USGS

Succession Planning

Desk Guide

Office of Human Capital

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Introduction

Succession planning is a systematic process of identifying and developing the talent pool for key positions that have a significant impact on the mission of an organization. It also mitigates the risks associated with the planned or unplanned loss of knowledge and skills critical to the organization's success. This desk guide provides resources to support succession planning activities across USGS. As you use this desk guide, these are some questions and answers you may want to think about.

What is succession planning?

- Succession planning is done to prepare broad pools of talent to be able to compete for key/essential position(s) in the organization. For example, Human Resources Assistants are the talent pool for Human Resources Specialist positions.
- Succession planning is also done to capture knowledge of those soon to depart the organization and share relevant knowledge with the existing employees. For example, seasoned Hydrologic Technicians can mentor junior Hydrologic Technicians and document their knowledge using the Knowledge Transfer Questions.

Why should I do succession planning?

- It is possible to have one or more reasons to do succession planning. Here are some likely needs:
    1. promote seamless staff transitions
    2. preserve legacy of achievements and experiences
    3. focus planning on critical vulnerabilities in the workforce
    4. build pools of talent capable of competing for essential positions
    5. encourage employee engagement, collaboration and mentorship

What is the succession planning desk guide?

- This desk guide provides resources to support succession planning activities across USGS and at all organizational levels.

Why was the succession planning desk guide developed?

- The desk guide was developed to educate supervisors and managers about the concept of succession planning and the tools to support succession planning for various positions and situations. Succession planning is not a one-size-fits-all process.

Is there a difference between succession planning for one position versus succession planning for a group of positions or the full organization?

- The concept behind succession planning (establishing strategic direction; identifying key positions and analyzing talent; and developing strategies) is similar whether planning for a single position or for many positions. However, there may be differences in numbers and/or types of competencies identified and the granularity of the analysis. When doing succession planning for one position, you are probably looking with specificity at a variety of skills and abilities; when planning for a group of positions, you are probably looking at a more limited set of competencies, or even a single competency, to be analyzed and developed across a range of series, or other skills and abilities. The succession planning process can be used for "soft" skills or abilities (example: leadership skills, like communication or cultural savvy), or for "hard" or more technical skills and abilities (example: knowledge and skills needed to perform scientific work, like groundwater geology). The approach the USGS developed can be adapted to support succession planning for a single position or an organization.

Do I need to use everything in this guide in order to do succession planning?

- No. The guide is intended to be flexible and offer resources for different scenarios. When an organization decides to conduct succession planning it inevitably touches on other human resources topics including: workforce analyses, performance management, training and employee development.

How does succession planning relate to workforce planning?

- Succession planning complements and is a follow-up to workforce planning. Succession planning efforts build a pipeline/talent pool to ensure continuity by developing potential successors who could compete for future positions. The decision to pursue succession planning is typically determined in Step 3 (Develop Action Plan) of the USGS Workforce Planning Model as a result of analysis in Step 2 (Supply, Demand, Discrepancies) of the USGS Workforce Planning Model.

Can I do succession planning without workforce planning?

- It depends. If the intention is to prepare a talent pool for a position targeted for succession planning, it is best to determine what position(s) to target during the workforce planning process. If the intention is to capture knowledge of soon-to-be-departing staff, this does not require a workforce planning process. Select succession planning tools can be used on an as-needed basis, like the Knowledge Transfer Questions or the Succession Profile Worksheet.

Do I need to write a succession plan?

- It is helpful to write a formal succession plan when using the process outlined in this desk guide. A written succession plan captures the steps of the process; decision points at each step; and records these items in a single document. If the organization chooses to use some of the tools in the desk guide as stand-alone items (e.g. Succession Plan Profile or Knowledge Transfer guide) a succession plan may not be needed.

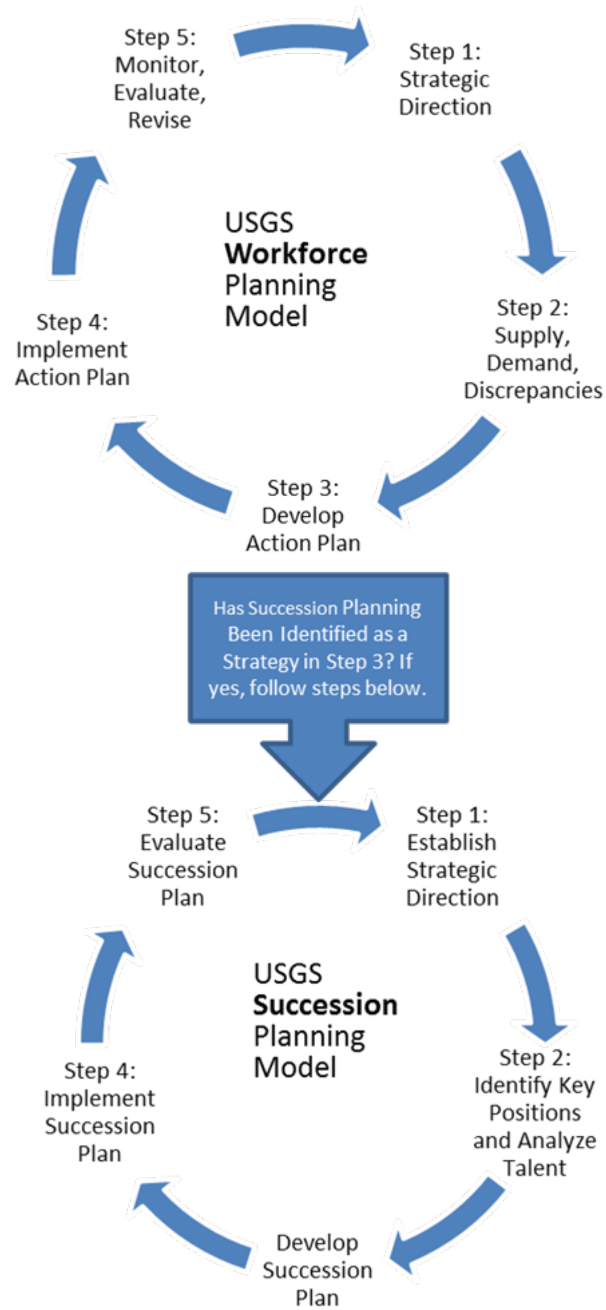
Relationship

Between

Workforce Planning

and

Succession Planning



Phases of Succession Planning

The desk guide is organized by the phases of succession planning. Each phase has relevant supporting tools. Some tools can "stand alone," while others are to be used as part of a comprehensive planning process. The tools are also designed to be flexible when responding to the type or level of succession planning.

Phases of Succession Planning	Description of Phases	Relevant Tools
Getting Ready	Understand what succession planning is and how it can work for your organization.	• Succession Planning Webinar Series
Phase 1: Alignment	Understand the strategic direction of the organization, based on the strategic plan and workforce plan. Conduct SWOT analysis. Determine barriers to success. Determine succession planning goals, keeping them aligned with the strategic and workforce plans. Estimate budget for succession planning strategies.	• Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) Analysis • Business Case
Phase 2: Analysis	Identify bench strength: key positions for succession planning and analyze how well the current talent pool will be able to fill those key positions. Include analysis of engagement, aspiration, and barriers to determine readiness.	• Identification of Key Positions • Identification of Talent Pool • Competency Modeling • USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool • Succession Profile Worksheet
Phase 3: Strategy	Identify succession planning strategies and related metrics that will be used to evaluate the success of the strategies.	• Individual Development Plan • Knowledge Transfer Questions • Leadership Development Matrix
Phase 4: Implementation	Document and formalize the succession planning phases of Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy into a comprehensive Succession Plan. Manage the implementation of the plan and succession strategies, and communicate those strategies throughout the organization.	• Succession Plan Template • Communication Tool • Project Management Plan
Phase 5: Evaluation	Determine how well the succession management strategies are filling targeted needs.	• Sample Metrics

Phase 1: Alignment

The purposes of the Alignment phase is to understand the strategic direction of the organization (based on the organization's strategic plan and workforce plan); understand the organization's strengths and weaknesses and the opportunities and threats facing the organization; determine succession planning goals; and estimate the budget for succession planning strategies.

Relevant Tools

- **Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) Analysis**
- **Business Case**

Phase 1: Alignment - Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT) Analysis

SWOT Analysis is a technique for understanding an organization's strengths and weaknesses, and for looking at the future opportunities and threats that an organization may face. When conducting a SWOT analysis, brainstorm factors or characteristics for each SWOT component, beginning with "Strengths." Look at the definition and prompt questions below prior to brainstorming.

Sources of input to help answer these questions may include Center Health Reviews, strategic plans, workforce plans, Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results, and Standard Workforce Data Elements.[1] It may also be appropriate to look at employee performance plans and individual development plans when succession planning is conducted at a smaller scale.

Strengths – resources or capabilities (internal to the organization) that facilitate goal achievement.

- How do the mission, vision, and values contribute to the strength of the organization and make it a desirable place to work?
- As a whole, what advantages does the organization offer to employees over other places of employment?
- What are the leadership opportunities within the organization?
- When considering your organization's strengths, you may want to reference levels of employee job satisfaction and engagement based on FEVS results. These results can reflect the strength of drivers of discretionary effort and performance, as well as retention and an employees' desire to stay with their organization.

Weaknesses – resource or capability deficiencies (internal to the organization) that could hinder goal achievement.

- How might budget and funding issues affect the organization and its succession planning efforts?
- How might key positions change over time?
- What are the internal vulnerabilities that may affect the organization's workforce?
- What are the barriers that limit the internal talent pool from aspiring to key positions?
- What are the barriers that limit the internal talent pool from being developed for key positions?
- When considering your organization's challenges, please consider your organization's FEVS results to understand areas of weakness that may impact succession planning.

[1] USGS Standard Workforce Data Elements are available at https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/usgs-workforce-demographics-measures-and-metrics

Opportunities – external factors or situations that can affect the organization in a positive way

- What are the emerging opportunities for the organization?
- What external sources are available for attracting new talent?
- What are the emerging occupational positions/needs for the organization?
- What are the possibilities for recruiting candidates with critical/essential skills?
- Are there strategic partnerships the organization can make with other organizations?

Threats – external factors or situations that can affect the organization in a negative way

- What can private or other governmental organizations offer to potential employees that organization cannot?
- What recruitment strategies are used by other organizations that may attract potential applicants away from the organization?
- In what ways will political or legislative changes affect succession planning in the organization?
- Are there public, partner, or other stakeholder perceptions that may affect the organization?

It is advisable to link or align shared or related factors between SWOT components to leverage strengths and opportunities and mitigate weaknesses and threats. Each opportunity and threat can be thought of as an outcome to be either approached or avoided. The strengths and weaknesses are the internal factors that can be used as tools to approach or avoid those outcomes. There are four major types of factor linkages that can be made:

Strengths-Opportunities linkages represent optimal situations because the organization can use the strengths it already possesses to achieve optimal outcomes.
Strengths-Threats linkages determine how to address the current threats to the organization by maximizing the existing strengths.
Weaknesses-Opportunities linkages capitalize on opportunities in order to minimize the weaknesses of the organization and to identify weaknesses that will need to be mitigated in order to seize opportunities.
Weaknesses -Threats linkages represent issues within the organization that may increase the risk associated with the threats facing the organization. These linkages may be considered the most critical to address, because the organization may have the most to lose by not addressing those issues.

SWOT EXAMPLE

STRENGTHS	*WEAKNESESS*
Organization Mission *Benefits available to employees*	*Loss of expertise as employees retire* *Unstable funding*
OPPORTUNITIES	*THREATS*
Diverse Job Availability *Pools of Potential Employees*	*Budget Cuts* *Hiring Freeze*

Phase 1: Alignment - Business Case

Developing the business case or justification for succession planning is an important part of articulating why the organization is pursuing succession planning. A sufficient business case should be articulated in one to two paragraphs. Below is a set of questions to guide the development of a business case.

- What are your organization's strategic goals?
- What are your organization's workforce planning strategies?
- How would you describe the link between your strategic goals and succession planning?
- How would you describe the link between your workforce planning strategies and succession planning?
- How will succession planning benefit your organization (e.g. retirement bubble, competition for talent)?
- Demonstrate workforce data that supports the business case for the succession planning goals (e.g. a chart or narrative explaining that 62% of senior leaders will retire within 5 years).

Reasons, or goals, for succession planning typically include the following:

- To promote seamless staff transitions
- To preserve legacy of achievements and experiences
- To focus planning on critical vulnerabilities in the workforce
- To build pools of talent capable of competing for essential positions
- To encourage employee engagement, collaboration, and mentorship

One or more of the reasons may apply to your organization.

BUSINESS CASE EXAMPLE

The first goal of the organization's strategic plan connects to succession planning. This goal seeks to establish and implement workforce planning that will enable the agency to accomplish the mission. We are concerned with losing institutional knowledge of senior level experts within various components of the agency. With the eligibility of retirement for that pool of employees, it is vital that we strategically work towards filling skill gaps by hiring new employees with extensive experience, education and knowledge. In addition, we must continue to implement and monitor various programs that develop employees with the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the duties that are critical to meeting the agency's objectives and goals.

BUSINESS CASE EXAMPLE

Succession planning was identified as a priority area in the organization's workforce plan. Succession planning will benefit us by ensuring there is a pipeline of talent within the organization that can compete for positions as seasoned employees retire or leave for other reasons. This succession planning effort is focused on developing and sustaining the competencies and skills needed by employees to meet goals identified and addressed in the workforce plan.

Phase 2: Analysis

The purpose of this phase is to identify key positions for succession planning and analyze how well the current talent pool is prepared to compete for those key positions (bench strength).

Relevant Tools

- **Identification of Key Positions**
- **Identification of the Talent Pool**
- **Competency Modeling**
- **USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool**
- **Succession Profile Worksheet**

Phase 2: Analysis – <u>Identification of Key Positions</u>

There are many reasons why a position may be considered key or critical. Some of the reasons include:

- Organizational structure (key contributor in achieving mission)
- Key task (performs critical tasks that would stop or hinder vital functions if missing)
- Specialized or unique skills sets (hard to replace)
- Geographic challenges (difficult for someone located elsewhere to carry out functions)
- Potential high turnover ('knowledge drain' due to high turnover)

The table below lists categories for identifying key positions. The succession planners decide which categories to focus planning efforts on. There is no right or wrong category.

Categories for Identifying Key Positions	
1. Executive and Senior Leadership Positions	**Positions designated by the organization** for succession planning <u>and</u> **senior-level positions** with senior leadership or executive management responsibilities. *<u>Examples</u>* ▪ Director and Deputy Director ▪ Associate Directors and Regional Directors
2. Administrative Leadership Positions	Positions that provide **administrative leadership** in carrying out the business activities of the organization in support of its mission. *<u>Examples</u>* ▪ Center Directors ▪ Senior Management Officer/Regional Management Officer ▪ Administrative Officer
3. Mission-Essential Positions	Positions where **considerable professional, scientific or technical expertise** is required to carry out the work. These positions **make a unique contribution** to the organization's mission. Incumbents of these positions may be considered **hard to replace**. *<u>Examples</u>* ▪ Emergency Response Coordinator ▪ Hydrologic Technicians
4. 'Stand-Alone' Positions	Positions where **expertise is concentrated** in one or a small number of incumbents, or where an **important role/area of responsibility** is assigned to a single incumbent. These positions typically have **limited or no bench strength**, may which negatively affect the organization's capacity to backfill, should the need arise. <u>Examples</u> • Senior Scientist • Research Scientist
5. Incumbent on Extended Assignment	Any position where an incumbent is <u>or</u> will be **temporarily staffed to another position** such that his/her position of record will be vacant for an extended period. *<u>Examples</u>* ▪ Incumbent on detail to another organizational unit or to another federal agency. ▪ Incumbent on a rotational assignment to learn a specialized skill or to provide expertise.

6. Incumbent on Extended Leave	Any position where an incumbent is **expected to be out for an extended period** due to a planned or unplanned leave situation. *Examples* ▪ Incumbent on extended leave for long-term illness or on maternity leave. ▪ Incumbent serving on jury or military duty.
7. High Potential for Staff Exits	Positions where there is a **higher likelihood the current incumbent may leave** in the near term. *Examples* ▪ Positions where staff turnover is known (anecdotally or statistically) to be high. ▪ Positions where a large proportion of staff (>40%) is/will be retirement-eligible near term.
8. Hard to Fill Positions	▪ Positions where there is a limited pool of high quality candidates.

Phase 2: Analysis - Identification of Talent Pool

The identification of the talent pool occurs during the second phase of the succession planning process. The purpose of identifying a talent pool is to define a population of employees to be selected for development. This can be based on one or more criteria, such as grade level, pay plan, occupational series, or location. The talent pool can be determined by management definition or by employees responding to a survey or invitation.

In the first situation, when management determines the talent pool, the succession planners define the population of that pool. For example, at USGS, the Executive Leadership Team determined the talent pool for senior executive positions is all direct reports to the executives at General Schedule (GS) level 14 and 15, Senior Level (SL) employees, and other senior management positions.

In the second situation, inclusion in the talent pool is determined by employees themselves, self-nominating to be considered for inclusion in the talent pool. If an employee wants to be considered, he or she may self-nominate in response to an email from management. For example, during a succession planning process conducted in the USGS Office of Human Capital, all employees in the Office of Human Capital were considered for inclusion in the talent pool for a set of career paths (rather than positions) in the Office Human Resources. All employees in the office received an email invitation to express their interest in selection. In another example, management at a U.S. Intelligence Agency determined the talent pool population for senior leader positions to be all employees who were several grade levels below the senior leaders. Those employees received an email invitation to express interest in development for the senior positions.

In an example that crosses both approaches, at the Department of Interior, all qualified individuals at the GS 14 and 15 levels may compete to be selected for the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SESCDP). [2] In this case, management first determined that employees at GS 14 and 15 are the talent pool and then employees self-select by applying to be included in the program.

[2] https://doiu.doi.gov/programs/sescdp.html#

Phase 2: Analysis –Competency Modeling

Competencies and competency modeling is used during the succession planning process to identify and confirm the competencies essential for success in the position(s) targeted for succession planning.

What is a competency?

A competency is a measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics necessary for success in a position.

What is competency modeling?

Competency modeling is a methodology that establishes a common language for analyzing and describing the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors for success in a position or set of positions. The model typically links to the business goals and strategies of the organization. Developing a competency model is an adaptive and iterative process that includes extensive stakeholder involvement. The model may group together types of like positions into categories such as leadership, professional, or technical. This grouping is determined by the organization using categories and language that resonate with the organization.[3]

To identify a competency model for the position targeted for succession planning, start by looking at existing competency models and competency model dictionaries. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) maintains competency models for select occupations. They also maintain a lengthy competency dictionary. The models and dictionary are available at https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/competencies/ The National Institutes of Health Office of Human Resources is another source for competency information and occupational competency models: https://hr.nih.gov/working-nih/competencies/occupation-specific/suggested-competency-models-job-series. In the event that competencies or a competency model does not exist, OPM offers tips on how to write competencies at https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/competencies/writing-competencies.pdf

For example, the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQs) are an example of a competency model that is used across the government to express what competencies are essential for success in senior executive positions. These competencies are Leading Change, Leading People, Business Acumen, Results Driven, and Building Coalitions.

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[3] Campion, M., Fink, A., Ruggeberg, B., Carr, L., Phillips, G., and Odman, R. (2011). Doing competencies well: best practices in competency modeling. *Personnel Psychology,* 64, 225-262.

Phase 2: Analysis - <u>USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool</u>

The purpose of the USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool is to support evaluation of the talent pool for the position(s) intended for succession planning, and provide results that will inform training, development, recruitment and retention strategies. The assessment tool is designed to walk the assessor through a series of assessment points. Those assessment points are aggregated to produce ratings on the following elements: ability, engagement, aspiration, and barriers.

The assessment results are captured at the aggregate level, and not at the individual employee level. A significant decision was made by the USGS Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to collect employee assessment results for succession planning at the aggregate level in order to avoid misuse of individual-level assessment data, be it actual, potential, or perceived misuse.

The tool was designed to guide the rater through a series of analyses of like elements at a sufficient level of detail that will promote a thorough and consistent rating process across all employees, and across all raters, as well as minimize subjectivity, preexisting perceptions, and unconscious favoritism.

Benefits of the assessment include:

- Flexibility: The tool can be adapted to succession planning at different organizational levels and different occupations.
- Consistency: The tool uses a format with consistent elements that allow data to be aggregated to bureau, sub bureau, and cost center levels.
- Commonly available software: The tool is based in EXCEL.
- Repeatable Results: The results of the tool capture data in sufficient detail to inform planning training, development, recruitment, and retention. Results can be gathered and compared at multiple time intervals, and results will be generally comparable against other organizational units (for the static elements).

The elements and the associated rating scales are defined below.

ELEMENT	DEFINTION	RATING
ABILITY Flexible element; can be customized.	Ability captures the competencies needed for the target position. Competencies may be "soft skills" or technical skills. Rule of thumb: assess on no more than 8 competencies.	Expert or High Level (3) Competent or Solid Level (2) Needs Improvement Level (1)

ELEMENT	DEFINTION	RATING
ENGAGEMENT Static element; do not replace.	Engagement rates (1) the degree to which employees give discretionary effort and (2) are committed to and intend to stay with the organization.	Expert or High Level (3) Competent or Solid Level (2) Needs Improvement Level (1)
ASPIRATION Static element; do not replace.	Aspiration rates (1) the degree to which employees desire advancement and (2) are motivated to do what is required at the next level of responsibility.	Expert or High Level (3) Competent or Solid Level (2) Needs Improvement Level (1)
BARRIERS Flexible element; can be customized based on other perceived barriers regarding the position.	Barriers are aspects that hinder development of employees, aspiration or engagement of employees, ability to hire or manage the workforce, etc. Mobility is an example of a barrier where a location change may be required for the position.	Example of rating levels for the Mobility barrier: Yes, Willing To Move (3) Willing to Move Only to Certain Locations (2) No, Not Willing to Move (1)

The Assessment Tool has been used for executive succession planning at USGS. The example shown below can be modified to address the relevant competencies and barriers; however aspiration and engagement should be addressed in all types and levels of succession planning.

For more in-depth information on assessing employee potential, the following two sources may be of interest:

Linkedin - The 3 Indicators Corporations Use to Identify High-Potential Employees, May 29, 2015
https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/3-indicators-corporations-use-identify-high-potential-michael-scott

Harvard Business Review: Leadership Development – "How to Keep Your Top Talent", May 2010
https://hbr.org/2010/05/how-to-keep-your-top-talent

USGS SES Talent Pool Assessment Tool (Count Version) **E X A M P L E**				
ORGANIZATION NAME:	XYZ Region			
Number of SES Pipeline Employees Rated	**12**			
RATINGS: Provide a count of employees for each Ability, etc., according to level of performance exhibited (3, 2, or 1)	**"Expert" or "High" Level 3**	**"Competent" or "Solid" Level 2**	**"Needs Improvement" Level 1**	**Total**
ABILITY - ECQ 1: LEADING CHANGE Creativity & Innovation, External Awareness, Flexibility, Resilience, Strategic Thinking, Vision	7	4	1	**12**
ABILITY - ECQ 2: LEADING PEOPLE Conflict Mgmt, Leveraging Diversity, Developing Others, Team Building	5	5	2	**12**
ABILITY - ECQ 3: RESULTS DRIVEN Accountability, Customer Service, Decisiveness, Entrepreneurship, Problem Solving, Technical Credibility	5	5	2	**12**
ABILITY - ECQ 4: BUSINESS ACUMEN Financial Mgmt, Human Capital Mgmt, Technology Mgmt	3	5	4	**12**
ABILITY - ECQ 5: BUILDING COALITIONS Partnering, Political Savvy, Influencing & Negotiating	10	2	0	**12**
ABILITY - USGS IDENTIFIED: Cultural Savvy	8	3	1	**12**
ENGAGEMENT: Discretionary effort shown Effort above and beyond	12	0	0	**12**
ENGAGEMENT: Committed to organization and intends to stay	11	0	1	**12**
ASPIRATION: Desires advancement, recognition, and future rewards	7	1	4	**12**
ASPIRATION: Motivated to do what is required at next level of responsibility	8	3	1	**12**
	Yes, Willing To Move	**Willing to Move Only to Certain Locations**	**No, Not Willing to Move**	**Total**
MOBILITY: Employees have indicated willingness to relocate (Y / N)	2	3	7	**12**

Example: USGS Succession Planning Assessment Tool

Data is collected by counts for each element.

Results are then computed into percentages for easy assessment and comparability with other results.

Phase 2: Analysis - <u>Succession Profile Worksheet</u>

What: The Succession Profile Worksheet is a document which captures the required competencies and recommended developmental activities for key positions. It helps organizational leadership understand the readiness of the current workforce. It assists in the process of assessing and developing staff for leadership and other key positions. It should consider and inform the development of training and development programs.

Who: Each leadership or other key position completes a Succession Profile Worksheet (i.e., first line supervisors to executives, as well as other key positions as identified by the organization).

When: A Succession Profile may be prepared or updated at any time. It is recommended that organizations complete them for key positions and keep them updated as a way to identify training needs for current development.

Why: It is recommended to create Succession Profiles for positions starting at the first-level supervisor to the top executives of the organization. Profiles may be used to further target training programs and hiring initiatives to increase readiness for key positions. These profiles capture information on *positions*, not on individual employees. Assessments of the readiness of individual employees for advancement are captured during Individual Development Plan (IDP) process. The creation and maintenance of Succession Profiles keep organizations ahead of developmental gaps and attrition. The Succession Profiles allow managers to keep a simple inventory of select positions that they can review when missions, organizations, and skill requirements change or need updating, or when there is a change-over of supervisors.

How: See example and template on the following pages.

Instructions: Each incumbent should fill out the Succession Profile for their own position. This will allow individuals in key positions to begin thinking within the succession planning framework and outlining strategies to identify and develop pools of well qualified staff for future vacancies. The boxes below should be completed where Box 1 “Position, Title, Series, Grade” refers to the incumbent’s own position; the same is true for Box 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Box 8 gives an outline of USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool results, if results are available, and associated developmental activities.

Succession Profile Form - EXAMPLE

1. Position Title, Series, Grade: (Your Position) Leader of the Group, Title *GS-0000-14*	**2. Current Incumbent:** (You) Name
3. Division/Office, Center, Group, etc.: *Human Resources Division*	**4. Current Incumbent's Supervisor:** Name
5. Date Incumbent Entered Position: *December 15, 2008*	**6. Likelihood of Turnover:** (Likelihood of you leaving) **[X] HIGH** = Likely in the next 12 months **[ ] MODERATE** = Likely within 1 to 2 years **[ ] LOW** = Likely within 3 to 5 years

7. Key Competencies Needed for Position: (List applicable competencies. These may be edited. The competencies here were chosen from the OPM's Competency Dictionary https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/competencies/

Leadership: *Leading Change, Leading People, Results Driven, Business Acumen, Building Coalitions*
Technical: *Knowledge of transactional HR processes and automated systems; HR operations such as staffing, position classification, labor relations, performance management, and training. HR consulting.*

8. Readiness of Talent Pool:

Refer to the USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool results (if results are available) on staff readiness and developmental needs. For example, what competencies had the highest percentage of Needs Improvement; what are the levels of engagement and aspiration; what barriers exist; and to what degree do the barriers discourage the talent pool from aspiring to the position. If results are not available, anecdotal information is also appropriate.

For example, succession planning results for leadership positions could show that a talent pool is strongest in the following leadership competencies: Results Driven (50%) and Building Coalitions (48%) and Needs Improvement in Leading Change (25%) and Leading People (22%). 70% of the talent pool gives discretionary effort (engagement) and 75% are committed to and intend to stay with the organization (engagement). However, 40% of the talent pool desires advancement (aspiration) and 30% are motivated to do what is required at the next level of responsibility (aspiration). Mobility is a barrier with 60% not willing to move to obtain a leadership position.

9. Successor Developmental Techniques Action Plan:
Developmental Assignments:
Ready Now and Ready 1-2 years candidates developmental assignments include:

1. *Receiving guidance from assigned mentors.*
2. *Completing a 30 day rotational assignment at a policy level office.*
3. *Writing a 10 page Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Technical Competency.*
4. *Facilitating a round table discussion to determine strategies to improve processes.*

Ready 3-5 years candidates will continue OJT, informal mentoring and coaching. Where opportunities exist or if required, formal classroom training will be provided.

Formal Training:

1. *Technical Writing – Provided at the Agency School*
2. *Motivating Others – Provided by Leadership Council*
3. *Influencing Change – Provided by the Local University*

10. Ability to Recruit and Attract Candidates: (Mark one rating within each time period.)

Within 12 Months	Within 1 to 2 years	Within 3 to 5 years
[ ] HIGH = The quality and quantity of candidates is outstanding.	**[X] HIGH** = The quality and quantity of candidates is outstanding.	**[X] HIGH** = The quality and quantity of candidates is outstanding.
[X] MODERATE = The quality and quantity of candidates is average.	**[ ] MODERATE** = The quality and quantity of candidates is average.	**[ ] MODERATE** = The quality and quantity of candidates is average.
[ ] LOW = The quantity and quality of candidates is insufficient.	**[ ] LOW** = The quantity and quality of candidates is insufficient.	**[ ] LOW** = The quantity and quality of candidates is insufficient.

Discuss Activities to Find or Attract Candidates*:* *Candidates are limited due to the shortage of qualified workers or leaders in the local geographic area. Possible recruitment pools include nearby colleges and universities in the surrounding area.*

11. Outlook for Recruiting in the Future: *Once the initial recruits are successfully brought into the agency, more potential applicants will apply for positions at the agency, increasing the talent pool. Potential leaders are very committed to their positions and willing to acquire new leadership skills.*

Succession Profile Form

1. Position Title, Series, Grade: (Your Position)	**2. Current Incumbent:** (You)
3. Division/Office, Center, Group, etc.:	**4. Current Incumbent's Supervisor:**
5. Date Incumbent Entered Position:	**6. Likelihood of Turnover:** (Likelihood of you leaving.) **[ ] HIGH** = Likely in the next 12 months **[ ] MODERATE** = Likely within 1 to 2 years **[ ] LOW** = Likely within 3 to 5 years

7. Key Competencies Needed for Position: (List applicable competencies. Refer to OPM's Competency Dictionary https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/competencies/)

Leadership:

Technical:

8. Readiness of Talent Pool:

Refer to the USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Tool Results (if results are available) on staff readiness and developmental needs. For example, what competencies had the highest percentage of Needs Improvement; what are the levels of engagement and aspiration; what barriers exist; and to what degree do the barriers discourage the talent pool from aspiring to the position. If results are not available, anecdotal information is also appropriate.

9. Successor Developmental Techniques Action Plan:

Developmental Assignments:

10. Ability to Recruit and Attract Candidates: (Mark one rating within each time period.)

Within 12 Months	Within 1 to 2 years	Within 3 to 5 years
[ ] HIGH = The quality and quantity of candidates is outstanding. **[ ] MODERATE** = The quality and quantity of candidates is average. **[ ] LOW** = The quantity and quality of candidates is insufficient.	**[ ] HIGH** = The quality and quantity of candidates is outstanding. **[ ] MODERATE** = The quality and quantity of candidates is average. **[ ] LOW** = The quantity and quality of candidates is insufficient.	**[ ] HIGH** = The quality and quantity of candidates is outstanding. **[ ] MODERATE** = The quality and quantity of candidates is average. **[ ] LOW** = The quantity and quality of candidates is insufficient.

Discuss Activities to Find or Attract Candidates:

11. Outlook for Recruiting in the Future:

Phase 3: Strategy

The purpose of this phase is to identify succession planning strategies that will address the results of the analysis phase.

Relevant Tools

- **Individual Development Plan**
- **Knowledge Transfer Questions**
- **Leadership Development Matrix**

Phase 3: Strategy – <u>Individual Development Plan</u>

The Individual Development Plan (IDP) is an employee development tool that identifies activities that will help individual employees enhance their job-related knowledge, skills, and abilities. Conversations on performance between individual employees and their supervisors help clarify and update current job requirements and expectations, which in turn supports improvements in our ability to achieve our science mission.

The IDP process is not limited to consideration of an employee's readiness to meet the requirements of their current position. The IDP also captures short term (2-3 years) and long term (3-5 years) career goals, including advancement to other positions, and what will be required to successfully achieve those goals. IDPs are used during the succession planning process to document and support potential current and longer term developmental needs and opportunities, including details, rotational assignments, mentorship or coaching, action learning projects, formal training, etc., to provide exposure to the skills, knowledge, and ability needed for successful current performance as well as advancement to positions of greater responsibility and complexity.

IDPs are not a promise or contract for training, or for promotion or other advancement.

https://www2.usgs.gov/humancapital/ecd/ecd_idphome.html

Individual Development Plan
Performance Year 20__

See Instructions

Employee's Name	Position Title/Grade	Office Phone	Email Address
Current Supervisor's Name	**Supervisor's Title**	**Office Phone**	**Email Address**

Goals for Successful Performance in Current Position	Short-term Career Goals (2-3 years)	Long-term Career Goals (3+ years)

Developmental Objectives: What do you need to do this year to work toward your goals?	**Developmental Activities** (training, assignments, projects, details, etc.)	**Proposed Dates**	**Estimated Costs**	**Date Completed**

Notes:	Employee's Signature/ Date
	Supervisor's Signature/ Date

This form is required for all DOI supervisors and should be updated annually (Personnel Bulletin 06-04). It is highly recommended for use by all employees. The employee and the supervisor/manager should each retain a copy for his/her records.

Instructions

Complete the Individual Development Plan following these steps:

1. **Employee Developmental and Career Goals:**
   The employee and supervisor should work together to complete the goals for successful performance in the employee's current position and the employee's short- and long-term career goals on the first page of the IDP.

   Developmental Objectives:
   In this section describe what the employee needs to do this year to work towards his/her goals. Objectives describe what the employee needs to learn or achieve in order to reach his/her goal. Example: Develop leadership skills; etc.

2. **Determine a method of training and a training time frame.**
   Determine what type of training or activity is needed to accomplish the employee's developmental goals. It could be On the Job Training (OJT), a detail, or an actual training course or a combination of methods. Identify the proposed dates for the training or activity in the *Proposed Dates* column. Enter the actual or estimated cost of the activity in the *Estimated Costs* column. Once the training is completed, write the date in the *Date Completed* column.

   Methods of training:
   - **OJT**: On the job training. This can include coaching by a skilled individual or details into positions that will give the employee the skills and knowledge needed.
   - **Details**: Temporary assignments to another location and/or position to gain specific knowledge and/or experience.
   - **Courses**: Information available on our website http://training.usgs.gov.
   - **Web Based Learning**: On-line training is available from DOI University at http://www.doi.gov/training , and OPM's website at http://www.golearn.gov.

3. **Discuss the Development Plan with your Employee**
   Discuss the IDP with the employee and make any necessary modifications. The supervisor and employee should sign and date the plan. This plan should be completed within 60 days from the beginning of the performance year.

4. **Review and Modifications**
   This plan should be reviewed at each performance review and modified as situations or needs change.

Phase 3: Strategy – Knowledge Transfer Questions

What is Knowledge Transfer?

It is the process that allows an organization to 1) capture, honor, and preserve the knowledge, work experiences, and accomplishments of individuals in key positions and 2) to support the continuity of the work when those positions are vacated.

What are the Benefits of Knowledge Transfer?

Knowledge transfer supports smoother staff transitions and enables the ability to capture best practices and legacy knowledge.

Why is it important for employees who are leaving the organization participate in a Knowledge Transfer interview?

The knowledge transfer interview prompts an employee to think about personal experiences and lessons learned. The information gathered will be shared with the employee(s) backup or eventual successor(s) to prepare them for a succession transition.

When should a Knowledge Transfer interview be completed?

If this is a planned transition, the incumbent should complete the knowledge transfer interview as soon as he or she is preparing to leave the current position, preferably no later than one month prior to the last day on the job.

What happens after the Knowledge Transfer interview?

Employees who complete the interview should provide their responses to their Manager/Supervisor. [Note: If the Office of Human Capital (OHC) conducts the interview, OHC will compile a written interview script and provide it to the incumbent and Manager/Supervisor for continued action.] The information collected may support a variety of purposes, such as identifying opportunities for improvements; documenting legacy knowledge to share with others; providing insights into training needs for future successors; and capturing tips and suggestions to share with colleagues and future successors. The information gathered during the interview should be handled appropriately and shared on a need to know basis.

Knowledge Transfer Questions

Please note that some questions may not be applicable to your position.

Your Organization

1. What are your organizational unit's greatest strengths?
2. Are there currently (or are there anticipated) gaps in staffing and/or capabilities in your organizational unit?
3. What cultural norms[4] (e.g., taking breaks with coworkers, sharing relevant industry articles) would you want to tell the future incumbent of this position about? Please address any one or more of the following:
    - How the organization conducts its business, treats employees, customers, and the wider community
    - The extent to which autonomy and freedom are allowed in decision making, developing new ideas, and personal expression
    - The flow of information through the organization's hierarchy
    - Employee commitment towards organizational objectives

Looking Forward

4. What ideas, goals, or projects have you not yet had the opportunity to pursue in this position?
5. Are there any business processes that you would change?
6. Are there any resources or responsibilities that you would reallocate or realign?

Advice for Your Successor

7. What are some of the most important lessons you have learned in your time in this position?
8. What are some of the key issues and challenges faced in accomplishing the work?
9. Of the key meetings/committees/working groups you attend, which are most critical for achieving success in your position?

Your Legacy

10. What have been your greatest contributions, accomplishments, or innovations in this

[4] Norms are based on shared attitudes, beliefs, customs, expressed or implied contracts, and written and unwritten rules that the organization develops over time.

position?

Phase 3: Strategy – Leadership Development Matrix

This Leadership Development Matrix, developed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in partnership with George Mason University, summarizes recommended developmental activities for leadership competencies. The leadership competencies are part of the competency model for executive positions called the Executive Core Qualifications (ECQ). [5] The ECQs and the recommended leadership development activities are relevant for executive positions. The competencies are also relevant for other positions requiring leadership skills, such a team leaders, supervisors, and managers.

Competency	*Recommended Leadership Development Activities*
Leading Change: ***Creativity and Innovation***	Engage in action learning projects with leaders from different functional areas within the organization. Projects should focus on development of new ideas, policies, and other activities that require creative and innovative thinking. Action learning projects should include feedback mechanisms, and mentoring. Engage in a developmental assignment that entails such activities as brainstorming and refining new policies, leading a policy launch effort, assessing implications of new technologies on organizational processes, or turning around a failing policy or process. Such assignments should be paired with feedback mechanisms and mentoring.
Leading Change: ***External Awareness***	Engage in scenario planning exercises where generating future scenarios for the organization requires consideration of key stakeholders, numerous external trends (political, economic, societal, technological, legal, environmental, and industry), and the uncertainties of the future. Utilize a mentor who can serve as a source of additional information regarding the industry and its external strategic environment. Work on a developmental assignment or job rotation outside the organization or one that requires the leader to work with others from different organizations to set up a new policy or strategic direction.
Leading Change: ***Flexibility***	Engage in job rotations where the leader experiences different work environments and learns new perspectives. Engage in multiple developmental assignments that differ significantly from one another in the nature of the challenges they present to the leader. Each assignment should require the leader to work with new and different frames of reference. Work with leadership and peer coaches who promote considerably different ways and

[5] https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training-and-development/leadership-development/effective-learning-interventions-for-developing-ecqs.pdf

Competency	*Recommended Leadership Development Activities*
	perspectives for understanding work problems. Participate in leader development workshops that utilize complex work simulations featuring active learning, significant variety in experienced problems, and structured feedback and guidance.
Leading Change: ***Resilience***	Engage in structured training programs that emphasize stress management tools and stressor-coping mechanisms. Work with a coach to identify and develop solutions to stress-inducing work problems. Such coaching should be paired with multi-source feedback.
Leading Change: ***Strategic Thinking***	Engage in developmental assignments that involve setting new directions, working on strategic formulation projects, and leading change. Participate in a variety of strategically oriented experiential exercises, including (a) active learning projects that have a strategic focus; (b) group dialogue of strategic case discussions; and (c) strategic business games and simulations. Attend courses and workshops that provide models of strategic thinking and pair these models with experiential exercises. Utilize a mentor who can guide the leader's cognitive development of more strategic frames of reference.
Leading Change: ***Vision***	Engage in developmental assignments that entail long term planning and development of new directions for the organization. Participate in team-based workshops comprised of action learning projects that create cross-functional exposure and include exercises aimed at future trends of the organization. Engage in scenario planning with team members to create a shared vision towards the future.
Leading People: ***Conflict Management***	Engage in developmental assignments that entail working in situations likely to be significantly conflict-laden (e.g., dealing with a problem employee, serving as a negotiator or mediator, working with people from different cultures, and leading groups with diverse members). Participate in and/or lead an action learning project with teams composed of members from different functional areas and with different perspectives. Work with a leadership coach that helps identify leadership problem areas that can contribute to poor conflict management. Construct a leader development plan to address these areas. Coaching should be combined with conflict management workshops, and development/ action learning assignments. Attend workshops that provide insight into conflict management styles and conflict resolution strategies. Such workshops should include not only lectures but discussions around conflict management case studies and role play exercises.

Competency	*Recommended Leadership Development Activities*
Leading People: ***Leveraging Diversity***	Engage in developmental assignments that entail working with groups containing members from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Such assignments should be paired with feedback providers. Engage in service learning assignments paired with feedback and coaching. Participate in extended workshops that utilize behavioral modeling, role plays, cultural assimilators, and reflective discussions to foster greater appreciation for diversity. Such course work should be paired with mentoring and action learning projects.
Leading People: ***Developing Others***	Participate in a coaching relationship. The coaching should focus specifically on skills in providing feedback and opportunities to subordinates, active listening techniques, and asking open-ended questions. Engage in a mentoring assignment -- such assignments should be paired with peer and leadership coaching. Attend workshops that focus on active listening, providing feedback and helping subordinates construct individual development plans. Engage in a formal self-development intervention that requires diagnosis of self-learning needs, construction of a self-learning curriculum, and evaluation of learning gains. Practice with such an intervention can foster skills that generalize to developing others. Solicit multisource feedback from supervisors, peers, and subordinates, focusing on skills in developing others, including active listening, providing feedback, and assigning developmental activities. Such feedback should be paired with coaching.
Leading People: ***Team Building***	Lead a team-based action learning project. The action-learning project should also include feedback mechanisms, and mentoring. Participate in coaching with multi-source feedback. These coaching exercises should focus on team management strategies such as the use of team charters and team process facilitation that motivates team members and increases team commitment. Such coaching should also be paired with multi-source feedback to increase the self-awareness of the team building skills that need improving. Engage as a team lead in challenge exercises, adventure learning exercises, and team-based simulations. Feedback should be included to ensure that leaders grasp the purpose of these exercises, and their team's sense of cohesion continues when they return to the organization.
Results Driven: ***Accountability***	Establish a coaching relationship that emphasizes the importance of concrete goal establishment and responsibility for goal completion. Such coaching can also focus on delegation as well as time and project management skills. Coaching should include multisource feedback that focuses on these skills. Establish peer coaching relationships to foster a climate of shared responsibility and accountability. Peer coaches create a higher level of self-awareness and reflection as well as a greater awareness of others' responsibilities and needs.

Competency	*Recommended Leadership Development Activities*
	Take workshops and courses on time/project management skills and performance management strategies. These workshops should include role play exercises that utilize scenarios displaying low accountability by peers and subordinates.
Results Driven: ***Customer Service***	Engage in an action learning project that focuses on improving internal and external customer service systems and processes. This project should be paired with self-reflection or personal growth programs to foster greater self-awareness Take part in a coaching program that centers on growing self-awareness and on improving recognition of client needs and balancing those with the leader's own needs and constraints. This coaching should include guidance on how to set attainable goals towards the final product and on developing the leader's planning techniques. Take an interpersonal skills workshop that includes role playing exercises reflecting both typical and non-typical internal customer service situations.
Results Driven: ***Decisiveness***	Participate in workshops and courses that offer simulation-based training exercises requiring multiple complex decisions. Such exercises need to reflect novel and ill-defined situations leaders are likely to encounter on the job. Offer opportunities to work through appropriate solutions. Opportunities should be interactive in nature and accompanied by feedback and guidance. Engage in an action learning project that focuses on solving multiple problems within a constrained time period. This will serve to foster decision making under time pressure.
Results Driven: ***Entrepreneurship***	Participate in workshops or courses that focus on entrepreneurship. The requirements of the class or workshop should include the leader's completion of a formal business plan for a new venture and its presentation to others. This program should be paired with catalytic coaching, where coaches/instructors encourage leaders to engage in more entrepreneurial thinking. Engage in an action learning project that includes the exploration of new ventures and opportunities. Such projects should be paired with coaching and mentoring. Engage in a developmental assignment that entails such activities as exploring, designing, and developing new ventures (e.g., policy, service-related tools and products). Such assignments should also be coupled with coaching, or mentoring for expert support and advice.
Results Driven: ***Problem Solving***	Engage in problem solving experiences with co-workers. The intent is to help each other better understand problem approaches and solutions. Participate in a workshop where external case studies are presented and discussed. These case studies should provide examples of the kinds of problems a leader is expected to confront in their leadership environment. Participate in a simulation exercise where leaders have the opportunity to work through realistic problem scenarios. Engage in an action learning project that entails working on existing problems within the sponsoring organization. Such projects should be paired with feedback mechanisms and coaching opportunities.

Competency	*Recommended Leadership Development Activities*
	Engage in developmental assignments that entail opportunities to work on problems that are ill defined or reoccurring within the organization. Such assignments should be paired with feedback mechanisms and coaching opportunities.
Results Driven: ***Technical Credibility***	Take formal courses or workshops on specific topics and areas where there is a need to develop technical competence. Such courses should be followed by job assignments that allow acquired skills to be practiced. Develop a mentoring relationship with a senior (i.e., more technically expert) employee in the organization. The mentor should encourage open communication and be available to answer technical questions. Engage in *job rotations* that entail work tasks utilizing targeted technical skills.
Business Acumen: ***Financial Management*** ***Human Capital Management*** ***Technology Management***	Take formal courses or workshops on specific topics and areas where there is a need to develop business acumen. Such courses should be followed by job assignments that allow acquired skills to be practiced. Develop a mentoring relationship with a senior (i.e., more technically expert) employee in your organization. The mentor should encourage open communication and be available to answer technical questions. Engage in job rotations that entail work tasks utilizing targeted financial management, human capital management, or technology management skills.
Building Coalitions: ***Partnering***	Engage in action learning projects with a team of leaders from different functional and organizational areas. The project should involve extensive collaboration. Engage in job assignments that entail working on cross functional and cross boundary teams. Develop a mentoring relationship with a more established and senior leader in the organization. The mentor should provide access to a wider professional network, and especially to "brokers" who can link to other professional networks. The organization should help match mentors to the appropriate mentees. Join and participate in professional societies and organizations that foster networking opportunities among its members.
Building Coalitions: ***Political Savvy***	Take a workshop on organizational political dynamics that includes case studies of successful political climate navigation. The course should involve interactive and role play exercises and simulations in which leaders need to evaluate political acceptance of decisions in several decision contexts. Attend a workshop or forum of senior employees who share their experiences working within the organization. The sessions should provide opportunities for interaction and engagement between speakers and attendees. Develop a mentoring relationship with a more senior employee in the organization, who can provide insight into organizational political dynamics.

Competency	***Recommended Leadership Development Activities***
	Engage in developmental assignments that require navigation of different organizational areas and levels of management to reach successful solutions. Such assignments should be paired with mentoring and/or coaching.
Building Coalitions: ***Influencing/ Negotiating***	Engage in simulations in which leaders are required to influence someone's opinion or negotiate a position. This simulation should be paired with feedback that evaluates the leader's performance and provides recommendations for improved strategies. Engage in a role-play activity in which influencing opinions or negotiation is a key component. This exercise should be paired with instructive feedback and facilitation. Take a workshop that presents case studies of negotiation situations and explains the strategies involved. An important component of this session should be a direct comparison between different cases that highlights underlying principles of influencing and negotiation. Engage in developmental assignments in which leaders must influence peers working on the same project or from whom they need to engender support. Ideally this exercise should be paired with coaching to help leaders uncover the strategies needed to be successful.
Fundamental competency: ***Interpersonal Skills***	Take workshops that include behavior modeling or role-play exercises. Modeling exercises should target specific interpersonal skills with modeled skill displays and sustained practice with feedback. Role plays should be paired with feedback by trained facilitators. Workshops should be with coaching to extend the lessons learned to your actual behavior on the job. Complete multisource or 360-degree assessments that evaluate interpersonal skills. Work with a coach to develop a learning plan to address identified gaps.
Fundamental competency: ***Oral Communication***	Attend a workshop that covers techniques and strategies for effective communication. This introduction should be paired with interactive activities such as behavior modeling or leadership simulations that allow leaders to put the content of the workshop into action. Take on a developmental assignment that offers the opportunity to present to or communicate with areas of the organization with whom the leader normally does not interact. Enter a coaching relationship in which oral communication abilities is the focal point of development. This relationship should be anchored in a skills audit and assessment or in multisource feedback results as the foundation from which the development plan is created. Participate in Toastmasters or similar club that practices public speaking.
Fundamental competency: ***Written Communication***	Participate in a writing *workshop*, or a course on written communication skills. This *workshop* should be interactive in nature and allow for group discussion as well as direct instructor feedback on participant writing samples Make use of learning partners and peer *coaches* to solicit *feedback* on written communications.

Competency	*Recommended Leadership Development Activities*
Fundamental competency: ***Integrity/Honesty***	Develop a mentor relationship with a senior employee early on in the leader's career to serve as a role model for ethical conduct. This mentoring should be paired with a formalized organizational 'code of ethics' that clearly reinforces a climate of integrity. Attend a workshop that provides heuristical decision making tools for leaders to rely on in potentially challenging ethical situations on the job. These decision making tools will help guide appropriate action in times of uncertainty. Take a course or workshop that includes case-studies involving poor ethical conduct. The discussion should emphasize what the ethical failures are, potential causes for the behavior, and recommendations for what should have been done in that situation Engage in a service learning project with an organization to enhance contact with and understanding of the community in which the organization exists.
Fundamental competency: ***Continual Learning***	Engage in self-development skills training. This training should be two-fold—identifying skills that should be developed and discussing how to effectively set goals to development these skills. This identification can be completed through multi-source feedback. Along with the evaluation of the leader's skills, there should be a formative evaluation so the leader understands why these activities are effective. Organizational support is also important to encourage these self-developmental activities. Participate in a coaching relationship that can facilitate self-development efforts. Multi-source feedback from supervisors, peers, and subordinates can be used as part of coaching to identify self-learning objectives.
Fundamental competency: ***Public Service Motivation***	Engage in service learning activities where leaders apply skills learned in the classroom to actual problems in the community. Engage in behavioral modeling paired with mentoring. The behavioral modeling should consist of actively portraying public service values of the organization. Leaders should use mentors as support and as experts who embody and model organizational values.
Cultural Savvy (USGS-specific competency) Definition: Knows how to operate in a science agency. Being cognizant of the organization's mission, functions, and interdependencies; and how the dynamics of its social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.	Attend a workshop or forum of senior employees who share their experiences working within the organization. The sessions should provide opportunities for interaction and engagement between speakers and attendees. Develop a mentoring relationship with a more senior employee in the organization, who can provide insight into cultural norms and dynamics. Engage in developmental assignments that require navigation of different organizational areas and levels of management to reach successful solutions. Such assignments should be paired with mentoring and/or coaching.

This table is related to the Leadership Development Matrix and describes the variety of learning interventions referenced in the matrix.

Interventions/ Activities	***Definitions/Descriptions***
Instructor-led	This type of training is facilitated by an instructor either online or in a classroom setting. Instructor-led training allows for learners and instructors or facilitators to interact and discuss the training material either individually or in a group setting.
Structured Training Programs; Formal Course Work; Skills Workshops; Web-based Training	Structured learning activities involve instructor led presentations of leadership theories, models, principles, and skills. Students are provided with lectures, demonstrations, and exercises to foster knowledge and skill acquisition. These types of learning activities are usually a precursor to more active learning exercises.
Case Discussion	Case discussions, or the case method approach, present learners with descriptions of organizational and leadership problems and the effective (or ineffective) solution strategies used by the actors in the case scenario. Learners analyze and discuss the case in groups to form understanding of the issues involved in particular cases, learn appropriate solution strategies, and develop relevant skills.
Experiential Variety	Experiential variety involves providing learners with multiple, carefully structured practice problem scenarios that vary significantly in the kinds of solutions that need to be generated for success.
Cultural Assimilator	A cultural assimilator is a computer-based training intervention in which a learner receives a series of intercultural vignettes and is asked to respond to forced choice questions about cultural nuances and differences. Responses are followed by automatic feedback.
Experiential Activities	Experiential activities are developmental tasks that occur in immersive environments and allow learners to naturally generate questions. These questions are optimally answered at the time they are generated. The key to experiential activities is hands-on learning and conversation; either virtually or in face-to-face interaction.
Action Learning; Active learning	Action learning and active learning are a self-directed approach to learning in which individuals and teams develop and present solutions to actual organizational problems.
Outdoor Challenge Exercises; Personal Growth Programs	Outdoor challenge exercises involve groups of learners participating in physically oriented team exercises. These exercises are designed to encourage growth in team trust, team communication, and interpersonal cooperation. Personal growth programs focus more decision making and self-exploration exercises that are intended to foster greater self-awareness.
Service Learning	Service learning involves active learning projects and exercises where the central tasks and problems have a form of community service as their primary focus.
Scenario Planning	In scenario planning, learners consider and develop multiple future strategic alternatives for organizations. These alternative scenarios are then used as the basis for collective discussions, decision making, and organizational learning.
Error Management Training	In error management training, learners engage in active learning where they are encouraged to experiment with different solutions, and learn from the errors they make in their problem solving.
Simulations; Games	Simulations and games present learners with realistic problem scenarios that require them to play roles in generating solutions. They typically include constrained problem environments with specific parameters for solution generation.

Modeling	Modeling is a training approach that involves emulating the use of targeted behaviors and skills in defined contexts. In modeling exercises, learners are shown displays of effective targeted behaviors, and provided practice opportunities with feedback.
Developmental Assignments	A development assignment is one that is designed to stretch a learner beyond existing skills, to challenge the learner to expand and grow these skills in order to meet more complex leadership performance requirements.
Job Rotation	In a job rotation, learners are reassigned to alternative organizational positions in order to learn about different functional areas and acquire new job knowledge and skills.
"Stamping-in" Assignments	Stamping-in assignments provide opportunities for learners to practice skills gained in formal courses and workshops.
Developmental Relationships	Developmental relationships are either formal or informal and involve one individual taking an active interest in and initiating actions to advance another's development. They are the kinds of relationships that serve as key sources of assessment, challenge, and support.
Coaching	Coaching involves an interaction between a coach and a leader that focuses on fostering the leader's self-understanding, the preparation of an individual developmental plan, and guidance and support in fulfilling that plan.
Networking	Networking involves the formation of learning partnerships, where learners acquire sources of social support for their developmental efforts. These partners provide advice about appropriate learning activities, and feedback about these activities. Networks can also provide support for career development and upward job mobility.
Mentoring	Mentoring is a process in which a more experienced and senior member of an organization provides developmental support and career advice to a less experienced and more junior protégé. Mentors may also help protégés gain a better understanding of complex organizational and strategic environments.
Adaptive Guidance	Adaptive guidance involves the provision of information to learners about their most appropriate developmental strategies and learning directions.
Assessments & Feedback (i.e. Multisource Feedback; Feedback intensive programs)	Multisource feedback is a process of acquiring performance feedback from multiple rates and sources, including a leader's superiors, peers, and subordinates. Leaders also provide self-ratings. Feedback intensive programs include not only assessments of performance, but of leader personality, skills, and other dispositions. Such feedback is intended to foster greater self-understanding and facilitate the construction of effective individualized development plans.
Self-Development	Self-development is any self-initiated and proactive learning process where learners are responsible for (a) assessing their own strengths and developmental needs, (b) designing and completing their instructional curriculum, and (c) evaluating their own learning progress. (e.g. individualized development plans, self-guided learning activities).

Phase 4: Implementation

The purpose of this phase is to document and formalize the succession planning phases of Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy into a comprehensive, formal Succession Plan. This phase also includes managing the implementation of the strategies and communicating succession strategies throughout the organization.

Relevant Tools

- **Succession Plan Template**
- **Communication Tool**
- **Project Management Plan**

Phase 4: Implementation – <u>Succession Plan Template</u>

This template is used to document and communicate the decisions made during the Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy phases of the succession planning process. It also captures the implementation and evaluation plans.

BACKGROUND

- What is your organization's mission and vision?

ALIGNMENT

- What are your organization's strategic goals?
- What are your organization's workforce planning strategies?
- How would you describe the link between strategic goals and succession planning?
- How would you describe the link between workforce planning strategies and succession planning?
- How will succession planning benefit your agency (e.g. retirement bubble, competition for talent)?
- Demonstrate workforce data that supports the business case (e.g. a chart or narrative explaining that 62% of senior leaders will retire within 5 years).

ANALYSIS

- What positions have been identified for succession planning?
- What is the talent pool for the identified positions?
- What are the the competencies for the identified positions ?
- What is the process for assessing the talent pool against the competencies?
- What are the results of the assessment?

STRATEGIES

- What are the succession planning strategies that will be used, i.e. job rotations, leadership training, special assignments; coaching, mentoring, shadowing, learning groups?
- When and how will you evaluate these strategies? Give method and timeframe.

IMPLEMENTATION [6]

- What are the strategies?
- Who is responsible for implementation?
- What are the timeframes?
- How will information about the succession plan/succession strategies be communicated to the organization?

EVALUATION

- How will you analyze the results of this succession plan?
- How are senior leaders held accountable for succession management?
- What will be your approach for making improvements on an annual basis?

[6] The Action Plan Template in the Workforce Planning Desk Guide can be helpful in developing action plans: https://www2.usgs.gov/humancapital/sw/workforceplanning/deskguide.html.

Phase 4: Implementation - Communication Tool

<table>
<tr><th colspan="7">Communication Plan</th></tr>
<tr><th>Audience/Goal</th><th>Message</th><th>Tactic</th><th>Messenger</th><th>Actions</th><th>Timeframe</th><th>Status</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="6">What is your goal related to a particular audience?</td><td rowspan="2">What is one thing you want to say to that audience?</td><td>What is one way you will meet that objective?</td><td>Who should be the voice behind that action?</td><td>Who will actually be doing the work and what will they be doing?</td><td>When is it going to happen?</td><td>Is it complete?</td></tr>
<tr><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">What is another thing you want to say to that audience?</td><td>What is one way you will meet that objective?</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td></tr>
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<tr><td rowspan="3">What is your goal related to another audience?</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td><td>etc.</td></tr>
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Phase 4: Implementation – Project Management Tool

Implementation will vary based on the scope of positions identified for succession planning and the strategies that have been proposed.

Task	Who's Responsible	Target Completion Date

EXAMPLE

If the occupational series identified for succession planning is the Administrative Officer series, and the strategy is to use Individual Development Plans (IDPs) with the talent pool, then the implementation will involve each employee and supervisor developing and tracking completion of training identified in the IDP. It is reasonable to track the implementation of an IDP over a one to two year time period.

EXAMPLE

If the series identified for succession planning is Hydrologic Technician, and the strategy is to use Knowledge Transfer with the talent pool, then the implementation will involve interviewing seasoned Technicians to capture their experience using the Knowledge Transfer Questions.

Phase 5: Evaluation

The purpose of the Evaluation phase is to determine how well the succession management strategies are filling targeted needs. In this phase, the organization collects data and uses it to measure the effectiveness of succession planning activities.

Relevant Tool

- **Sample Metrics**

Phase 5: Evaluation – Sample Metrics

There are various methods for evaluating succession planning efforts, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Succession Planning Metrics (Quantitative)		
Measure	Purpose	Measurement Approach
FEVS results indicate an improvement in the Talent Index[7].	Assess the degree to which the organization has the talent necessary to achieve its goals using the FEVS Talent Index.	Federal Employee Survey Results
Skill/Competency gaps closed for key positions identified for succession planning	Determine the difference between competencies needed and competencies possessed.	Competency Assessment
Bench Strength	Determine the number of employees who have achieved the required competency levels to assume different responsibilities or higher level positions. Indicates employees ready to compete for promotion.	• USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool • Focus groups with leaders • Supervisory nominations • Performance appraisal
Number of applicants	Determine if there has been an increase in aspiration for key positions based on the number of internal candidates applying.	Collect data from Hiring System on recruitment sources (internal, external government, external non-government) for key positions after job announcements are closed
Quality of internal applicants	Determine if there is improvement in the readiness of internal applicants to compete for key positions.	Collect data from Hiring System and Hiring Manager on number and percent of internal applicants who are successfully referred for selection

[7] The Talent Management Index indicates the extent to which employees think the organization has the talent necessary to achieve organizational goals. It is made up of these items:
1. I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization.
11. My talents are used well in the workplace.
18. My training needs are assessed.
21. My work unit is able to recruit people with the right skills.
29. The workforce has the job-relevant knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals.
47. Supervisors/team leaders in my work unit support employee development.
68. How satisfied are you with the training you receive for your present job?

Responses to these questions are another way to **qualitatively** assess the succession planning program. For example:

- Are the strategies addressing the needs? How?
- Is the implementation occurring as planned? Why or why not?
- How is the program contributing to the organization's mission and objectives?

Scenarios

Scenarios provide examples of how to use the tools in the Succession Planning Desk Guide. The scenarios apply the succession planning phases to positions targeted for succession planning. The positions in these scenarios have been selected because they represent occupations where planning is likely needed at USGS. This does not suggest your organization must conduct succession planning on these positions. Rather the positions are used to illustrate how to utilize the tools in the succession planning desk guide.

SCENARIO: Science Support/Administrative Officer

Phases of Succession Planning	Relevant Tools	Scenario
Phase 1: Alignment Understand the strategic direction of the organization, based on the strategic plan and workforce plan. Conduct SWOT analysis. Determine barriers to success. Determine succession planning goals, keeping them aligned with the strategic and workforce plans. Estimate budget for succession planning strategies.	• **Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT Analysis)** • Business Case	The Science Center conducted a **SWOT analysis** and identified: Strengths - established partnerships Weaknesses - outdated labs Opportunities- qualified applicants Threats - loss of appropriated funding
Phase 2: Analysis Identify bench strength: key positions for succession planning and analyze how well the current talent pool will be able to fill those key positions. Include analysis of engagement, aspiration, and barriers to determine readiness.	• **Identification of Key Positions** • **Identification of Talent Pool** • **Competency Modeling** • **USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool** • Succession Profile Worksheet	• Administrative Officers identified for succession planning, by using the **Identification of Key Positions** • Competencies for Administrative Officers identified as Management Advisory Services, Financial Management, Human Resources Management by using the **OPM MOSAIC Competency dictionary and the Administrative Officer Position Description** • Employees in Science Support occupations at the GS 7 through GS 12 grade levels at the Science Center were identified as the talent pool, based on management discussion • The talent pool was assessed by the Science Center Management Team using the USGS Succession Planning Pipeline **Assessment Tool**

Phase 3: Strategy Identify succession planning strategies and related metrics that will be used to evaluate the success of the strategies.	• **Individual Development Plan** • Knowledge Transfer Questions • Leadership Development Matrix	• Employees in the talent pool and their supervisors identified developmental opportunities in their **Individual Development Plan (IDP)** to prepare them with competencies needed for the Administrative Officer position
Phase 4: Implementation Document and formalize the succession planning phases of Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy into a comprehensive Succession Plan. Manage the implementation of the plan and succession strategies, and communicate those strategies throughout the organization.	• Succession Plan Template • Communication Tool • Project Management Plan	• Implement the IDP in a one-two year timeframe
Phase 5: Evaluation Determine how well the succession management strategies are filling targeted needs.	• Sample Metrics	• Reassess the talent pool using the USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool after one-to-two years post implementation of the IDPs.

SCENARIO: Science/Hydrologic Technician

Phases of Succession Planning	Relevant Tools	Scenario
Phase 1: Alignment Understand the strategic direction of the organization, based on the strategic plan and workforce plan. Conduct SWOT analysis. Determine barriers to success. Determine succession planning goals, keeping them aligned with the strategic and workforce plans. Estimate budget for succession planning strategies.	• **Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT Analysis)** • Business Case	The Science Center conducted a **SWOT analysis** and identified: Strengths - established reputation Weaknesses - aging workforce Opportunities - large number of people who want to intern at the Center Threats - hiring freeze and waiver requirement
Phase 2: Analysis Identify bench strength: key positions for succession planning and analyze how well the current talent pool will be able to fill those key positions. Include analysis of engagement, aspiration, and barriers to determine readiness.	• **Identification of Key Positions** • Identification of Talent Pool • **Competency Modeling** • USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool • Succession Profile Worksheet	• Hydrologic Technicians identified for succession planning, by using the **Identification of Key Positions** • Competencies for Hydrologic Technicians identified as Flexibility, Teamwork, Technology Application, Scientific Knowledge, and Scientific Data Collection by using the **OPM MOSAIC Competency dictionary and the Hydrologic Technician Position Description** • In this scenario, there are a limited number of internal employees in the talent pool. No assessment of a talent pool is conducted. • The **Succession Profile Worksheet** is used for seasoned Hydrologic Technicians to complete.

Phase 3: Strategy Identify succession planning strategies and related metrics that will be used to evaluate the success of the strategies.	• Individual Development Plan • **Knowledge Transfer Questions** • Leadership Development Matrix	• The **Knowledge Transfer Questions** are used to interview seasoned Technicians to capture their experience.
Phase 4: Implementation Document and formalize the succession planning process phases of Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy into a comprehensive Succession Plan. Manage the implementation of the plan and succession strategies, and communicate those strategies throughout the organization.	• Succession Plan Template • Communication Tool • Project Management Plan	• Management uses town halls, email communication and other meetings to emphasis the importance of knowledge transfer. • Management promotes the **Knowledge Transfer Questions**, and highlights select responses to the questions in communications with employees.
Phase 5: Evaluation Determine how well the succession management strategies are filling targeted needs.	• Sample Metrics	• A survey is sent to Hydrologic Technicians to find out how many have referred to responses from the **Knowledge Transfer Questions** when performing work.

SCENARIO: Leadership/Senior Executive Service positions

Phases of Succession Planning	Relevant Tools	Scenario
Phase 1: Alignment Understand the strategic direction of the organization, based on the strategic plan and workforce plan. Conduct SWOT analysis. Determine barriers to success. Determine succession planning goals, keeping them aligned with the strategic and workforce plans. Estimate budget for succession planning strategies.	• **Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats (SWOT Analysis)** • **Business Case**	Business Case: The USGS Workforce Planning Team analyzed workforce data of the leadership ranks (GS14, 15, SES, SL, and ST) and determined vulnerabilities in the SES population based on retirement eligibility and projected eligibility. Strengths: compelling mission Weaknesses: few internal candidates for SES vacancies Opportunities: impact science policy and USGS direction Threats: pay compression at the leadership ranks
Phase 2: Analysis Identify bench strength: key positions for succession planning and analyze how well the current talent pool will be able to fill those key positions. Include analysis of engagement, aspiration, and barriers to determine readiness.	• **Identification of Key Positions** • **Identification of Talent Pool** • **Competency Modeling** • **USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool** • Succession Profile Worksheet	• **Senior Executive Service positions identified for succession planning** during Step 2 (Supply, Demand, Discrepancies) of the workforce planning process. • Competencies for Senior Executive Service positions identified as Leading Change, Leading People, Business Acumen, Results Driven, Building Coalitions, and Cultural Savvy through **competency modeling focus groups with incumbents** • Direct reports at GS 14, 15, and SL, plus other senior management positions were **identified as the Talent Pool**, based on management discussion • The talent pool was assessed by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) using the USGS Succession Planning

		Pipeline **Assessment Tool**
Phase 3: Strategy Identify succession planning strategies and related metrics that will be used to evaluate the success of the strategies.	• Individual Development Plan • Knowledge Transfer Questions • Leadership Development	• Use a combination of the **Individual Development Plan** and the **Leadership Development Matrix** to identify appropriate developmental opportunities for the talent pool
Phase 4: Implementation Document and formalize the succession planning process phases of Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy into a comprehensive Succession Plan. Manage the implementation of the plan and succession strategies, and communicate those strategies throughout the organization.	• Succession Plan Template • Communication Tool • Project Management Plan	• Management uses town halls, staff meetings, and 1-on-1 meetings with talent pool to discuss succession planning • Management uses IDP discussions to identify developmental opportunities with interested members of the talent pool.
Phase 5: Evaluation Determine how well the succession management strategies are filling targeted needs.	• Sample Metrics	• Number of internal candidates that apply for SES vacancies at USGS increases • Re-assessment of talent pool

Appendix: Sample Project Plan

Phases	Activities	Due Date	Responsible
Getting Ready	Understand what succession planning is and how it can work for your organization.		
	View Succession Planning Webinar Series		
	Gather supporting documents which may include: Center Health Review, Strategic Plan, Workforce Plan, FEVS results		
	Pull and review Standard Workforce Data Elements https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/usgs-workforce-demographics-measures-and-metrics		
	Identify leadership sponsor and obtain commitment		
	Identify succession planning team		
Alignment	Conduct SWOT Analysis using supporting documents and Standard Workforce Data Elements as input		
	Formulate business case based on SWOT		
	Estimate budget for succession planning activities		
Analysis	Identify key position(s) for succession planning		
	Identify the talent pool for key position(s) (if talent pool is being determined by management) ***OR*** Invite employees to be considered as part of talent pool (if talent pool is being determined by employee responses to survey/email invitation to express interest)		

	Identify competencies for key position(s)		
	Assess ability, engagement, aspiration, and barriers for key position(s) using the USGS Succession Planning Pipeline Assessment Tool		
	Evaluate bench strength for key positions based on Assessment Tool results		
Strategy	Develop succession planning strategies based on Analysis phase		
	Develop budget required to implement strategies		
	Determine which metrics will be used to evaluate succession planning strategies		
Implementation	Document Alignment, Analysis, and Strategy Phase into Succession Plan		
	Develop Communication Plan		
	Implement Communication Plan		
	Implement Succession Planning Strategies		
Evaluation	Conduct quarterly monitoring based on evaluation metrics		
	Prepare evaluation report		
	Make adjustments to program based on evaluation results		
	Reaffirm leadership commitment		