



HR Community Talent Management

Final Report 2007-08

success through HR professionals



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Talent Management for HR Community

The ‘talent’ in an organization refers to the current employees and their valuable knowledge, skills and competencies. Talent management (or succession management) is the ongoing process of analyzing, developing and effectively utilizing talent to meet business needs. It involves a specific process that compares current talent in a department to the strategic business needs of that department. Results lead to the development and implementation of corresponding strategies to address any talent gaps or surpluses.

Talent management for the HR Community is a priority of the HR Strategy for the HR Community. Not only does the HR Strategy support the HR Community as its own professional group, but it also recognizes and will support the role human resource professionals have to help their clients become skilled, committed and accountable public servants.

The implementation of a talent management process that is transparent and equitable is expected to create an environment for people to develop their skills in preparation for a range of future possibilities thereby preparing the workplace for changing roles. The goal of this process is to map the business needs of the HR Community with the potential and career development needs of our people in order to develop a comprehensive Talent Management Plan.

1. The Rationale for Talent Management

1.1 A CHANGING WORKFORCE

Nova Scotia, like all other jurisdictions, is experiencing the impact of demographics on its workforce. Within the next several years the Nova Scotia Public Service will be faced with the loss of corporate knowledge as a result of large numbers of employees who are eligible to retire, impacting government’s ability to meet its obligations to the public. Currently, one third of all employees in the Nova Scotia Public Service are 50 years of age or older. Only four percent of our employee base is under 30 years of age. Succession management has been identified as a key strategy for addressing a number of critical Human Resource (HR) issues in the Nova Scotia Public Service: aging of the workforce, increasing retirement rates, tight labour market, limited competitiveness, fast-paced changes in work, and the need for a diverse workforce at all levels.

It has therefore become a corporate and departmental priority as identified by the Deputy Ministers and the corporate Human Resource Plan.



1.2 THE CORPORATE HUMAN RESOURCE PLAN

In 2005 the Government of Nova Scotia introduced a five year Corporate Human Resource Plan with the intention of providing a guide to Human Resource Management in the Nova Scotia Public Service. This plan is a response to growing challenges of the government's ability to maintain quality services and client satisfaction.

Two of the five goals articulated in the Corporate Human Resource Plan directly address the particular issues relevant to talent management for the HR Community:

Goal1: To make a difference through a skilled, committed, and accountable public service.

Strategies that will address this goal include those that encourage professional development and commitment to high quality public service.

Goal 5: To be a learning organization.

Strategies which address this goal include those that ensure there are high-quality and relevant learning and development opportunities, such as the Leadership Development Programs, which provide a coordinated and integrated approach to the professional development of current and future leaders, and knowledge management such as mentoring and processes for knowledge transfer to ensure the continuity of corporate knowledge.

The strategies to achieve both of these goals are integral components of talent management practices.

1.3 HR COMMUNITY TALENT MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The HR Community approached talent management for the entire Community as a means to obtain a broad sweep of the Community as a base line. The talent management approach was based on best practices and the corporate succession management model endorsed by the Public Service Commission.

There were 3 major stages to the Talent Management process used by the HR Community – Preparation, Identify Talent and Manage Talent. Each stage involved a number of activities that resulted in tangible outputs and involved all levels of work – Leadership, Manager, Consultant, Development, and Support – across the Community to ensure an open, transparent and honest process.

Stage 1 -- Preparation

The objectives of the Preparation Stage were to ensure that the Community was ready to undertake the process and have the appropriate resources, context and materials to do so effectively. This stage was fundamentally a preparation stage but it is crucial to the success of the process and may not need to be repeated in its entirety in subsequent years as talent management becomes a natural part of doing business.



Stage 2 – Identification of Talent

The objective of this stage was to capture a broad picture of the HR Community by determining key or critical positions within the HR Community and identifying existing departmental talent. By gathering relevant employee information, the HR Community made more informed decisions when addressing HR priorities and strategies.

Stage 3 – Management of Talent

The objective of this stage was to identify and address gaps between existing talent and critical HR Community business needs. This stage was the analysis and action stage of talent management where HR priorities and strategies (such as recruitment, retention, leadership, diversity and career development) were identified and addressed in a comprehensive Talent Management Plan for the HR Community.

Highlights

- A project charter, implementation plan, detailed project plan and a communications plan were created by the Talent Management Advisor in February 2007 and approved by the Executive HR Forum.
- The process began in February of 2007 with Career Development and HR Competency workshops.
- The eligible participant group was comprised of excluded HR professionals, including MCP and AS employees (at all five levels of work) for a total of 206 employees.
- A total of 10 Career Development Workshops were delivered by the Public Service Commission's Succession Management Advisor.
- A total of three Coaching Workshops for all employees who supervise/manage other employees were delivered by an external consultant.
- Throughout the spring of 2007, the Public Service Commission's Talent Management Advisor met with management and leadership employees to help them prepare for talent review meetings.
- Talent Review Meetings were held in May and June 2007.
- The Public Service Commission's Talent Management Advisor attended each talent review meeting and recorded the data collected from the development plans.
- Talent review information was collected, sorted and summarized. All this information came from career development plans and career conversations.
- Participation in the workshops and the talent review was voluntary.



2. Summary of Outcomes

2.1 WORKSHOPS

To support employees participating in the talent management process and to introduce the new HR Competencies and three leadership competencies to the Administrative Support group, 10 *Career Development Planning* workshops were held during February and March 2007. Formal evaluations were provided at the end of every workshop and were very favorable. Suggestions from the evaluations were incorporated into subsequent workshops to hone both content and delivery. The concepts in these workshops aligned and reinforced the performance management process, competency development and talent management.

To support managers and supervisors skill development in conducting career conversations, *Coaching for Career Development* workshops were offered to all managers, supervisors and leaders in the HR Community.

All workshops were opened by a representative from the leadership level of work, including the PSC Commissioner and the HR Strategy for the HR Community Project Director.

In total, 137 people attended the *Career Development Planning* workshops and 36 managers and supervisors attended the *Coaching For Development* workshops

2.2 CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND DISCUSSIONS

Following the workshops, all employees were requested to complete a career development plan and have a career discussion with their manager in preparation for the talent review process. Participants who chose not to submit a plan did so for a variety of reasons.

2.3 TALENT REVIEW MEETINGS

In preparation for talent review meetings, the Talent Management Advisor met with Manager and Leadership level of work employees to provide a preparation workbook, answer any questions and review the agenda. This included ensuring performance reviews and career development plans were completed with all participants, and reviewing and addressing any issues or concerns in regard to the talent review process.

A total of two Talent Review Meetings were held: one for the Employee Benefits Coordinators and HR Managers (including OHS, Labour Relations and general HR Managers) and one meeting for the HR Directors and Director level positions within the PSC. Approximately 55% of the HR Community was presented during the two talent review meetings. Career Development Plans for the HR Directors were



submitted to the PSC Commissioner, however due to multiple reporting relationships with various Deputy Ministers, a formal talent review was not conducted of the Leadership level of work this year.

The meetings were facilitated by an external facilitator to ensure objectivity and confidentiality. Talent review data was recorded on spreadsheets with the intent of becoming “working” HR planning documents for individual CSUs and the Executive HR Forum.

Anecdotal feedback was gathered at the end of each talent review. The response to this process was very favorable. Comments from participants indicated that they saw this as an excellent opportunity to get the “bigger picture” of the talent on their teams and across the entire HR Community.

2.4 CRITICAL POSITIONS

During the talent review process the Leadership level of work participants were asked to identify positions that were critical to their teams. The objective of this process was to mitigate risk by identifying where more resource development and HR strategy is required. The detailed results of this process can be found in Final Results Report. Critical positions were those that are considered difficult to fill and are expected to be difficult to fill in the future, if vacant would have a significant impact on ability to meet objectives and require a unique set of skills or expertise.

2.5 RETIREMENT DATA

During the talent review process, participants were asked to identify those employees who have indicated they will probably retire within the next three years. A summary of this can be found in Final Results Report. Overall, there is relatively low intention to retire within the Community in the near future.

2.6 GAP ANALYSIS

Talent review data was analyzed and presented by the HR Planning Consultant in the Final Results Report. Information sessions were held for the HR Community to share the final results and answer any questions about the talent review meetings. These sessions were open to all members of the community, delivered by the Talent Management Advisor and opened by the Project Director. The sessions were very well attended and response was favourable.

Both the Manager and the Leadership levels of work had an opportunity to review the results of the talent review data analysis and identify gaps and issues as well as generate potential strategies and solutions. Following this work, the Executive HR Forum prioritized the issues and strategies, which formed the basis for the Talent Management Plan for the HR Community.



3. Lessons Learned

- Support from the Executive HR Forum and Managers is critical to success.
- Communication to the HR Community in a variety of ways (email, print, face-to-face) was a critical success factor and must be consistent and continuous.
- The dedicated support of a full time Talent Management Advisor as well as significant support from the Project Director for HR Strategy for the HR Community was imperative in keeping the project on track and moving the various components of the initiative forward.
- At the outset a comprehensive project plan and communication plan was developed. This was a very helpful tool in ensuring that the project team had a common understanding of the types of activities involved and the deadlines for deliverables that were required throughout the initiative to enable the initiative to meet its objectives.
- Although the components of the talent management initiative required significant time and resources they were very well received. It is anticipated that this initial investment will result in significantly less time required to go through the processes during the next talent review cycle.
- Performance management is the foundation for the talent management process. It is imperative that a rigorous performance management process is in place for all employees in the HR Community.
- Career Development Planning training was crucial in helping employees make the connection between performance management, talent management and the new HR Competencies.

4. Recommendations for the future

4.1 OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Use the project and communication plans as well as the tools and resources developed during the implementation in subsequent cycles. This will help maintain the consistency and quality of the initiative over time.
2. Provide Career Development Planning training for new employees entering the HR Community. Due to small numbers of new employees this may be accomplished with one-to-one support from HR Development Consultants and when necessary, a half-day workshop.
3. Promote existing Corporate Calendar coaching workshops or provide customized career coaching workshops for all managers and supervisors of employees who did not receive it in during implementation and for those who desire a refresher.



4. Encourage all HR Professionals to complete Career Development Plans, whether or not they choose to participate in talent review in subsequent years. This is important input into the talent review process and provides valuable data for planning.
5. Encourage all managers and supervisors to have career discussions with their employees. Even if employees wish to stay in their current role or have no specific development plans, this information can still be rolled into the talent review process. This approach has been used by other departments and ensures that no employee gets left out of the process.
6. Use the talent review process as part of ongoing talent management. As all managers have participated in the talent review meetings they are now familiar with how the meetings are conducted and the valuable outcomes. Provide tools and resources to managers to allow them to conduct their own talent reviews with level of work roll-ups. The Talent Management Advisor (or similar position) should help support this by providing guidance on the process and ad hoc facilitation of talent reviews where required.
7. Conduct a Leadership level of work talent review using a modified approach if necessary.
8. Develop and conduct a final review and evaluation once the first cycle has been completed.

4.2 SPECIFIC PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Communicate the talent management and review processes (preparation, mini reviews, tools, spreadsheets), meeting process (structure and agenda) and logistics in as few email as possible – either by paper package or face-to-face meetings – for greater impact.
2. Clearly define the structure of the talent review meetings according to level of work.
3. Distribute spreadsheets (from 07-08) to each Benefits Coordinator, Manager and HR Director to complete and send back to designated point of contact. Revise the spreadsheet to be consistent with (career) development plan format.
4. Establish a separate meeting to review and discuss the critical positions.
5. Use mini-talent review meetings according to level of work and roll up the data.
6. Allow presenters time to present and then ask for a re-cap of the highlights and enter that information in the spreadsheet.
7. Present proposed ground rules and allow time for discussion of ground rules to ensure clarity.



8. Select a facilitator who can provide a balance of subject matter and process facilitation expertise.
9. Facilitate internally when possible and if appropriate.

5. Conclusion

Talent Management for the HR Community is an opportunity for HR professionals to develop in their areas of expertise and in their careers. A strong HR Community helps create a strong public service. The goal of talent management is to better understand our people in the HR Community so we can support professional and career development and align individual needs and goals with the business focus of HR. We also want to ensure that we as a Community have the agility to develop people so that we are meeting the future needs of the community and government and our clients.

This first broad sweep of the Community provides a foundation on which to ensure leadership continuity, knowledge transfer and service continuity. The initial implementation resulted in a number of important human resource priorities and strategies, such as performance management, leadership and management development, attraction and retention, employee learning and development and culture, all of which are supported by the HR Strategy for the HR Community.

The critical next step in the process is the implementation of the Talent Management Plan for the HR Community. Individually, members of the community and their managers should work together to move forward individual career development plans.

The HR Community must work together to promote a talent management mindset, commit to supporting development as a professional group, and integrate talent management into the daily fabric of doing business.