



What is Success Management: A Review of Literature

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Abstract

Most of the projects we hear of in media are either over budget, late or are simply not good enough and still different lobbies of people claim that those projects have been successful. Neither the practitioners nor the academicians seem to agree on what constitutes project success. It seems to be a rather elusive concept. This paper attempts to put forth the points of views of different researchers in this field.

Keywords: Project Success, success Manager

INTRODUCTION

Succession Management is not replacement management. Succession Management is making provisions for the development, replacement and strategic application of key people over time, and requires the identification of the organization's values, mission, and strategic plans. It is a proactive approach that ensures continuing leadership by cultivating talent from within the organization through planned development activities. Succession planning is a process for identifying and developing internal people with the potential to fill key leadership positions in the company. Succession planning increases the availability of experienced and capable employees that are prepared to assume these roles as they become available. Taken narrowly, "replacement planning" for key roles is the heart of succession planning. Effective succession or talent-pool management concerns itself with building a series of feeder groups up and down the entire leadership pipeline or progression. In contrast, replacement planning is focused narrowly on identifying specific back-up candidates for given senior management positions. For the most part position-driven replacement planning (often referred to as the "truck scenario") is a forecast, which research indicates does not have substantial impact on outcomes. Fundamental to the succession-

management process is an underlying philosophy that argues that top talent in the corporation must be managed for the greater good of the enterprise. Merck and other companies argue that a "talent mindset" must be part of the leadership culture for these practices to be effective.

Success factors:

What happens when a key executive or top performer suddenly leaves? Do you have a replacement ready? Or will key initiatives, deals, and processes be disrupted until you can find one?

To retain critical employees and avert a crisis when one departs, you need proactive succession management. Download this information-packed white paper and discover:

- Why succession planning needs to be integrated into your talent strategy
- Ways that "talent pooling" can dramatically reduce your risk
- The gaps in skills and talent you need to fill now
- The critical role of employee career development
- How predictive modeling and performance calibration can prevent crises.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

In the corporate world it is important that the succession plan receives visible support from the CEO and top management (Eastman, 1995). Visible support and commitment of the CEO and top management are cited as cardinal elements of succession planning and some experts have suggested that without support and involvement from the top of the organization, even “the best succession plans are doomed for failure. The same would be true for higher education as not only the senior executives but all prospective members of the inimitable search committees would need to be visibly supportive of the process (Rosse & Levin, 2003).

Based on their experience with succession plans in a variety of organizations, Mahler and Drotter (Mahler & Drotter, 1986) concluded that a major requirement of succession planning is top-management action; Top management must make a commitment to and actively participate in the succession planning process. Similarly, NAPA (National Academy of Public Administration, 1992) conducted a comprehensive study of succession-planning practices in both the private and public sector and concluded that top-leadership involvement and commitment is a common characteristic of successful succession plans.

In the corporate setting, as will no doubt be the case in higher education, the succession plan needs to be simple and tailored to unique organizational needs. The succession plan should be kept as simple as possible and easy to operate. The succession planning system should have a mission statement which describes the purpose of the system, who it will serve, and the desired outcomes.

Succession planning requirements will not be the same across organizations, and organizational characteristics, such as structure, size, wealth, growth rate, maturity, and management values are all factors that must be taken into account when designing a plan Executive Knowledge works, 1988; National Academy of Public Administration, 1992.

For example, size and wealth will be related to resources available for succession planning, and smaller, less complex companies will tend to have less formal succession plans (Rhodes & Walker, 1984) and the succession planning needs will be different for a company that is in a rapid growth mode versus one that is characterized by slow growth or decline (Eastman, 1995).

Buckner and Slavenski (1994) suggest that the corporate succession plan can only be designed after “profiling the organization” and evaluating a

number of issues. Many of these same questions are valid in higher education.

For example: Are business units centrally managed or decentralized? What are the positions needing successors?

Any succession plan must be flexible and linked with a strategic plan. The succession plan should be an evolving and iterative process that reflects any significant changes in the strategic plan. It is suggested that corporate succession planning should be “an ongoing process like the business planning itself”. Rapid organizational and environmental changes call for a flexible succession plan which is intricately linked to the strategic business plan and designed to respond to evolving organizational needs.

Moreover, both the demands of key positions and the skills and abilities required of people in these positions will fluctuate with changes going on in the industry and the succession plan must reflect such changes. Organizations should first review their business plans before discussing individuals and positions; then they should ask more specific questions such as, “What types of people will we need in the future to achieve our strategies and goals”.

In the corporate setting, the best succession plans evolve from a thorough human resources review process. In a small sample of universities recently polled for a benchmark study, periodic human resources review meetings typically provide the forum for identifying superior employees and planning for their development. Beyond factors of cost, morale, and risk in an external appointment, another reason peculiar to higher education for the nurture of internal talent is that academic change takes time and continuity of leadership to effective.

Rothwell (1994) claims that periodic review meetings are crucial for the success of a corporate succession planning program, because it helps keep the program on target and emphasizes the importance of succession planning to key executives. There is nothing culturally that would seem to prohibit such reviews in colleges and universities. To the contrary, a number of institutions of higher education already provide for them.

Large corporations, like large educational institutions, often have many separate and discrete operational units within the larger organization. To improve the quality of the review process in organizations with separate functions or business units.

Getty (1993) suggests broadening views: succession plans should be presented in a group format in which top managers present their succession plan for their individual units; this approach prevents organizations from developing a narrow view of where talent can be found and helps managers learn about talent outside of their area. In higher education, such convocations of administrators could allow for potential inter-divisional job movement for increased efficiency.

In the corporate world, the effective succession plan is based upon well developed competencies and objective assessment of candidates. The literature reviewed here and elsewhere suggests that succession planning involves clearly defining the requirements and requisite competencies for key positions and then identifying which employees could be developed to fill these positions in the future.

To ensure that this is a fair and effective process, decisions should be based on systematic analyses of:

- (1) Job requirements (both current and projected) of upper-level positions.
- (2) The current performance levels and potential of individual employees.

Effective succession planning systems are based on well defined competencies and reliable information about the current performance and potential of employees (National Academy of Public Administration, 1992). To be beneficial for higher education settings, any cultural obstacles to assembling such reliable information would need to be overcome.

Spoor (1993) recommends developing competency profiles based on an estimate of what positions in the organizations will look like in one, three, and five years. Rothwell (1994) also discusses methods for projecting requirements of future key positions, such as conducting future-oriented job analysis and determining the associated competencies required for success. Historically, this has not been an area of strength for academia, especially when it comes to identifying and developing leaders among faculty.

To limit the role of subjective assessments and anecdotal assessments, succession candidates should be identified through formal assessment methods such as performance appraisal and other sources of job-relevant information, such as psychological tests and assessment centers. Objective and job-relevant assessment data help effectively identify succession candidates, while also providing essential

information regarding the developmental needs of these candidates. Performance appraisal data, which help identify which exemplary employees, are an important source of information for succession planning.

Marches (1989) The organization's culture, life-cycle stage, technology, degree of risk associated with decision making, and the type of feedback cycle should all be considered. The assessment of executive/organization match should involve comparing each potential executive's skills and -competencies profile with the organization's requirements in terms of tasks, roles, culture, risk, feedback, and technology. These are factors that many search committees focus on instinctively but it would no doubt be beneficial to emphasize this function of search committees.

Borwick (1991, 1992) recommends that, given the growing importance of teams in organizations, succession planning should involve collecting data on teams as well as individual positions and individual candidates.

Leibman and Bruer (1994) claim that instead of identifying the right person for the right position at the right time, corporations are looking to continually develop strong leadership teams for strategic tasks". This might be a way to cushion the shock of succession implementation in higher education. Rather than selecting an individual (say a Provost) to succeed a retiring President, a pool of qualified successors (other vice-presidents, etc.) could be identified and developmental experiences could be devised to facilitate leadership growth in all of them.

The corporate literature reviewed suggests that, in addition to information on the requirements of upper-level management positions and objective assessment data on potential successors, the succession plan should incorporate information on the career needs and aspirations of individual staff members. Succession planning should be a collaborative process designed to meet the career needs of the individual as well as the organization.

Buckner and Slave ski (1994) contend that the best succession-planning system is one that meets the needs of both the organization and its staff.

However, the literature points out that the clandestine nature of succession planning in many organizations often precludes employee involvement, and succession plans emphasize organizational needs without regard to the needs and interests of individual employees. When formulating succession plans,



corporate decision-makers are reported to rarely consider a candidate's willingness or desire to assume a new position, relocate, or to engage in developmental activities.

The danger of this approach is that staff may refuse promotions or new positions that conflict with their career goals and needs. Similarly in higher education, the cultural environment of the given program, department, or school may also interfere with allowing meaningful participation in the succession plans. Research in this area would be helpful in determining the extent to which colleges and universities are their own worst succession planning enemy.

It is reported that in the corporate setting, a pitfall of many succession planning systems is that they emphasize the identification and assessment of talent, while paying less attention to development. The National Academy of Public Administration's (1992) extensive review of the succession planning literature and practices led to the conclusion that, rather than select high-potentials first and then develop them, organizations will be more successful if they develop first, then select. This is the group development concept advanced earlier for higher education. By educating all suitable deans, a prospective provost may surface.

The frequent opportunity for developing candidates to accept new job challenges is a characteristic of effective succession-planning systems.

Although executive development practices traditionally have relied on formal educational programs, there is a growing awareness that managers learn primarily from challenging job experiences such as task forces, job rotations, line switches, and turnaround or fix-it assignments. Job rotations in which high-potentials are given assignments that expose them to critical aspects of the business, are a common form of executive development that help prepare individuals for more senior positions in organization.

Succession planning requires intentional movement of individuals among assignments for developmental purposes, even when not in the best interest of short-term business necessity. Placing candidates in assignments for which they are not fully qualified—stretch assignments—creates a rich developmental opportunity; the novelty and challenges of a new job situation stretch the person beyond his or her current abilities.

Developmental assignments should be long enough to allow sufficient time for learning to occur (in corporations a duration of approximately two to three years is suggested), because too-rapid movement results in insufficient time to benefit from the developmental opportunities in a given assignment.

In industry it is important to have line managers involved in planning these moves and to get their support for moving people between organizational areas. Similarly, without the understanding and support of the staff, job rotation or cycling would have a greatly diminished opportunity for success.

Succession plans, be they corporate or higher education, should not function as an isolated system but rather as an integral component of the overall human resources plan process. Such integration will provide a necessary safety net for both the individuals involved and affected members of their work community. Organizations should review other human-resources procedures and policies to determine how the plan will work in relation to these programs

CONCLUSION:

Success manager is an important factor leading to project success. As discussed above, many leading authors agree with this point of view and are conducting research to substantiate this grounded theory. This paper has endeavored to bring out the factors associated with success manager's leadership style having profound impact on project success.

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