

Who's in Charge? Effective Succession Planning across USGS

Action Team 3



Coach:

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ELT Champions:

- Holly Weyers, Regional Director, Southeast Region
- Kevin Gallagher, Associate Director, Core Science Systems

Sponsor:

- Jill Nissan, Workforce Planning Program Manager, Office of Human Capital

Team Members:

- Adrienne Bartlewitz, Water Mission Area
- Todd Baumann, Lower Mississippi-Gulf Water Science Center-Baton Rouge
- Mike Chotkowski, Pacific Region
- Darrell Lambeth, Caribbean-Florida Water Science Center
- Lori Weir, Lower Mississippi-Gulf Water Science Center-Nashville
- Chris Magirl, Arizona Water Science Center



Problem:

We are faced with an ongoing potential loss of institutional knowledge and skills due to a retirement eligible workforce. We need to find the best way to empower employees with practical skills and experience to become better leaders for today and tomorrow.

Tools Used:

Diverging:

- Visual Explorer
- Polarity Map
- Brainstorming
- Brainwriting for the 'I's

Converging:

- Converging Grid—Importance vs Impact

Visual Explorer



Culmination of Brainstorming and Brainwriting for the 'I's



Converging Grid: Importance vs Impact



Redefining the scope:

During our team meetings, we brainstormed many ideas that fell into the following categories:

Original Ideas:

- Leadership training
- Recruitment tools for leaders
- Retention tools for employees
- Encouragement for leadership positions
- Importance of technology in the future

Narrowed Focus:

- Refine Mentoring
- Temporary Detail Recommendations
- Training Recommendations
- Knowledge Transfer

Refine Mentoring:

- Supervisors encourage retirement eligible employees to mentor others for the transfer of institutional knowledge
- Evaluate and refine the USGS formal mentoring program for all new positions
 - Increase mentorship participation
 - Require mentoring for employees in new positions

Temporary Detail Recommendations:

- Expand the use of details for vacancies
- Target USGS Leadership Program graduates to fill details
- Encourage details to other agencies
- Provide education/awareness of existing detail programs

Training Recommendations:

- Re-evaluate onboarding and training of early career staff
- Career development program
- Formal training program for center directors
- Train hiring officials on how to interview
- Explore private-sector training and seminar products
- Expand TX-WSC leadership training program

Knowledge Transfer:

- Educate employees on post-retirement programs
 - Emeritus
 - Temporary Reemployment of Civilian Retirees under the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)
 - Volunteer for Science
 - Rehired Annuitant
- Invite retirees to teach training sessions



Conclusion:

- Knowledge and skills are walking out the door
- Prepare the next generation of quality leaders
- Will require thinking outside the box and a cultural change



Succession planning for a changing world