lead positions that give non-supervisory management tasks (e.g., developing a budget, leading logic model development, reporting on grant deliverables, etc.)
- Encourage webinars and other on-line learning

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# Discussion

Questions

Ideas