

EFFECTIVE TALENT AND SUCCESSION MANAGEMENT

A FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT YOUR OWN APPROACH

5 key aspects of designing your approach to talent and succession management

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PURPOSE

What does the business need talent and succession management to achieve?
What specific outcomes are you aiming for?
How will progress be measured?

POPULATIONS

Do some aspects of talent and succession management apply to the whole workforce?
For which specific groups of jobs do you need to identify talent pipelines/successors?
If you want to talk about people as 'high potential' or 'talent', what will this mean?

PRINCIPLES

Do you have general principles you will apply? For example, objectivity, or equality of opportunity.

PROCESSES

How and by what criteria will potential/successors be identified, and by whom?
What career and skill development will be delivered, to whom and over what timeframes?
How will talent interventions relate to general performance management, development, and job filling processes?

PLAYERS

How will top teams agree and lead your approach?
What are you asking line managers to do?
What do individual employees need to do?
How will HR support talent and succession management locally as well as centrally?

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10 practical tips for talent and succession management

INVOLVE SENIOR MANAGERS FROM THE START – IT'S THEIR PROCESS

Get them to discuss and agree purposes, populations and principles. Involve managers in process design too – will it work for them?

FOCUS ON EASILY DEFINED GROUPS OF JOBS OR GROUPS OF PEOPLE

Concentrate effort where growing internal talent will improve resourcing. This can be a mix of broad levels, functional groups and/or 'critical' posts.

PILOT YOUR APPROACH

Start small and then widen scope if necessary. For example, begin with one or two functions, divisions, regions or levels. Small firms can easily cover all their staff and jobs in one go.

DESIGN IN INFORMATION FLOWS

Talent and succession management must link with business and workforce planning. It often uses information from appraisal or assessment. It feeds into both job filling and development.

CLARIFY WHAT YOU MEAN BY 'POTENTIAL'

Make it as clear and simple as possible for managers. Explain what they should look for in how people are doing their work now. Alert managers to changing skill needs.

COLLECTIVE MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

Use simple talent or succession reviews. These help managers discuss and agree identification and development plans.

COMMUNICATE WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS

Explain talent and succession management strategy and process to everyone in simple terms. What does this mean for them? Who can the employee talk to about their own career?

TAILORED CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Facilitating job moves and work experiences is often the most important aspect. You are helping individuals develop into credible candidates for future roles.

A SERIOUS ROLE FOR HR LEADERS

Succession planning requires active facilitation and championing by senior HR people. They need high credibility and to be 'hands-on'.

HANG IN THERE

Evaluate and modify your approach. But keep going for at least five years to show real returns.

This research is published in full as: Hirsh W (2015) Effective talent and succession management: A framework for thinking about your own approach. HR Essentials 1, Institute for Employment Studies.

Visit www.employment-studies.co.uk/hre1 to read the two-page paper.

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