



Capstone Project: Succession Planning

Executive Summary

The State of Missouri faces a management crisis across departments with approximately 47% of managers eligible to retire within the next five years (2020-2024). With these staggering numbers, we need a formal succession planning process based on proven best practices to plan for the future of Missouri state government.

Succession planning is the process of identifying critical positions within each department and developing individuals that are ready to step into those positions. Succession planning ensures a pipeline of talent to deliver agency strategies and goals, and safeguards against the loss of critical institutional knowledge.

Succession planning is inconsistent across Missouri state government. In order to eliminate inconsistencies and better plan for succession, the following best practices are recommended:

- **Identify Critical Positions (Step 1)** – Employ a risk assessment approach to identify positions most in need of succession planning based on their potential to impact business operations and strategic initiatives due to retirement, promotion, or turnover.
- **Identify Critical Success Factors (Step 2)** – Determine what factors are necessary for success in critical positions. Upon completion of this step, leadership will have a clearer picture of the experiences, knowledge, core and technical competencies that will contribute to future success in the position, as well as what knowledge needs to be documented and shared by the incumbent or others in the organization.
- **Assess Leadership Potential (Step 3)** – Use an approach commonly found in succession planning, the Nine Box Grid to evaluate employees' current and prospective roles in the agency, assessing their potential and performance.
- **Develop Leaders (Step 4)** – Outline the Professional Development Plans for employees identified in Step 3 and align development plans with the critical competencies and skills identified in Step 2.
- **Measure, Monitor and Evaluate Success (Step 5)** – Monitor and evaluate the strategies implemented to address succession. It is important to regularly evaluate the succession planning process to ensure effectiveness. We recommend succession planning efforts be measured and monitored quarterly, with an annual larger scale review of progress.

There is no time to lose; almost 25% of leaders across Missouri state government are currently eligible to retire. At any given time and without notice, each of us could face replacing team members in positions that are critical to the daily operations of our organizations. Given this state of urgency, we have developed a playbook with the tools necessary to begin a formal succession planning process as early as tomorrow morning.