

**STRATEGIES, TOOLS AND PROCESSES FOR SUCCESSION
PLANNING: ANALYSIS OF THE BC MINISTRY OF FORESTS AND
RANGE SUCCESSION PLANNING INITIATIVE**

by

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Abstract

Succession Planning is fast becoming an urgent issue facing today's organizations. Looming mass retirements due to the baby boomer generation means that organizations can expect to lose knowledgeable and experienced workers and finding replacements will be difficult as mass retirements force a labour shortage. Consequently, many organizations are creating succession plans. In an investigation of the British Columbia Ministry of Forests and Range Succession Plan, internal documents and previous government surveys were analyzed, and stakeholder interviews were conducted to assess the Ministry's readiness to adapt and implement this project. This investigation concludes that the Ministry's plans are thorough, yet many opportunities for improvement exist. Additionally, this succession research provides strategies, tools, and processes for successful succession planning and discusses recommendations.

Dedication

I dedicate the following paper to my husband and my parents. To my husband, Rod Allen, for his patience, endurance, support, and encouragement throughout the past year whilst perusing my MBA - for without him, this dream may never have been realized. Also, I dedicate this paper to my parents, Bernie and Barb Chmilar, for their enduring love, wisdom, and for 'always' being there for me.

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that the aging of the Baby Boomer generation will inevitably create a mass exodus from many organizations within the next 20 years. The BC Ministry of Forests and Range (MOFR) is no exception in that nearly 50% of its critical work force is expected to retire within the next 15 years (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005a, 2005b, 2004d).

In dealing with the above issue, a Succession Planning Committee has been formed within the MOFR to present a comprehensive analysis of the organization and present some viable and forward-looking alternatives and recommendations. The Succession Planning Committee is part of the Larger Work Force Planning Group. The plan is broken into five components: full workforce gap analysis, recruitment & retention plan, knowledge management plan, competency infrastructure & succession plan.

The following chapter describes the Ministry, its current situation, and the project as negotiated between the Ministry Team and the MBA team.

1.1 Business Function

The MOFR is a Ministry within the Provincial Government of British Columbia, responsible for the stewardship of 47 million hectares of provincial forestland. Additionally, the MOFR provides fire protection for over 84 million hectares. As a point of fact, 90% of BC forestlands are publicly owned placing an intensified responsibility on the MOFR for the management of these lands.

The ministry pursues its goals for sustainable forest resources and benefits in a consultative manner with the public, industry and other Crown agencies, while recognizing the unique interests of aboriginal people. In this way, the ministry works to earn the public's trust as staff make day-to-day decisions which ensure that all British Columbians can look forward to healthy forests and a strong forest economy now and in the future. (Strategic Planning, 2005)

In total, the MOFR is made up of four divisions: Corporate Policy and Governance, Operations, Forest Stewardship and Tenure and Revenue. Within the Operations Division lies the Northern Interior region, The Southern Interior Region, The Coastal Region, BC Timber Sales and Fire Protection. These five segments contain 47 district offices/fire centers, 4 satellite offices, and 19 field team locations. The Forest Stewardship division consists of: Forest Analysis Branch, Forest Practices Branch, Forest Science Program, MOFR Library, Research Branch and Tree The Corporate Policy and Governance Division consists of: Business Improvement Branch, Business Solutions Branch, Information Management Group, Strategic Human Resources Plan, and Strategic Policy Planning. Finally, the Tenure and Revenue Division consists of Aboriginal Affairs Branch, Economic and Trade Branch, Resource Tenure and Engineering Branch and the Revenue Branch. In all, the MOFR has approximately 2,500 full-time equivalent employees (see Appendix A).

1.2 History

As is the case with many government agencies, the MOFR has been subject to shifts in roles, responsibilities and accountabilities as elected governments change. While its core areas of interest remain intact, various departments can be spun off, merged, split apart, or absorbed by other ministries depending on the new governments focus.

The MOFR has experienced many shocks with relation to its workforce. The present composition of today's workforce is a partial product of the ministry's history. In 1981, 1989, 1994, and 1998, the ministry experienced varying degrees of budget and workforce downsizing. With the arrival of the new BC Liberal Government in 2001, voluntary buyout packages followed by mandatory layoffs were methods used to bring about workforce attrition and contribute to an overall reduction in the BC Public Service.

Shifts in government policy have also resulted in the attempted centralization of a number of administrative tasks. The BC Public Service Agency was created in 2001 to handle a variety of functions for all departments, namely payroll, recruitment, and IT. As a result, these jobs within each ministry were eliminated and those occupying them transferred or laid-off. However, as with many organizational changes, the results did not meet the expectations and the MOFR has subsequently rehired many of these workers.

Other government policy changes have resulted in job function changes: Previously the Compliance and Enforcement branch focused on compliance and has since moved its focus to enforcement related to results based processes. Whereas the previous norms of compliance work included logging inspections, and industry consolidation the increased need for corporate integrity has shifted jobs to post-logging surveys.

1.3 External Pressures

In addition to the changes presented as a result of government shifts, the ministry has also experienced many other externalities. In particular, the WTO Softwood Lumber Trade Dispute with the United States has imposed massive changes throughout the forest industry. With duties exceeding 24%, lumber and pulp mills have been forced to seek new efficiencies, which have resulted in industry consolidation, new business

process practices, and workforce realignments. The introduction of 24-hour operations, combined with economies of scale as a result of numerous mergers, has greatly increased the competitiveness of the BC lumber industry. The WTO ruling against US softwood lumber duties and Byrd Amendment is currently under appeal by the United States.

Other external forces affecting the BC Forest industry are world consumption. Though world commodity prices have seen large dips in the last 20 years, rising demand for timber from East Asia has resulted in newfound energy in BC forestry related activities. Indeed, as Chinese consumption continues to grow, (it now exceeds US consumption) demand pressures will continue to mount for BC lumber products.

The weather in BC has posed additional pressures on the. Over the past two years, BC has experienced unusually warm and dry seasons, most likely has a result of El Nino systems operating within the Pacific Ocean. Warm, low precipitation winters are followed by hot and dry summers, thereby drying out forests and dangerously increasing the risk of containable forest fires. Fire bans, controlled burns, and increased prevention measures have been put in place, but record numbers and sizes of wildfires in BC has presented challenges to the MOFR.

However, the most pressing crisis facing the MOFR is the Mountain Pine Beetle epidemic. The mountain pine beetle burrows into the bark of trees prized for lumber exports, killing them and increasing the risk of losing wood to rot or wildfires. Appearing roughly three years ago, the mountain pine beetle has run through warm winters to consume large tracts of forest in BC's interior. The current spread of the insect now sits at an area in BC equivalent to the size of New Brunswick. Unions

At present, the MOFR currently engages with two major unions: the BC Government Employees Union (BCGEU) and the Professional Employees Association

(PEA). Collective bargaining with these groups over the years has produced agreements which place an increased value on the protection of employee's jobs that have the most seniority. Unfortunately, during the latest downsizing, the result of this seniority policy was the layoff of younger workers with shorter tenure. The collective agreements have also created competitive wage levels suitable to maintain high degrees of employee retention, quality of work life, and job flexibility. However, generous pension benefits coupled with early retirement stipulations have presented a new problem to the, mass work force exodus.

At this point, our interviews with the project managers have informed us that the unions are aware of the Workforce and Succession Plans, but are not directly involved with the process.

1.3.1 Canadian Demographics

One of the 'hot issues' of today, Canadian demographics, has become an important concern for business and industry throughout North America. The largest generation of the aging Canadian population, the Baby Boomers (aged 40 – 59), has sparked new long-term planning projects in workforce succession and training. Though Canada's second largest generation, Generation Y (aged 24 and younger) is now entering university, it remains to be seen (from a knowledge management perspective) if enough talent can be trained in time to meet the demands for replacements of a generation of professional and managerial employees retiring en masse.

Workforce pension and retirement provisions, as mentioned before, will present a serious challenge to the. Currently, employees are eligible to retire when the sum of their age and their years of BC public service equals 85. In addition, the size of the pension

benefits paid out is also determined by the highest five income-earning years. Finally, the mandatory retirement age for the government is age 65.

1.4 Project Objective

The objective of our project team was to conduct a change audit concerning the BC Ministry of Forests succession planning change project. We examined the work completed to date, analyzed the MOFR's plans using an 8-step process. Based on this analysis, our team provides a set of recommendations to assist the project team in ensuring successful implementation.

Within this analysis, Sheila, John & Rachel dove deeper into the '20-60-20 Stakeholder Commitment' portion of the analysis by interviewing key stakeholders, who are directly affected by the change project. Using the information gathered from the interviews, the SFU team identified stakeholders' issues and concerns allowing the MOFR to develop strategies to address those issues. As the MOFR expressed a particular interest in the risks of the project, both internal and external to the organization, the stakeholder analysis also identifies key areas of risk posed by various stakeholders. An additional component of our risk analysis will be provided with a project Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis.

In addition to the 8-step analysis, the Succession Planning Committee received insights inspired by the MBA team's individual research - specifically in the areas of visioning, mentoring, training and development, and succession planning tools, processes, and strategies

1.5 Purpose

The aging of the Baby Boomer generation will inevitably create a mass exodus from many organizations within the next 20 years (www.statscan.ca). In dealing with this mass work force exit, a Work Force Planning Group has been formed within the MOFR to present a comprehensive analysis of the organization and present some viable and forward-looking alternatives and recommendations. The plan is broken into five components: full workforce gap analysis, recruitment & retention plan, knowledge management plan, competency infrastructure, and succession plan (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2003).

Leslie Bush (Project Team Lead) expressed that the succession planning component of the project is seen as the foundation for the initiative. In other words, the succession planning component is fundamental to the success of the entire project. Therefore, the succession planning group is looking to minimize risks in order to increase stakeholder buy-ins, reduce project time lags, and save money associated with the reduction of these factors.

1.6 Scope

The scope of this project is to examine the BC Ministry of Forest's Succession Planning Project across three years. As of today, the MOFR is roughly one year into their project, which provided the MBA team an opportunity to examine past efforts, current status, and future plans.

1.7 Deliverables

Rachel, John, and Sheila provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Strategic Human Resource Group, consisting of approximately 16 members in late July 2005. The presentation included a summary of the change audit including a detailed look at the 20-60-20 Stakeholder Commitment and Communications component of the analysis, and the risk assessment of the change project. In addition, each member of the SFU team provided his or her focused research analyses on the above sections. Finally, the SFU team provided recommendations to the Strategic Human Resource Group from a project consultant's perspective and answered questions.

1.8 Key Stakeholders

The key stakeholders of the project whose interests will be given consideration throughout the project include Unions, the succession planning group, employees, the public, private forest companies and the BC government. SFU team interviewed 4 Union officials, 4 Educational institutes who provide Forestry related programs, 11 employees from varying sectors and departments, 2 independent consultants, 6 forestry students, an executive member, and 4 members from the succession planning team. In total, the SFU team will interview 30 key stakeholders. Key stakeholders were mutually identified and selected by the SFU MBA Team and the MOFR Project Team Leads – Leslie Bush, and Sandra Letts.

1.9 Budget Resources

The project required the SFU team to conduct several in person & phone interviews. The cost of these phone calls was the responsibility of the MOFR. All costs associated with travel to conduct one-on-one interviews will be covered by the MOFR.

The SFU students prepared the necessary materials for the presentation, however all room fees, photocopies, use of projection equipment and other associated costs were the responsibility of the MOFR.

Special Client Deliverables:

1. In order to complete the project on time, timely response by telephone and email was essential.
2. Email of all updated succession planning information and or Copies of all information were given to the MOFR Succession Planning Committee during meetings.
3. Client was to have made initial phone calls with interviewees to set up & pre-approve interviews. (Once done, SFU students will set up interview appointments).
4. Access to MOFR's website.

1.10 Potential Issues and Constraints

Potential risks associated with this project include time lags, heavy student course load, unforeseen expenses, unforeseen illness, unavailable research information and possible external constraints. As the project deadline was Aug 2nd for Rachel, John and Sheila to graduate, to minimize time lags, constant communication and a drive toward meeting time commitments was essential. In addition, open and honest communication was encouraged throughout the duration of the project to ensure all issues and constraints are discussed as they arise.

Another possible constraint included competing commitments, lack of stakeholder availability, and thus failure to collect all data.

A final project constraint is the inability to administer a survey. Leslie and Sandra have expressed a preference that a survey not be issued, as the Ministry is planning to administer their own survey in the near future. Thus, interviewing was the main form of primary data collection, and thus will serve to better identify areas of concern providing a foundation for future survey questions.

1.11 Completion Criteria

The MBA Project Criteria includes four sections:

1. A description of the contract
2. A feedback report and analysis given to client
3. A chapter including individual research as it relates to the project
4. A reflection of what the students learned about the field project

The next chapter will summarize the feedback presentation made to MOFR. Chapter 3 will review the literature and compare the MOFR succession planning to that of succession planning research whereby fleshing out linkages and opportunities for improvement. This paper will provide succession planning background information, strategies, tactics, steps, and mistakes most often made. The final chapter will review personal insights into field research and consulting processes learned during this project.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE BC MINISTRY OF FORESTS AND RANGE'S SUCCESSION PLANNING INITIATIVE

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the data collected and analyzed during the MOFR Succession Planning Change Audit. The MBA team examined the MOFR's Succession Planning Project, which is a part of the larger Work Force Planning Group (Appendix B). Overall, the Succession Planning Project is scheduled to span across three years. As of today, they are roughly one year into their project, which provided the MBA team with opportunities to examine past efforts, current status, and future plans.

The purpose of data analysis is to assess the MOFR's readiness to implement their succession planning initiative. To measure their preparedness, our MBA team compared the MOFR's current plans, past surveys, and future plans against eight change initiative markers as modified from the 'inspire action' method taught to us by Nancy MacKay in BUS 901 class (2004). The eight markers used in this analysis are strategic alignment, project structure, change leadership, communication strategy, stakeholder analysis, risk assessment – stakeholder interviews, resilient teams, and aligned performance. Throughout the chapter the Ministry's plans are analysis against the markers and where there are shortcomings in the ministry's plans, recommendations are made. Finally, the chapter concludes with additional recommendations and insights.

2.2 Project Approach and Methodology

Our first task was to reach an agreement on the project charter and to receive final approval from the Succession Planning Committee (Leslie Bush and Sandra Letts, Project Team Leaders, 2005). Thereafter, we partook in several phone meetings with Leslie Bush and Sandra Letts between May 15th and July 30th.

Our next step involved the receipt of e-mail documentation of the succession planning done by the MOFR to date including data from past surveys. Next, our group conducted 30 interviews with various stakeholders. During our interviews, standardized questions were asked (see Appendix C) in order to compare the data.

Finally, we conducted an in-depth analysis of the Ministry's change efforts and the interview data using the eight change markers as described above. From these analyses, we were able to gauge the past successes and/or failures of their efforts, and provide a series of alternatives and recommendations to ensure risk minimization and improve their opportunity for success.

In addition to the Change Audit, our MBA team prepared individual research papers which link empirical research to the methodologies provided by the MOFR. This research was also used to add to the recommendations made by the MBA team. The outcome was a final PowerPoint presentation made to the Strategic Human Resource Group, July 13th, 2005.

The following section contains an analysis of the MOFR, a discussion of our findings and recommendations. References and appendices can be found at the end of this document.

2.3 Analysis

2.3.1 Strategic Alignment

In the business community, choosing a strategy involves choosing a position in the market place – deciding on a unique mix of value. Examples of strategy in the competitive market place are low cost / low price and high cost/ high price. These strategic positions are based on customer needs, accessibility or the variety of goods and services provided by the company (Porter, 1996). Porter goes on to advise that strategic positions should be based on long-term planning, not just short-term one-offs.

This section will outline the MOFR's organizational strategy, the succession planning strategy, challenges identified from the Auditor Generals survey as they relate to the succession strategy, and the importance of visioning whilst communicating the succession strategy.

2.3.1.1 MOFR Organizational Strategy

Succession planning research shows that there should be alignment between the Human Resource Strategy, the Corporate Strategy, and the overall company mission, vision, values and goals. To this point, the MOFR does a great job of defining these parameters (see Appendix D). Thus the MOFR is clear on what it does, how it should do what it needs to, and where it is going. This creates an effective foundation for the organization to operate towards common objectives and perform work according to four common values: integrity, accountability, innovation, and respect.

The critical challenge here is to communicate these foundation statements to a large and diverse organization, and attempt to mould the culture of the organization according to its new foundation. Unfortunately, as will be discussed in section 2.3.1.3 of

this document, an analysis of past surveys conducted by the Auditor General in 2001 and 2004 show the MOFR still has some challenges in this area (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2003b)

2.3.1.2 Succession Planning Strategy

It is clear that the Succession Planning Committee has done an excellent job of strategizing its deliverables, budget, place of distribution, team communications and team goals (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005c).

2.3.1.3 Challenges Identified via MOFR Workforce Survey Analysis 2001 and 2004

An analysis of the Auditor General Surveys from 2001 and 2004 (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004a) display some key areas for improvement in the communication, understanding, and behavioural adherence to the organizations foundation statements. Examples of concerning findings from this survey are listed below:

- In each of the three questions relating to mission vision and values, about 1/3 showed a high understanding and ¼ of the work force have no clear understanding of these organizational foundation statement. It is concerning that 2/3 of the work force have little or no clear understanding of the organizations foundation statements.
- Two-thirds of employees have a clear understanding of their departments' goals which we believe is positively significant.
- Two-thirds of employees have a clear understanding of how their work contributes to departmental goals which believe is positively significant.
- However, negative shifts from 2001 to 2004 have occurred in both the employee understanding of the ministry's overarching foundations as well as the employee's individual department's goals. Between 2001 and 2004 there was at 7% decrease and an 8% decrease respectively. Notably, this may be due to industry restructuring of roles, jobs, and lines of authority.
- In 2001, only 22% of employees in the MOFR strongly agree that executives provide a clear direction for the future. This of course could have serious implications for the succession planning initiative. To follow,

employees must know where they are being lead. It is encouraging to note, however, that from 2001 to 2004, a statistically significant increase of 7.5% of employees strongly agreed that management is now providing clear direction for the future.

- Only 22% of employees strongly agree that they receive recognition for high-quality customer service (this point has implications for the aligning performance component of the project as will be discussed later in this paper).

2.3.1.4 The Importance of Visioning in Communicating the Succession Strategy

The final component of strategic alignment as it relates to succession planning is creating a compelling vision which is owned by organizational leaders.

Vision is the ideal goal that the organization wants to achieve in the long-term. During our May 13th meeting, Leslie indicated that the MOFR Succession Planning Vision was the same as the MOFR Work Force Planning Vision: *Have the right people in the right place at the right time and fill critical positions quickly and efficiently from a pool of qualified candidates* (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004c). In other words, it would be ideal for the Succession Planning Committee to align systems and resources to ensure that once a critical position becomes vacant that an appropriate candidate with the correct skills can be chosen from a pool of qualified candidates. Currently there is some concern regarding pool vs. individual vs. role-based succession planning (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005c). Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the vision before moving forward. The important factor here is to create 'passion' behind this vision in order to warrant it 'compelling'.

2.3.2 Project Structure

The second task in our analysis was to examine the MOFR's succession planning project structure. The following assessment of Ministry's project structure will outline two key factors. The first factor is whether the Succession Planning Committee

has defined a clear business case including success measures which can be owned by organizational leaders, and the second is identification of the succession team member's roles and responsibilities.

2.3.2.1 Business Case and Project Success Measures

The MOFR's Succession Planning Project has incorporated many of the elements associated with a successful project structure through the application of project management software and by defining a clear business case (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005g). However, one of the team's shortcomings to this point is the lack of project success measures.

Currently, the Succession Planning Committee is using project management software in the Succession Planning Project. During their June 16 meeting, the succession planning team used computerized project system to identify a completed task list and action plan, distributed tasks among members, and to set timelines (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005g). The Succession Team has also developed a clear business case to guide the project (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005a). Based on discussions with Leslie and Sandra of the Strategic HR committee, it was determined that a case has been defined which centers on two main business objectives. One of the main objectives of the project is to improve the quality and quantity of the Ministry's human resource assets, through the retention, recruitment and development of qualified employees (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004d). The other objective is to minimize costs associated with employee retirement and succession (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004d). This includes minimizing hiring and replacement costs, as well as time lags associated with finding a replacement for retired employees.

However, one key element of a successful project structure that is missing from the Succession Project is the integration of success measures. Such measures are needed to gauge project progress and success, and as such could provide team satisfaction and inspire team motivation. For this purpose, it is recommended that the MOFR integrate project success measures such as turnover and absenteeism rates, time taken to fill critical positions etc. Currently the Ministry does track turnover and absenteeism rates, so it may be possible to use these in conjunction with the project. Of course, some control for other factors influencing these rates would have to be established in order to track the effect of the Succession Planning Project. For example, leadership competencies could be diagnostically tested which may be a useful indicator of a person's leadership style and personality. These might include such tests as Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or the "Big Five." These tests may be used for an individual under consideration for a leadership position, to assess areas in which they may need additional training or development, or their suitability for a position.

2.3.2.2 *Succession Team Member's Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities*

The second important factor in determining a successful project structure is the identification of team member's roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. In this case, the project team has identified team leader, member roles and responsibilities, and has assigned these roles under the consideration of member competencies and availability (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004e). However, one area of opportunity for the Project Team is to assign accountabilities to the project success measures - once these have been integrated into the project.

A second area of opportunity for the Project Team relating to the improvement of role and responsibility allocation is to take other factors, besides competencies and

availability, into consideration. Such factors could include motivation and drive to complete the project, as well team member's intentions regarding short term vs. long-term commitment. This would ensure that the project team motivation and commitment is maintained to drive the project to achieving its goals.

A third area of opportunity for the succession planning team members rests in the area of change management competency training. It is recommended that once change management skills have been identified, group members be issued training. Essentially, a set of change competencies will need to be developed, areas of opportunity identified, and training implemented.

Finally, the assignment of accountability may be difficult as all MOFR Succession Planning Committee Members work on a voluntary basis and are not evaluated on the basis of the project outcomes. However, we suggest that once project success measures are identified it will be important to motivate team members to be accountable for these outcomes in order to ensure the projects success. One idea for this could be to link project progress and success with rewards and outcomes.

2.3.3 Change Leadership

Change leadership refers to those who are responsible for the success of the Succession Planning Project within the organization. Important elements in this section include the identification of change leadership to ensure project sustainability and the identification of these leaders' roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.

2.3.3.1 Identification of Change Leaders

Change leadership refers to the definition of a leadership structure in which accountability for pushing the project toward completion, achieving set goals and obtaining resources from the executive level is achieved. Essentially, it is important to

identify who reports to whom, and more importantly, to ensure that the change leaders are the right 'people' for the job - i.e. that they are given the skills to succeed. To its credit, the MOFR has done an excellent job of identifying the change agents and reporting structures (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005h). The Succession Planning Project has identified team leaders who are responsible for the overall success of the project and all Team Members have been chosen for their extensive government and Forestry experience and leadership capabilities. One area of opportunity, which can be identified here, is a need for specialized training in change management for change leaders. This is a component which the MOFR has recently begun implementing. An additional area of opportunity would be to identify the change leader's level of commitment and future career/personal plans to ensure retention and group continuity.

2.3.3.2 *Change Leaders' Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities*

Once the change leaders have been identified, clear lines of responsibility and accountability have been set, the next important component of change leadership is with regard to team leader competencies. With regard to competencies, the team leads are both from the strategic HR team within the ministry and do possess relevant skills required to move the project forward. However, through our stakeholder interview process, our MBA team has identified a few areas of opportunity for the team leaders in the area of change management training (details of these interviews will be discussed in a later section of this paper). Such training may include employing effective communications, identifying and reducing resistance, and facilitating meetings are all essential skills.

2.3.4 Communication Strategies

Developing a clear communications strategy is essential to the success of any change initiative. Currently, the succession team has an excellent internal communication strategy. However, phone meetings with Leslie Bush and Sandra Letts (June 2005), stakeholder interviews (refer to section 2.3.6), analyses of the Public Service Survey, and the Auditor General's 2001 and 2004 Workforce Environment Surveys have revealed some shortfalls in the Succession Planning Committee's external communication strategy (Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004a, 2004g).

2.3.4.1 Team Communication Strategy

As stated previously, internally, (among the succession planning committee members) the Succession Planning Committee has done a good job of establishing a communication strategy (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005h)

2.3.4.2 Employee Communication Strategy

Although the Ministry has an excellent Succession Planning Committee communication strategy, we have not been made aware of a clear communications strategy concerning passing succession planning information on to the general work force. So far, the succession team has been updating the work force by making information available on the internal website, and via e-mails; however, our interview revealed that this is very ineffective as most employees are bombarded with information overload and have little time to peruse the internal website.

Further, upon assessment of the MOFR internal survey documentation (BC Ministry of Forests and Range 2004a, 2004g) it was revealed that employees largely had no clear understanding of their ministry's Human Resources plan, and further it was indicated that employees do not feel the ministry is making changes necessary to be

successful in the future. This goes straight to the heart of the success of the succession planning initiative. In other words, employees not fully aware of the magnitude of the MOFR Succession Planning Project and may be unaware of its purpose i.e. to ensure the success of the MOFR in the future

Other suggestions regarding implementation of a communication strategy could include communication of the vision via videotape, personal meetings with management to ensure a clear message is communicated, and the use of informal networks as discussed later in this chapter. In addition, a printed monthly succession newsletter distributed to all branches.

Finally, an important factor in the commitment to any change initiative is the effectiveness and range of its communication strategy. Open, honest, and constant communication are required at every stage of the change process, from identification of a need, to conception of a change project, right through to the back-end support after a change initiative is completed. People left out of the loop can become problematic opponents to a change initiative thus never fully committing to the transition.

2.3.5 20-60-20 Rule

The 20-60-20 rule of change management states that in the beginning of any change initiative twenty percent of workers will be in favour of the change, sixty percent of workers will be unsure as to whether they are in favour or opposed to the change, and the remaining twenty percent will be adamantly opposed to the change (MacKay, 2005). The premise is that the majority of change leaders time and dollars should be spent swaying the sixty percent of undecided employees to 'buy-in' to the change initiative.

Utilizing this perspective, our MBA team reviewed information from the Auditor Generals Survey (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004a). This survey provides a

variety of insights regarding 20-60-20 projections within the ministry. Further, primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholder groups relating the Succession Planning Project will be discussed.

2.3.5.1 MOFR 20-60-20 Projections

Our analysis of an internal survey performed by the Auditor General in 2001 of the MOFR workforce showed that most employees believe this organization does not adapt well to change, and many employees are confused about the MOFR's mission and values (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004a). These beliefs are indicative that employees need to be managed properly with effective involvement and communication strategies to change these outlooks and elicit their commitment to the success of this project.

Based on our discussions with Leslie Bush of the Strategic HR group, we believe that the 20% of stakeholders who are fully committed at this time are primarily management and executive employees who have received key information and are currently aware of the severity of the MOFR's looming staffing crisis. As the undecided 60% of a change initiative's stakeholders have the potential to either cooperate or not, this group should be the focus of change leaders' efforts to achieve buy-in. With the right communication strategy, and level of involvement, these stakeholders can be moved to support the project. Currently, this 60% is derived from those employees with some knowledge of the succession planning initiative. For the remaining 20%, these individuals typically will not buy into any change project regardless of the level of effort or resources designed to sway them over.

2.3.5.2 Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Stakeholder Groups

The MOFR Succession Planning Committee and the MBA team have identified the following Stakeholder groups: Employees, the project team, managers, potential candidates for hire, the public, unions, government, employee's family and friends, forestry companies and environmental groups. These stakeholders can be subset into primary, secondary and tertiary groups. According to Wexler (2005), Primary Stakeholders have a fiduciary relationship with the organization i.e. have a direct role in its financial performance, who can directly be affected by or can influence the project. Further, Wexler (2005) suggests that Primary Stakeholders include management, employees, and shareholders. Secondary Stakeholders are those outside of the organization who either can directly or indirectly influence, or be influenced by, the organization, such as the media, labour unions, the government, foreign governments, etc. Tertiary stakeholders are those outside of the organization that may be influenced by the organization, but have no current power to influence it. Companies usually take a stewardship relationship with these stakeholders (Wexler, 2005).

Managing these stakeholder groups properly is essential to the success of this project, especially to the groups that will be affected the most, such as the employees, managers, and MOFR clients. Forecasting possible implications of stakeholder support or opposition will prepare the managers of this change project for many contingencies, and allow for more comprehensive planning. Therefore, in Appendix E, our MBA team outlines the usage of a stakeholder map, an effective tool designed to identify the current state of a stakeholder group, map the desired state of that group, and employ strategies to bring that group to the desired state. Without effective stakeholder management in this initiative, the Succession Planning Project will simply be deemed 'another

government change program,' lose support from critical groups, or never gain support from potential allies who were improperly managed.

2.3.6 Risk Assessment - Stakeholder Interview Data and Recommendations

This section of the chapter contains a brief overview of our stakeholder interview findings as well as an explanation of key recommendations our team has made to the Ministry as a result of these findings. The proceeding information is based on the compiled stakeholder interview data as well as a Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities (SWOT) assessment that can be found in Appendix F and G respectively. This section of the analysis is divided, using the compiled data, as follows: union officials, professors at institutions offering forestry programs, students, MOFR employees, contracting companies, executive members of the succession team, and succession planning committee members. For ease of reading, the following section is numbered.

2.3.6.1 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risk from the Union Group

1. First, when asked about their knowledge of the succession planning committee, many members were aware of the project, but not its specifics. As such, some expressed an interest in being invited to join the Succession Planning Committee. Therefore, we recommend inviting unions to help create dual commitment for the project.
2. Next, our interviews revealed that some perceived the job interview process to be unfair - specifically stating that interviewers were biased toward people who were 'good at interviewing' and that those with much experience but an inability to express the specific competencies they possess, were not given opportunities. Therefore, we recommend that interviewers add an experiential component to the interviews which focuses more on the interviewees' work experiences rather than looking for 'key words' which may not encompass the candidates' experiences and other competencies associated with the work.
3. Third, many union members were aware of the mentoring program initiated by the Ministry, but were unsure of how this program was related specifically to succession planning. Further, they suggested that there were differences in how

this program was being run in various locations. Therefore, we recommend standardization of the mentoring program and the addition of specific mentoring measurements which can be directly linked to career advancement for the protégé and the mentor.

4. Fourth, by and large, the union members we interviewed believe that job interviews are not being conducted the same throughout the Ministry. For this reason, we recommend that interviewers be given standardized training to ensure consistency, and that one interview model is followed throughout the organization.
5. Finally, as the Ministry has a difficult time encouraging employees to move to expensive/remote locations, some union representatives recommend providing the following incentives: isolation pay, market adjustment pay, lateral transfers out of remote locations (as part of a succession plan) after two years, increased vacation time, medical travel allowance (to visit doctors in neighbouring towns), and flexible working hours. Further, MOFR could make moving to remote locations a mandatory part of the career process – ‘earning your boots’ so to speak as is done in the RCMP.

2.3.6.2 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risk for Educational Institutions

1. While interviewing Professors from various educational institutions offering forestry programs, we uncovered the fact that many students were unaware of the types of jobs offered by the MOFR therefore we recommend that the MOFR set up information sessions and job fairs. This would allow the ministry to provide students and instructors with information regarding the industry, the MOFR in general, how to apply for jobs at the MOFR, the benefits of working with MOFR, and possibly the MOFR’s Succession Planning Project.
2. Additionally, professors told our MBA team that many students expressed the need for cross training and skill variety. For this reason, we recommend that the MOFR provide opportunities for students to gain variety of skills by cross training in different job positions and by receiving temporary job assignments.
3. Further, many Professors perceived the MOFR to be a low paying employer relative to other organizations in the industry. For this reason, we recommend that the MOFR conduct a salary benchmarking analysis to compare its pay level compare to other companies in the industry. The results of this study could be used to change the perception of the Ministry in they eyes of both Professors and students.
4. Finally, some Professors we interviewed expressed that enrolment has been declining for the past couple of years and that this may be due to negative media coverage of the Forest industry. Therefore, media relation is important to MOFR because the public perception of MOFR influences potential entrants into this field of study and thus the industry. We suggest that MOFR inform the media of the Succession Planning Project to create excitement among the public.

2.3.6.3 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Employees' Risks

1. Our interviews with MOFR employees revealed that many employees had a low understanding of the MOFR Succession Planning Committee's project vision. Therefore, we recommend communicating the vision using a videotaped message - This video can then be issued to each division and viewed by employees and managers alike. In addition, most employees were not checking the company web site for information regarding succession planning, as such, we suggest that information be communicated from the committee to managers via e-mail and that managers meet with staff monthly to communicate this information in person.
2. Second, our interviews uncovered the fact that there was much confusion around how to get involved in the mentoring program and as to the value of the program. Therefore our group recommends standardizing the program and communicating the program and its' benefits to both the mentor and the apprentice.
3. Third, employees expressed an interest in more 'on the job' training therefore we recommend increasing the number of temporary assignments and the opportunity for lateral transfers so that employees will gain more skill variety.
4. Fourth, the management employees we interviewed expressed concern regarding wage to work load value and therefore we recommend the MOFR conduct a salary and job responsibility review as a first step toward ensuring that salaries are inline with the required job responsibilities.
5. Some managers expressed an interest in advancement but recognised that they did not have the necessary skills to move up. One possible recommendation is to have job preview interviews for critical positions. The top five interview candidates could be given temporary job assignments to increase their competency levels.

2.3.6.4 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks from Contracting Companies

1. The contractors we spoke to expressed an interest in learning more about the Ministry's Succession Planning Project and thought that there may be an opportunity to work with the Ministry to information share. We think that there is the potential to share employee resources with contractors thus forming a mutually beneficial relationship. For example, the MOFR could recommend top interview candidates who did not get hired to contractors thus saving the contractors time and money. Further, contractors may not have enough work to keep employees working full time and thus, those employees seeking full-time works could be refered to the Ministry.

2.3.6.5 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risk for Students

1. The students enrolled in Forestry or Forestry related programs we interviewed expressed concern surrounding the lack of job information they received from the Ministry. For this reason, we suggest that the Ministry offer extensive information sessions at university and college campuses informing students of how to apply

with MOFR, what the benefits of working in MOFR are, and why the MOFR is the employer of choice.

2. Next, some students felt that they did not see many job postings on campus for the Ministry relative to other organizations in the industry. For this reason, we recommend working closely with university professors and career centers by informing them about new job postings so that this information can be communicated to students.
3. Third, our interviews revealed that professors have a profound effect on students which enables them to significantly influence students' perceptions. For this reason, it is important to set up communication channels to ensure professors are receiving accurate information regarding the MOFR. Thus establishing lines of communications with professors to information share is imperative.
4. Fourth, many students claimed that most organizations list job postings in January and that the MOFR posted job offerings in the spring. As students could not wait for an unsure thing, they applied to other organizations. Therefore, the Ministry may be missing the opportunity to hire the 'best and brightest' students. For this reason, we recommend expediting the process of posting applications.
5. Fifth, our interviews revealed mixed results regarding key factors influencing their career choice (i.e. nature of work, stability, pay, location, and opportunity for advancement). For this reason, we recommend surveying students in order to flesh out what areas are the most important. In this way, the ministry can retrieve important information which can be encompassed by their recruitment strategy.

2.3.6.6 *Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks for Executive Members and Other Groups*

1. Our interviews revealed that the Executive Members were extremely knowledgeable about the succession planning program and that they had a variety of valuable insights and suggestions. Therefore, we suggest that it would be valuable for the Succession Planning Committee Members to learn from the executive's knowledge and thus it is recommended that the executive participate in all succession planning meetings.
2. Next, the executive members suggested that the Succession Planning Project include universities and students and thus supports our recommendations as above.
3. Additionally, the Executive Members cautioned that employee perceptions must be managed effectively in order to gain employee support. Further, the Executives suggested formalization of a consistent message to the staff promoting the benefits of succession planning and ensuring that this program is here to stay and not a "flavour of the day" program.
4. Further, the Executives suggest that the Succession Committee ensure a consistent message is delivered to management to ensure a unified message can be delivered to their respective staff - thus reinforcing our suggestion regarding the use of videotaped messages.

5. Lastly, the Executives cautioned that instilling the 'Road Ahead' initiative in the minds of all current and future employees is imperative and as such, it is recommended that these programs be imbedded in the organizational culture.

2.3.6.7 Key Recommendations for Succession Committee Members

1. First, our interviews revealed that some members of the succession committee were concerned about the possibility of losing enthusiasm for the project due to the disconnect they felt between meetings. Thus, we recommend addressing this concern with members to seek plausible solutions.
2. Second, committee members suggested that meetings often strayed from the agenda and that not everyone was given an opportunity to speak. For this reason, we recommend that a chairperson be elected for each meeting and that this chair be rotated. Additionally, training on conducting effective meetings would help to ensure meetings were structured, agenda items were covered, and all opinions were heard.
3. Third, some members we interviewed expressed concern regarding the lack of knowledge about how the Succession Plan fit in with the other Road Ahead initiatives. For this reason, we recommend that other Work Force Project Committee Members become involved in succession meetings and vice-versa.
4. Fourth, the committee members did approve of inviting a union member to join the succession committee, but cautioned that this member must be open minded and willing to become a 'part of the team'. Therefore, we recommend incorporating a union member into the team and as such assigning them tasks and duties.
5. Fifth, most committee members felt that they did not have enough strategic HR information or training and as such the HR members of the team seemed to have an unfair advantage. For this reason, we recommend training Succession Planning Committee Members in the following areas: Strategic HR, succession planning processes, and possibly group dynamics.

2.3.7 Building Resilient Teams

The next component of the change audit model is building resilient teams.

Building resilient teams is an important factor which contributes directly to the success of any change initiative. Building resilient teams contributes to increased commitment, decreased conflict, increased creativity, trust and performance. Currently the MOFR is not using any team building methodologies that we are aware of (BC Ministry of Forests and Range 2005d, 2005e, 2005f, 2004f, 2004h, 2004i, 2003a). Suggested ways in which to build commitment among the Succession Planning Committee include using the team

coaching approach, understanding change dynamics, teaching methods of clear communications, and training on group development and team methodologies.

2.3.7.1 Team Coaching Approach

One way in which resilient teams can be built is via the use of the team coaching approach. Essentially, the team coaching approach identifies what parties will be impacted by the change and identifies how prepared these members are to make a change. It is unclear given the documents provided whether coaching skills have been developed among the succession team members. Although stakeholders have been identified, impact and unintended consequences which may arise from the succession planning process have not been explored.

2.3.7.2 Dynamics of Change

Another component of building resilient teams is to build team dynamics. Conner (1992) suggests that change leaders should constantly look for better ways to help employees handle change. By teaching Succession Planning Committee Members the dynamics of change and the processes for managing change, they will be better prepared to cope and moreover promote the change initiative.

2.3.7.3 Clear Communications

Understanding how to build clear communications is an important factor in building resilient teams as clear communications, build team trust and foster creativity can lead to increased team performance. Thus, we recommend communication training for MOFR Succession Planning Committee; As such, the following section will suggest theories of group development that the MOFR may wish to consider.

2.3.7.4 Group Development Theory

As stated, our MBA team suggests that the Succession Planning Committee could benefit from learning various group development theories. First Lacoursiere's 5-phase model could be used to further understand the group's development. The phases are: Orientation, Dissatisfaction, Resolution, Production, Termination (Lacoursiere, 1980). It is important to emphasize group development at each phase in order to ensure high group productivity. Recognizing Lacoursiere's model would allow team leaders to understand why the phases occur, and how to better develop the group and move on to the next phase.

Additionally, we recommend that the MOFR's Succession Planning Committee Members learn about the Gibb's 'TORI Theory of Trust' in which Gibb hypothesised that fear is a crippling force which prevents growth, creativity, effectiveness, and productivity (1978). Gibb believes that only when group members are able to exhibit trust, openness, and interdependence, can the group truly develop and become productive (1978). If the leader of the group is able to pay attention and anticipate situations which may arise during each phase of development, he/she will be better prepared to lead the group through the developmental phases.

2.3.8 Aligned Performance

The final component of our analysis is that of aligned performance. A critical component to any change initiative is ensuring that all goals are aligned to the overarching organizational performance management strategy. In this case, the Succession Planning Committee must align its' goals with the goals of the Ministry and as such these goals must be tied to the organizations reward systems. Creating this link will enforce the necessary behaviours required for the success of the new system. They

key component of aligning the performance management system to the Succession Planning Project is to establish project success measures to evaluate progress, to provide feedback to team members as to their performance and, to align rewards to the achievement of project goals.

To this point, the MOFR Succession Planning Committee has done an excellent job of assigning goals to its members; however, there is a shortcoming in the area of lining these goals up with reward systems (BC Ministry of Forests and Range 2004c, 2005c, 2005g, 2005h). Further, in the creation of the succession system, aligning its mentoring programs, training and development programs and other initiatives to promotion and advancement opportunities will be critical to the projects success. To measure the team's effectiveness, it is suggested that responsibility for success measures be allocated and monitored, feedback be given to change leaders and managers with responsibilities around succession planning, and rewards are linked to achieving project goals.

Finally, performance management must align rewards with success of the project goals. It is recommended that the Succession Team Leaders find the resources and the right way to reward team members for their role in the project's success. This could include a celebration party or dinner gift certificates for those involved, and/or a personal letter from the executive sponsor of the project thanking them for their efforts. Whatever the reward chosen, it must be ensured that the rewards are valued by the team members. It would thus be recommended that the team members participate in deciding what they would like their reward to be.

2.4 Additional Recommendations

In addition to those recommendations made thought out this analysis, our MBA team offers the following additional recommendations.

2.4.1 Mentoring

Currently, the MOFR Succession Planning and Work Force Planning Groups have a formal mentoring program in place, and we recommend they continue and expand this. The Ministry currently has Mentoring available for many of their management positions, but we recommend that they expand this to non-management positions - This is something the ministry is currently making efforts to do. The Ministry uses mentoring primarily to assist in career advising, knowledge transfer and personal development. They are also trying to attract retired forestry employees in order to help keep their expertise in the organization.

Currently the mentoring program is voluntary, but we recommend that more emphasis be placed on mentoring, as it is so critical in retaining employees and knowledge. Specifically, we recommend that mentoring be expanded to all levels of the organization, both mentor and protégé should be offered training and both qualitative and quantitative success measures be used to measure the effectiveness of mentoring.

2.4.2 Succession Mapping

As the Ministry is not currently using succession mapping, we recommend they consider this tool. The succession map is a very useful tool used to identify those people that will be approaching retirement, and to provide evaluative criteria for those individuals potentially able to replace them (Pinfield, 1995b). As illustrated in Appendix H, a succession map is basically an overlay of an organizational chart. However, on this

map, more information is provided. For potential retirees, it highlights their expected date of retirement. To fill that vacancy when they leave, the succession map then highlights all potential candidates who could fill the vacancy. This is accomplished by providing performance evaluations, competency analyses, technical knowledge, education, training, willingness, and availability on the map to assess the 'fit' of the candidates. From here, the succession map identifies a pool of candidates with a high degree of job fit that can be placed into the recommended formal mentoring program or a job competition.

2.4.3 Stock Flow charting

Another useful tool not currently being used by the ministry is that of stock flow charting. Stock flow charting is a tool used by many organizations such as Weyerhaeuser to examine the composition, distribution, and flow of employees in, through, and out of the organization is through the use of stock flowcharts (Pinfield & Hirsh, 1998). These flowcharts are diagrammatical, but operate along two dimensions: size of job group, and salary level. Weyerhaeuser has used the flowcharts to establish the lines of movement and promotion through the organization. As an example, we provide a stock flowchart analysis developed by Ashley Bennington, an MBA student and former employee of the Canada Revenue Agency's Client Service Division at the Surrey Tax Centre (Appendix I).

As Appendix I shows, a stock flowchart uses boxes to group employees by job or pay group level. The horizontal dimension of the box indicates the current or average size of the employee group, while the vertical dimensions stretches across the salary level indicated on the y-axis. Arrows are numbered and flow in, out, or in between various boxes to show the size and flow of employees. In addition, arrows can be

subdivided according to the reasons for employee movement, such as retirement, promotion, layoff, voluntary quit, or dismissal.

The benefits of using stock flowcharts are that Human Resources planners can quickly identify where and how employees are flowing, and for what reasons. It also can show where potential problems will occur in the future if certain areas of employment are not experiencing any flows. The Succession Planning Committee may find this very useful, but its ultimate success relies on garnering data from exit interviews to determine the reasons employees are quitting or moving. Targeted strategies could then be applied by job group or region to correct the problems.

2.4.4 Communications Strategy

In our analysis of the succession planning communication strategies, some important areas of opportunities are identified. First, a top-down, proactive communication is required to properly inform all employees and stakeholders of the change initiative (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004a, 2004g). While a website would be effective in disseminating information, typically, only a small portion of the workforce will refer to it to gain the necessary information (employee interviews). Furthermore, the committee can consider getting managers 'onboard' with the project's vision first, and then get their commitment to disseminate the information to their employees to further gain their commitment to the project.

A final note regarding communications is to employ the use of informal networks such as 'trust networks,' 'knowledge networks,' and 'technical networks' (Lawrence, 2004) (see Appendix J which includes a technical networks illustration). Trust networks can be identified by surveying employees and asking them questions regarding who they obtain information from, whose opinion they trust, and whom they refer to for technical

knowledge. Using the data from the surveys, managers can map out the information about trust or knowledge network to determine where to divert their efforts in gaining commitment for a change initiative. Upon identifying an 'opinion leader,' a manager can meet with them, provide them with the information about the change, and elicit their commitment to the change. When they return to their information or trust networks, they will have the right message to pass on to their peers and will be able to gain their commitment to the project. The benefits of using these informal networks is to prevent distortion of information, allow for clearer communication, and elicit the highest level of employee and stakeholder commitment possible for this project. In addition, important data will not be lost in the process, misunderstandings and resistance can be minimized, and enthusiasm for the project will increase.

2.4.5 Stakeholder Management

As mentioned before, the use of a Stakeholder Map is important in identifying all the stakeholders involved in the change initiative. Simply listing the stakeholders is not enough: their potential impacts on the project's success or failure need to be taken into account, and strategies employed to ensure they provide the greatest benefit to the project or minimize the negative impact they could have. As illustrated in Appendix K, the stakeholder map consists of two dimensions (cooperation and threat) and maps stakeholders into four distinct areas: Supportive, Non-supportive, Marginal, and Mixed Blessing. Effectively, the map shows the current state of all the stakeholders, and additionally, the users of the map can determine where they would like the stakeholders to migrate to (i.e., cooperative and non-threatening) (Lawrence, 2004). From this, the project leaders can devise strategies to ensure the stakeholders do not become opposed to the project, but become key allies to ensure its future success.

2.4.6 Training and Development

To ensure the highest degree of success for the Succession Planning Project, it is essential that the project team itself possess the skills and competencies required to lead such a large change initiative. While we have no doubts surrounding the skills, knowledge, and experience of the people leading this change with respect to the jobs they perform now and in the past, we would recommend that a set of change competencies be assessed and developed where needed. The looming staffing crisis is a phenomenon never before experienced by employees of the MOFR. Therefore, it is essential that the project leaders of a change initiative designed to address a problem of this magnitude possess all the necessary skills and knowledge necessary to ensure its success.

It may be beneficial, then, for the project team itself to look into assessing themselves along key competency areas related to change management. For example, information collection, research methods, statistical analysis, knowledge management, project management, and group development skills are all important competencies to possess in properly managing a change initiative of this magnitude.

In an organization as diverse as the MOFR, training is essential to bring new employees up to speed, be they managers, new recruits, or candidates for promotion. The importance of training and development must be underscored because of its benefits in terms of productivity, knowledge management, safety, and client service. Government organizations are typically very good at training their employees, and the MOFR is no exception. On a cautionary note, however, if the MOFR deems it necessary to train individuals for promotions across departments, that they receive a good portion of on-the-job training to ensure a full knowledge transfer prior to an employee retiring. For example, someone being promoted from Timber Sales to Protection should receive

more on-the-job training than someone promoted internally. For this reason, it may not be economically feasible to promote individuals across departments unless absolutely necessary.

2.4.7 Performance Measures

While the Road Ahead Project has identified a performance measure of 'Production' for succession planning as replacing retirees within 6 months at a 100% success rate (phone conversations with Succession Planning Committee Team Leads) - this performance measurement can only be assessed in hindsight. To ensure a forward looking performance measure, we would suggest using a quantitative measure that can be used to assess the effectiveness of the Succession Plan Initiative and the Workforce Plan at any point in time. Specifically, the Human Resources department for any given region could run the following scenario: If every person occupying a critical position retired today, what percentage of these positions could be filled by people who are skilled and qualified enough to perform that job at the same level of effectiveness and productivity as the retiree? The answer to this scenario question could help determine where resources are needed, by department, region, or division, and assist in diverting funds in the budgeting process.

To bring to realization this performance measure, it would be beneficial to develop a concrete set of procedures designed to set the MOFR up for success to replace people. For example, one year prior to a person's retirement, the job competition process could begin, and within six months of the retirement, a candidate would be secured and could begin the mentoring process with the person about to retire. A quantitative measure to assess this procedure's performance would be to identify the time gap between the retiree's departure and the identification of his or her replacement.

With respect to the 'Quality' performance measure of the Succession Planning Project, a combination of methods will need to be employed to fill critical positions. Populating the competency system of the MOFR will be important for quick and easy job competitions. Use of our recommended succession planning map would geographically or functionally identify upcoming retirements and possible internal replacements. The Workforce Planning Group also needs to emphasize the use of accurate, detailed, and timely performance appraisals of employees that are within striking distance of the positions that could become vacant due to retirements.

2.4.8 Vacancy Chains

Another recommended tool to be used by the Succession Planning Committee is the use of Vacancy Chains (Appendix L). Vacancy Chains can be used to follow the lines of key positions. In other words, key positions will have a waterfall effect on the organisation which will require additional positions to be filled (Pinfield, 1995a). For succession planning and workforce planning, these vacancy chains determine all movements necessary within an internal labour market. If movements are not possible because of unqualified candidates or lack of availability, then the HR department will have to fill those gaps with people from the external labour market. Vacancy chains can help to increase Management's line of sight from the one position to be filled to all positions which will become vacant.

2.4.9 Pilot Project

Finally, once the people and processes have been put into place, and tools and training have been implemented, Burns & Martin (2002) suggests implementing a 'test plan' or 'pilot project'. These 'pilot projects' are very common when implementing new

systems. In essence, a Pilot project is a mini project or working model of the larger project. One benefit of a pilot project is that it encompasses all parts of a succession plan but can save costs and time by restricting implementation to just one division or unit. Using a pilot project would enable the team to identify areas of change required and opportunity prior to rolling out the full program; thus minimizing risk, decreasing expenses and saving valuable time. An additionally benefit of using a pilot project, is to show upper level managers results whereby increasing their level of buy-in for the project. This positive reinforcement can help to secure the necessary budgets required to implement the project. Additionally, results can also show employees that the succession plan works, and is a valuable assess for them thus solidifying their level of buy in.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the data collected and analyzed during the MOFR Succession Planning Change Audit. The purpose of data analysis was to assess the MOFR's readiness to implement their succession planning initiative. To measure their preparedness, our MBA team compared the MOFR's current plans, past surveys, and future plans against eight change initiative markers as modified from the 'inspire action' method taught to us by Nancy MacKay in BUS 901 class (2004). The eight markers used in this analysis were strategic alignment, project structure, change leadership, communication strategy, stakeholder analysis, risk assessment – stakeholder interviews, resilient teams, and aligned performance. Throughout the chapter, the Ministry's plans were analyzed against the eight markers and where there were shortcomings in the ministry's plans, recommendations were made. Finally, the chapter concluded with additional recommendations and insights.

3. STRATEGIES, TOOLS AND PROCESSES FOR SUCCESSION

3.1 Introduction

Succession Management is the development and retention of high potential employees whereby creating a talent pool (Taylor and McGraw, 2004) from which to fill key positional voids. In other words, identifying and developing candidates with the knowledge, skills and abilities required to fill critical positions. As described by Kesner (1989), succession planning involves aligning long-term personnel needs to qualified internal or external candidates. Moreover, some authors believe that 'who' fills these positions is equally as important to the process of succession planning as 'how' these positions are filled (Herrera, 2002).

Use of succession planning has been increasing over the past decade throughout the global economy. Companies have been striving to improve their competitive advantage by strategically aligning succession planning and management to human resource management. Recent shifts in work place demographics have highlighted the need for retention and employee development. According to Grossman 1999, as reported in Taylor and McGraw (2004), in the United States, 35-45 year olds will decrease by 15% between the years 2000 and 2015. Similarly, Taylor and McGraw cite the Australian Bureau of statistics stating that the Australian labour pool will decrease by 10.6% by over the next 5 – 10 years. Clearly, this aging workforce creates urgency for succession planning.

Canada is reporting similar trends to those listed above. The following assessment is derived from information obtained from the Statistics Canada Website July 2005. In Canada, from 2002 to 2003, the percentage of workers nearing retirement declined for the first time in over 10 years resulting in just fewer than 3 million workers nearing retirement in 2003. Factors contributing to the aging Canadian population include the baby boom generation (born 1946 to 1966), decline in fertility rate, (2000 was the lowest point ever recorded—an average of 1.49 children per mother), and longer life expectancy (just over 82 years for women and 77 years for men). Trends indicate that just over 30% of Canadians will be over the age of 55 by 2021 which is significantly more than the 20% in 2001. Consequently, as the aging population continues to increase the percentage of younger Canadians will decrease, thus contributing to a labour pool decrease. An example cited on the Statistics Canada website illustrates this point: In 1981, there were four people in their early thirties for every one person fifty-five and older and in 2000 the ratio was 3:1. Obviously, these labour trends will have a significant impact on the Canadian labour market (Statistics Canada, 2005).

Unfortunately, Succession Management is not easily done in today's competitive environment – and, for the most part, it is either not being done or not being done well (Jayne, 2003). In the past, fathers would train their sons to take over the family business, or managers would reactively promote high achieving employees or employees of preference (Herrera, 2003). Being proactive and preparing for the unexpected is the flagship of Succession Planning. Planning and managing succession will decrease the risks of, and pain associated with, key positional voids. Therein lies the purpose of this chapter -to compare the MOFR succession planning to that of succession planning research whereby fleshing out linkages and opportunities for improvement. This paper

will provide succession planning background information, strategies, tactics, steps, and mistakes most often made.

3.2 Background

3.2.1 Trends

Succession planning is becoming increasingly important in both the private and public sectors. In addition, although difficult, many public sector agencies have developed plans of continuous effort across administrations (Schall, 1997). According to Herrera (2002), in 1950 72% of the American work force worked to the age of 65; however, in 1985, only 31% worked to the mandatory retirement age. Some organizations have begun to deal with the issue of succession planning such as in the case of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), who began succession planning in the early 1990's (NAPA, 1992 as cited in Schall, 1997).

In spite of well-documented and published statistics on this 'employee shortage', a recent survey showed that 60% of organizations are not prepared to replace strategic positions in their organizations upon sudden vacancy (Herrera, 2002). In fact, it is expected that 1/3 of executive level employees will leave fortune 500 companies between 2002 and 2007 (Herrera, 2002). Herrera goes on to site that 50% of Washington government workers are 45+ years old and 33% of those employees are expected to retire as early as 2007. This is similar to Henrico County, which reported, out of its 380 full time employees, 29% of upper management was eligible to retire by 2005 and as many as 49% could retire without full benefits (Institute of Management and Administration Inc., 2003).

Unfortunately, in the case of the MOFR, succession planning began in 2001 but was 'put on the back burner' until 2004. At this time (2005), it is apparent that within the next 5 years 26% of its employees will be eligible to retire; thus creating an urgent need for succession planning and management. Additionally, The North Interior Workforce/Succession Planning Information Document (2004f) indicates the average age of a Ministry employee to be 46.2 years old. As a sample, of the 412 employees in the North Interior Forest Region, 28% are between 27 and 39 years old, 42% are between 40 and 49 years old, and 31% are over 50. When calculating total employees eligible to retire within the next 15 years (2020) out of 2490, there will be 52% eligibility.

In addition to the 'Baby Boomer' trend, in which mass exodus from the workforce and labour pools are being signalled, there lies other important factors – decreased 'job-life' and decreased 'work-life'. Decreased 'job life' refers to the time an employee will remain in one job. Kransdorff (1996) reports that, in most industrialized countries in the west, employees have an average of seven employers with a job-life of 6 years. Obviously, this is significant. One of the key implications is severe knowledge loss. In addition, this new trend imposes increased training costs - an average of 12 months per new recruit. In other words, 15% of an employees 'work life' is unproductive. This new trend suggests newly innate training costs to both public and private organizations.

Other issues incurred with the aging population include productivity, work-life balance, training, safety, and fair treatment. Moreover, this labour shortage will result in labour pool shrinkage and an increasingly competitive market for labour pools between the public and private sectors (Herrera 2003). In the past, governments jobs, although not as prestigious and with fewer benefits than the private sector, were considered stable. In light of recent government cutbacks and the increasing trend toward privatization, one could conclude that the key feature of the government as a 'safe' and

'long-term' employer is wavering. As a point in fact, the MOFR underwent major cut-backs due to a change in Government with an original reduction of 38% across the board – the bulk of these being in 2003 with smaller actions in 2002. Although some positions were held as transitional, and some functions were absorbed back into the ministry functions, the end toll was great. However, these mass layoffs exacerbated the problem of an internal aging population, as many older workers with more seniority retained their positions.

Even more shocking than the above trends, is that of organizational recognition and capabilities to deal with these trends. According to Kesner (1989), relatively few firms have established succession plans. Worldwide research shows that 75% of organizations lack confidence in their ability to fill strategic vacancies by 2008 (Jayne, 2003). Jayne goes on to report that a New Zealand survey of local organizations reported 92% perceived a need for increased leadership competencies, yet they were unaware of what these competencies were. In addition, 45% of these companies lacked internal candidates with the skills to replace identified strategic positions within the organization. In addition, NAPA research indicates that there is a lack of attention to public sector succession transitions (Schall, 1997). On the contrary, Huang (2001) reported that out of 166 Taiwanese firms surveyed, 65% had succession plans.

In conclusion, these trends suggest a need for organizations to plan for and manage succession. Herrera (2003) identifies what some government agencies are doing to improve their succession management: The treasury department enrolls its managers in executive leadership programs, the Department of Defence created an internal leadership management program and the Census Bureau works with Washington University to provide training and program certification. Whatever the action, it is clear that action is required.

3.2.2 *Reasons and Purported Benefits*

Although many organizations are now faced with labour shortage issues due to the mass retirements expected via 'Baby Boomers' exiting the work place, there are many other reasons why organizations use succession planning. Essentially, the mantra touted by many journals, is to have the right people in the right place when needed. This is similar to that used of the MOFR whose Human Resources executives use the term – the right people in the right place at the right time. As a point of interest, although Huang (2001) reported that there is a lack of empirical academic evidence to support the link between formal succession management and organizational performance, there are a number of good reasons for Succession Planning.

Some of the major reasons companies engage in succession planning include improving business results, responding to new business opportunities, increasing employee (management) diversity, anticipating changing in skills required of future leaders, (Taylor and McGraw, 2004), aligning organizational structure and processes to mission and visions, addressing imbalances in knowledge, skills and abilities of employees, providing a basis for continued management development, savings money via proactive vs. reactive placement (Herrera, 2002), and providing realistic staff projections for budgeting purposes (Pynes, 2004). To the contrary, According to Taylor and McGraw (2004), a UK study of 279 organizations reported that 90% of FT 500 companies used succession planning for retention purposes. In the case of the MOFR, it is clear that succession planning is critical to sustain an effective and functional Ministry.

3.3 Proactive Vs Reactive Succession Planning

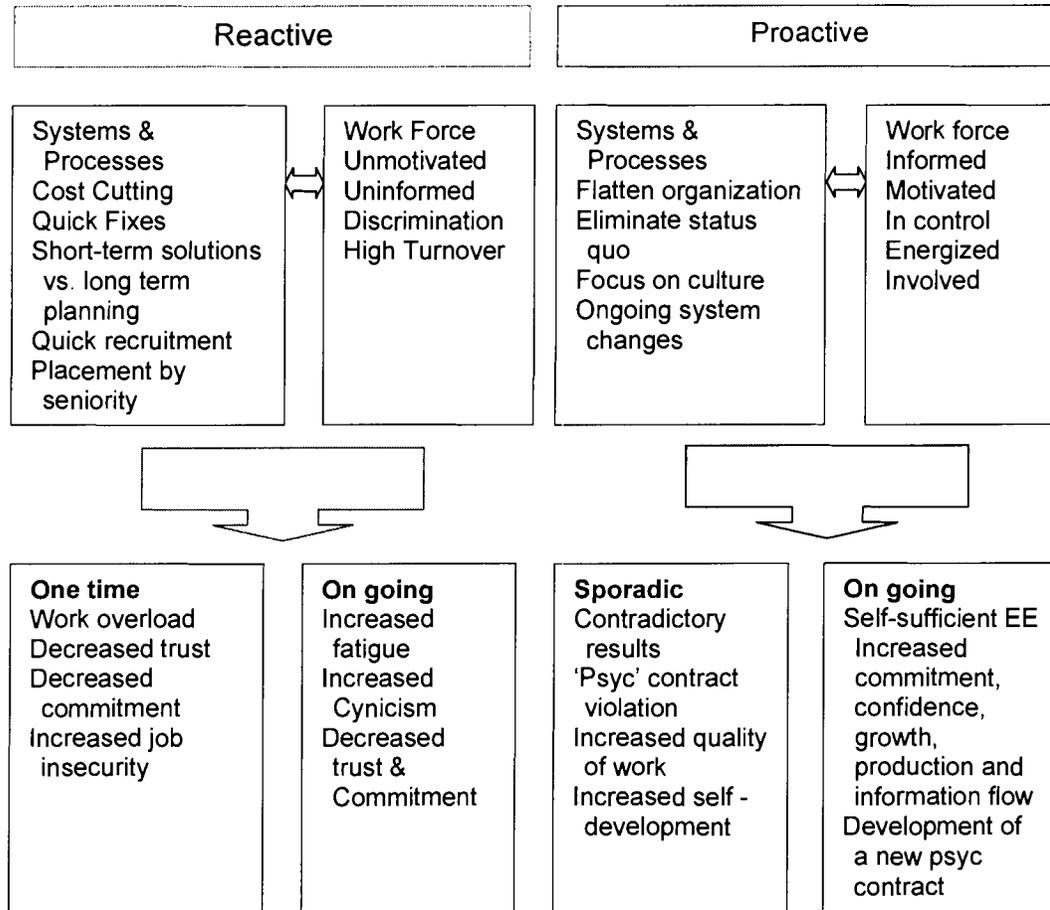
Based on the various researches, I have conducted in the areas of succession planning and downsizing, I propose a model of the differing nature and effects of reactive and proactive succession planning. My model, which is shown in Figure 1, is described as follows:

A reactive succession planning process includes cost-cutting, quick fixes, short-term solutions vs. long-term planning, quick recruitment, and placement by seniority. Proactive succession planning systems and processes focus on long-term development of the organization and as such include the flattening of organizations, elimination of the status quo, a focus on culture and ongoing systems of change. Thus I hypothesize that under reactive processes employees would be unmotivated, uninformed, discriminated against, and thus the workforce could be one of high turnover. However, in a proactive environment the workforce would be informed, motivated, in control, energized and involved. Further, if a reactive one time event, succession planning may result in work overload, decreased employee trust, decreased employee commitment and increased insecurity. Finally, if succession planning is done as an on going reactive measure the results may be increased fatigue, increased cynicism, and thus resulting in decreased employee trust and commitment to the organization. Whereas I suggest that if implemented as an ongoing strategic part of the organizations human resource plans, succession panning can be part of a new 'psychological contract' building self-sufficient employees with increased commitment, confidence, levels of production and with an increased level of information will flow through out the organization.

According to this model, I believe the evidence as depicted in chapter two shows the MOFR is taking a proactive succession planning approach. The MOFR Succession Plan is proactive in that it is slated to become an ongoing part of the Strategic Human

Resource Plan. This model has been shown for illustrative purposes as well I suggest this is an area of opportunity for future research and study. The next section of this paper will focus on research uncovering various succession planning strategies and resources which I feel are an important part of proactive succession planning.

Figure 1. Diagram of the Succession Planning Rational



Note. Figure created by the author.

3.4 Strategies and Resources for Proactive Succession Planning

As described, trends indicate that the reasons and benefits of Succession Planning, although varied, are many. Taylor and McGraw (2004) suggest that succession planning focuses on the retention and replacement of staff, whereby succession management aligns a succession plan to strategic organizational drivers. Essentially, strategy refers to skilful planning and management and may refer to 'positioning' within a

marketplace. In other words, succession management is a process, which must be, embodied throughout the organization. The prevailing question then, is what strategies are companies taking, what should they be doing, and how should resources be allocated to increase the opportunities for success. Research indicates that there are many approaches to this conundrum (Conger and Fulmer, 2002; Pynes, 2004), and some suggest that the 'fit' of the succession plan to the organization supersedes the need for complexity (Herrera, 2002). The following section describes the need for strategic alignment, a plan of action, flexible systems, partnerships, and monitoring of the plan.

3.4.1 Strategic Alignment

The first strategy lies in the concept of alignment. Essentially, there should be alignment between the Human Resource Strategy, the Corporate Strategy, and the overall company mission, vision, values and goals. Furthermore, the plan should be allocated the budget and resources it needs to succeed (Pynes, 2004). In an article written by Papiernik (2000), which interviews Wendy's executives regarding succession planning, it is stated that that maintaining continuity with the team that works on long-range planning is very important, thus, solidifying the need for strategic alignment between succession planning and organizational strategy. As indicated in the previous chapter, this is clearly an area of opportunity for the MOFR.

3.4.2 Developing an Action Plan

The second strategy of successful succession planning lies in the development of an action plan. Risher and Stopper (2001) argue that corporate strategies must drive Succession Plans. Pynes (2004) suggests that these action plans should include both

resources to be allocated as well as accountabilities assigned. In other words, an action plan will be ineffective if it is not properly budgeted for and if this budget does not allow for change. In addition, if unassigned, accountabilities will remain vague, time lines may not be met and tasks may be done poorly or left incomplete. succession management is on-going and will require flexibility, however, a clear action plan, lines of communication, time lines and accountability are essential to its' success.

As the MOFR, is still in the initial stages of planning, there is much opportunity to include the key components as stated above. To date, the ministry has defined a budget, in the Work Force Planning Group Project Charter (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004h). However, with the new Road Ahead Initiative, budget allocations are unclear and the MOFR Succession Planning Committee is in the process of submitting a budget proposal now.

3.4.3 Building Flexible Systems

Another strategy for succession planning lies in building flexible systems. Flexible systems are open to employee feedback, create a diverse pool of candidates, and allow for changes and upgrades (Conger and Fulmer, 2003). Such flexible systems may also include systems for learning and training – role-play, cases studies, special projects awarded to motivated employees. Herrera (2002) lists what some companies are doing to provide flexible systems of competency enhancement: Sun Microsystems provides coaching for VP's and directors, Ernst and Young provide training using cases studies, and Sonoco focuses on leadership (vs. management) training. Another area pertaining to flexibility is monitoring technological developments and effectiveness of current systems and tools. Technology is changing at an ever-increasing rate whereby systems put in place today may be obsolete in 3 – 5 years.

The MOFR, realizes the need for flexible systems, and is currently investigating 'best practices' among its regions and departments. Obviously, being responsive to change given the nature of its bureaucratic environment will not be easy, however, this is an idea the MOFR is open to.

3.4.4 Identify Critical Positions

The MOFR has identified a gap analysis as a separate project outside of the succession planning function. The gap analysis is part of the more diverse Work Force Planning Project. The purpose of the gap analysis is to determine the number of candidates retiring within certain regions and from specific positions. Under the umbrella of succession planning, the MOFR has labelled identification of critical positions as its number one priority.

With regard to the strategy of identifying critical positions, Conger and Fulmer (2003) suggest that organizations must have a long-term view. An organization must be prepared fill critical positions as well as identify 'key training positions'. In other words, if candidates wish to move up, funnelling through certain management or supervisory positions will provide opportunities for expanding employee competencies. Clearly, identifying key training positions is something that the MOFR could benefit from. Allowing candidates to funnel through key positions would save the MOFR money in terms of training costs and would help to increase the pool of qualified candidates.

3.4.5 Develop Partnerships

A fifth strategy for succession planning is partnership. Partnership refers to open honest feedback from employees and managers about needs and competencies required to fill positions (Pynes, 2004) as well as their opportunities for development.

Conger and Fulmer (2003) add to this idea by suggesting that employees are the best source of information about their needs, skills and experiences. Fruth (2003) suggests matching talents with interests in a way that invites employees to stretch their skills. To this point, some companies have employees update their resumes and competency profiles themselves, on line. That way, employees can take accountability for their succession planning, view posted positions they are currently qualified for, and see the competencies they would need to gain to fill positions they are not yet qualified.

As cited from the Human Resource Management Plan (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004b), the Ministry is undertaking the goal of a revitalization strategy. This initiative is called 'The Road Ahead'. The 'Road Ahead' initiative resulted out of the 2002 staff survey which indicated that there had been a significant decrease in job satisfaction. Mentioned in this report are activities that support its strategies, the first being "an all staff engagement process to dialogue on vision, mission, and values..." Another item mentioned which falls under the category of developing partnerships is development of a work group to lead employee dialogue on stewardship. However, with regard to succession planning specifically, it has yet to be determined how employees will be involved in the process of planning their futures. As indicated by our MBA interviews with MOFR employees, many would like to be involved in the process of succession and some would like to provide input into the program. For this reason, our team has suggested surveying employees to solicit further data.

3.4.6 Monitor and Upgrade the Plan

The final strategy for successful succession planning is regular program monitoring. Conger and Fulmer (2003) suggests measuring success rates of filling positions with qualified candidates, fullness of candidate pools, and internal fill rate. For

example, and internal fill rate goal may be 80% to allow for the addition of external knowledge and internal skill enhancement.

3.5 Tools

As described above, there is a need for organizations to devise strategies and tactics to deal with succession planning. In addition, it is equally important to understand how tools can be effective in the implementation of the plan. The prevailing question then, is what tools are companies using, what should they be using, and how should resources be allocated to increase the opportunities for success. The following section outlines but a few of the many succession planning tools available: story telling, mentoring, training and development, 360-degree feedback, and learning journeys.

3.5.1 Story Telling

Story telling in organizations is simply depicting experiences, in a relatable way, to convey a message. Although not often used by organizations, this can be a very effective medium of education and communication. Artificial intelligence researchers have discovered that humans do not store information such as a computer may (in topic files) but in the form of context and stories (Blunt, 2001). Essentially, humans use stories and contexts of information to link ideas and thoughts, commonly referred to as 'sense making', to create reference parables. Since leaders are grown out of experiences, challenges faced, opportunities lost, and varying job duties (to name a few), clearly story telling is an effective medium by which to relay messages from the past.

With respect to the MOFR, Story telling is not a method formally used. However, as noted from the above documentation, using story telling to convey messages from leaders in critical positions may increase incumbents understanding of responsibilities

and or effective methods of dealing with new circumstances faced. In all, the benefits include realization of a cost and time savings.

Blunt (2001) further states that most information retrieved in lists is simply discarded and therefore unused that indicates learning organizations need to be more creative. Stories are a way to create links between best and worst practices, to shape strategies, to depict culture and to promote desired actions and behaviours. Although story telling is an efficient form of communication, Kransdorff (1996) states only a handful of British companies' currently record memories and experiences as they relate to projects. However, in the United States, Allan Nivens, Professor of History at Columbia University, began story telling in the 1950's by conducting and recording interviews with 400 people for the history of Ford Motors (Kransdorff, 1996). Not only is this an effective medium by which to convey scenarios, it can be used to form market strategies, link past processes to results, build on past achievements, link events to responses to results, and in a word, save reinvention of the wheel and more applicable – protect organizations from knowledge loss.

Another way in which stories can be told is via exit interviews. Often when one thinks of exit interviews, one envisions a phone interview by which standard questions are asked to flesh out employee unhappiness within the organization. Unfortunately, more often than not, this information is never looked at, compiled or used in an effective medium. Story telling can allow those leaving the organization to convey experiences and lessons in a memorable way (Kransdorff, 1996). Blunt (2001), suggests encouraging exiting candidates to describe stories via questions such as: 1) Name a time when you worked for a great leader/a poor leader, 2) Describe the 1st time you led a team and realized how much you didn't know, 3) Describe a time when you and or a project team accomplished more that was expected, 4) Name a skill which a family member or mentor

taught you which you use to this day, 5) describe a personal crisis you have had which you have overcome, 6) Describe a time in which you were about to give up, but didn't. With regard to succession planning, questions like those listed above draw a picture of what skills exiting employees had, what they take with them, and what new candidates may require. In essence, this information can help to depict subtleties in culture and knowledge management (Kransdorff, 1996). Currently the MOFR does not conduct exit interviews, therefore, implementing exit interviews and using the above questions could serve to flesh out key information to reduce mass knowledge loss. As 50% of the work force will be retiring by 2020, the need to retain knowledge is critical.

3.5.2 *Mentor/Coach/Teacher*

Another tool, used in succession planning, is mentorship. Other roles, which mentors can play, include coach and teacher. Mentorship refers to a person acting as an advisor and or supporter of a protégé. Mentors are usually older and more experienced than the apprentice is and as such, the mentor that can offer wisdom and advice thereby fostering student success. This relationship, usually built over time, requires trust, honesty, integrity and wisdom. Retired K-Mart VP Vine reports that it is important to match people who make a connection and not within a hieratical structure (someone's boss) but within another division or area of the company (Johnson, 1992). The benefits of mentoring in this way can be to provide a non-threatening growth-inspiring environment.

According to Blunt (2001) the mentor asks what are your priorities and how can I help you? Essentially, the mentor can act as both a coach and a teacher. A coach shares experiences and encourages growth whereas a teacher shares practical wisdom. Ultimately, a mentor is someone who can lead by example – they may not have always

been successful or made the right choices, but they have learned from their mistakes and are following a path of leadership. As Fruth (2003) puts it, mentoring is an opportunity to capitalize on teaching moments and reinforce leadership activities. In the case of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections, one of the Wardens suggests adding pseudo-warden positions (warden in training), claiming that this type of hands on practice provides a useful training ground for future Wardens (Friedman, 1990).

Currently the MOFR has listed formal and informal mentoring as one of the activities to be done as part of the Road Ahead Initiative (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005). Additionally, the ministry is investigating matching processes and software available. Most recently, at the North Interior Road Ahead Workshop March 2nd, 2005, Darryl Robb offered 'best practices' from a mentoring project offered in the Coast Forest Region. Additionally, other information regarding Mentors was given. Having said this, our MBA interviews with employees and other stakeholder groups uncovered that although some employees are aware of the Mentoring program, it is inconsistent and the results are immeasurable. In other words, the program is being done in some locations but not others and is not standardised. As such, this program is not being successfully tied to succession planning and therefore runs the risk of losing momentum.

Mentoring has a multitude of advantages – one of which is the avoidance of last-minute training. Mentoring ensures that candidates are already 'up to speed' with skills and technologies required to make a transition. In addition to this, protégés can gain experiential learning by covering for mentors during vacation or leave. In a study depicted in Messmer (2002), 100% of executives polled said it was useful for managers to identify and groom successors. Moreover, Messmer (2002) suggests that when people know that their contributions matter, they are more likely to stay with organizations and show a keen interest in performance.

3.5.3 Training and Development

Jayne (2003) suggests that training for succession planning requires organizations to think about future needs, technologies, directions and interests. Developing training programs around future needs will help avoid competency lags. Further, as reported in Johnson (1992), Retired K-Mart VP Vine said that it is important to train the right people fast. In the past, it was common for people to work at K-Mart for 20-25 years to age 65 - now; most people are retiring at age 55. In light of the fact that the average age of the ministry employee is 46, there may be an increased need to introduce multi-layered training. Specifically, the younger generation entering the work force may be equipped with information requiring new technologies, which the older work force may not. Developing individual training to meet the ever-changing needs of staff will require the Ministry to be flexible.

3.5.4 360 Degree Feedback

Employee feedback is another effective tool, used in aligning successors to key positions within the organization. Specifically, 360-degree feedback can provide excellent information required to determine training needs. Basically, 360 feedback is a performance measurement tool in which information flows upward and laterally as opposed to the traditional review in which the performance assessment flows down. Many companies use 360-degree development for succession planning and performance management. This means of feedback can be more effective than the traditional manager –employee evaluation as it avoids rater error or bias (Risher and Stopper, 2001).

As determined from the 2003 Work Environment Survey (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004g), 62% of the Ministry staff said they were not given either a

performance development plan or an employee appraisal. Clearly, this is an area of opportunity for the Ministry. As mentioned, the Ministry recognizes the need for increased performance evaluation for appraisal and training purposes; thus, the focus on employee performance and development plans in the MOFR Human Resource Plan.

3.5.5 Learning Journeys

As described in Friedman (1990), the Oklahoma Department of Corrections uses a tool called learning journeys. The journey begins with a half hour meeting with the organizations' Director. Once an upper manager assumes a new position, they take part in a series of interviews and discussion groups with key people in the organization. The interviews take about two to three weeks. At this time, no other job duties are performed allowing the candidate to absorb the information being passed down. The goals of the journey are to build network relations, gain first-hand knowledge of the organizations inner workings, and to appreciate the history from a personal perspective. The journey ends with another meeting with the Director.

Currently the BC MOFR is not using learning journeys. The BC MOFR could benefit by using learning journey for future candidates moving into critical positions. Although this may be an expensive investment, this experience could lead to future savings in time and money via the mitigation of error.

3.6 Steps/Processes

As shown in the previous sections, organizations can use a number of strategies, tactics and tools to assist in succession planning. The final consideration is the mechanism by which to form plans. The steps and processes of succession planning will answer the questions who, what, where, when, how, and why. In the following section,

the steps of succession planning are organized into three phases: the planning phase, the acting phase, and the maintenance phase. The first phase is the planning stage. This is very important as the old adage goes, 'measure twice - cut once'. Taking time to plan properly can save organizations time and money.

3.6.1 Phase 1: Planning

Step number one is 'buy-in' (Burns-Martin, 2002). 'Buy-in' is a very well used term, which has great significance in most business undertakings. Buy-in essentially ensures that parties involved 'believe' in the project and have a clear vision as to the reasons why it must occur and are willing to take the necessary steps to make it happen. Without buy-in, the people involved will lack energy, and therefore, the project will likely fail. In particular, Burns-Martin (2002) stress that buy in should come from the top. Obviously, if organizational leaders do not understand the need for succession planning, they will not allocate the project the resources and time required for successful completion. The MOFR Succession Planning Committee understands the need to increase stakeholder buy in, and thus, has asked for a full stakeholder analysis (results as given in the previous chapter). However, as stated in the previous chapter's data, other than the succession team, most stakeholders lack a clear understanding of succession planning, what the team is doing and how it can clearly benefit them.

To gain management buy in, it is important to link the project to specific, measurable outcomes such as turnover ratios, decreased cost of hires, increased internal fill ratios, training benefits and others. The key is to pick drivers which are important to the organization's leaders. This is the very first and most important step, which will set the stage for the proceeding steps. As outlined in the Succession Plan Project Team Project Work Plan document, tasks, deliverables, timelines, and leads

have been outlined (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004e). However, actions have not been specifically linked to key business drivers, nor have measurable goals been identified.

The next step is to determine who will be the project champions. In other words, who will lead the project teams and the project to success? In many instances succession planning is done by human resource personnel. However, to ensure strategic alignment and buy-in, it is important to include all levels of the organization. In the case of the MOFR, the Succession Planning Committee is formed of various volunteers from different regions and departments throughout the province as well as human resources personnel who act as team leaders. However, as indicated from the MOFR interview data, involving additional stakeholder groups such as union members and soliciting greater employee input could increase positive program promotion.

As the overall plan must align to business strategies, representation from each organizational department should be involved in, at least, in the initial phases of the plan. For example, representation and buy-in from the finance department may secure appropriate budgets to succeed. Once representation for all departments is in place, an organization may wish to include representation from all layers of the organization to ensure objective and complete input. An important consideration is - do the team members have the skills necessary to perform the tasks required? If not, it will be important to initiate training. It will be impossible to establish plans if the right people are not in place, if those in place are not speaking the same language (per say) or if those on the team do not have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to lead the project to success. Thus, the Ministry is very open to our consulting presentation to help inform committee members of the fundamental concepts of succession planning, leadership and training. Finally, once the teams are established and lines of authority or

accountability are put in place, Burns-Martin (2002) suggests devising a clear reporting structure.

The next step in planning for succession is to set specific goals (Burns-Martin, 2002). It is important to establish quantitative and qualitative goals. For example, having the right people, at the right place, at the right time, is an excellent qualitative goal. However, how to measure this goal is extremely important, thus a quantitative success measurement must be added to the MOFR's Succession Plan. For example: the right people may equal having increased training efficiency ratios, the right place may be having a trained candidate pool of 3 - 4 for all key positions, and the right time may be 6 months prior to key positional retirements. Of course there are other success measures which can be implemented, decreases in turnover rates, and increases in internal hire rates, to name a few (Burns-Martin, 2002).

A third step in succession planning is visualization and information gathering. This is the step which the MOFR is currently embarking upon. Essentially, planning and visualizing establishes who will be involved, how they will be involved, what time lines the organization is working with, what the parameters of the program are, and how this fits with the organizations culture. At this point, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis is conducted. The ministry currently has a SWOT for the Project Planning Group, however, our consulting team has devised a more thorough and succession specific SWOT as mentioned in the previous chapter.

Kesner (1989) suggests having a clear understanding of organizational objectives, goals, and mission, assessing the external environment (economic, competition, technologies, demographics, geography, regulations), assessing the internal environment (all division), evaluating strategic alternatives (including cost benefits), and choosing the best way to move forward. At this point, the vision seems

only to be clear to project team leads at the MOFR and seems to diminish thereafter. For this reason, to encapsulate a clear and concise vision, it is recommended that a videotaped message be distributed to managers and thereafter to employees.

After the visualization and information gathering, the organization will be ready to put the pieces together in the next step-program design. Essentially, the design will be the documented plan, complete with time lines and accountabilities. Without question, accountability is essential to the success of any initiative. Without it, there will be no reason to achieve set goals, time lines will be blurred, the vision will be lost, and ultimately the project will fail. Items of importance in succession planning include:

1. Critical position identification (Currently being done by the MOFR)
2. Gap analysis (Currently being done by the MOFR)
3. Knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) associated with job descriptions (Will be part of the succession planning groups plans)
4. Personality assessments or psychometric tools. These tools have proven useful in determining the probability of job satisfaction and thus success ratios. (Currently being investigated by the MOFR)
5. Current pool assessment including resumes and KSA's of current employees.(MOFR is considering this for future plans)
6. Software or systems to match candidates to positions and to identify training opportunities (knowledge management). McCauley, Eastman and Ohlott (1995), add that matching and stretching are important in consideration of selection. In other words, how able and willing will the candidate be to grow beyond what is currently known? (This is part of the Ministry's Knowledge Management Plan in which they may use the Hay Group competency system).
7. Create a plan to fill gaps including recruiting, hiring, retention and training plans. Including attracting and retaining the right people at the top (Risher and Stopper, 2002). (This will be part of the Ministry's Recruitment and Retention Plan).
8. Link compensation to performance outcomes. (The Ministry has yet to do this).
9. Communication strategy - explicit policy of exchange may encourage departmental personnel exchanges, which can lead to improved leadership quality (Friedman, 1990) and functionality. (Currently MOFR communications strategy is minimally effective and includes meetings and website postings).

10. Budgets (As mentioned, the MOFR Succession Planning Committee is in the process of submitting a budget).
11. Strategy to monitor and maintain program. Prudential Financial as cited in Risher and Stopper (2001) suggest following up on individual development plans. (Currently the MOFR has none).

Once all the components of the program have been put into a plan, it is important to determine the tools necessary to help ensure success during each phase of the program. For example, training may be done in house and externally, performance reviews may be enhanced by adding 360 reviews, succession management software, employee profiling tools, and leadership training, to name a few. A note of caution here would be to ensure investigation and proper use of all tools. For example, 360-degree assessments are most effective when used to identify training opportunities rather than performance assessments. As cited in Risher and Stopper (2001), Prudential Financial suggests the use of automated succession planning technology such as PeopleSoft. Finally, Herrera (2002) suggests considering the following resources when devising Succession Plans: Recruitment firms, marketing events, internal and external training, search firms, and community events (involvement) for promotional purposes.

3.6.2 Phase 2: Action

As the MOFR is still in the planning phase, the following action steps offer valid suggestions and ideas.

The second phase of succession planning is the action phase. This is the phase where what has been talked about and planned for, can now be done- 'where the rubber meets the road', so to speak.

The very first step in action requires leadership training. Leaders may require training with regard to using new systems, following new processes, using new tools and

technologies, as well as applying leadership vs. management skills. Leadership is an extremely diverse topic, requiring a paper of its own. However, in brief leadership is inspiring others to be at choice while acting in a productive and meaningful way in the pursuit of a goal or outcome. In contrast, a manager simply manages the ebbs and flows, tasks and processes, of human capital – who will do what, when, how, where and why. In the book, *Becoming a Master Manager* by Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, and McGrath (2003), the roles of leadership are discussed. In brief, a leader, or master manager, must be a mentor, facilitator, monitor, coordinator, director, producer, broker, and an innovator. The premise is that leaders need not be all things in all situations simply that they are able to recognize what skill is required and have the ability to adapt by linking the necessary skill to the situation. Leadership is fundamental to the success of the project as if leaders can not inspire employees to be the best they can be, potential will be lost, motivation depleted, and ultimately costs (such as sabotage, theft, or turnover) will be incurred. Upon reviewing the interview data, it is clear that leadership training for MOFR managers is essential. Employees do not understand current programs, are not being involved equally, and are not receiving consistent information or training.

Once the people and processes have been put into place, and tools and training have been implemented, Burns-Martin (2002) suggests implementing a test plan. 'Pilot projects' are very common when implementing new systems. For example, when large corporations change computer systems, it is very common to test the program on a division or branch to work out 'the bugs' prior to organization wide implementation. This can save cost and time.

3.6.3 Phase 3: Maintenance

The maintenance phase requires a review of goals, objectives, processes, procedures, and performance measures - essentially the whole plan. Burns-Martin (2002) suggests that constant review of the plan take place to identify opportunities for improvement via new technologies, and ideas. Once identified, new opportunities must be added to the plan. Therefore, flexibility will allow for revision and continuous improvement of the plan. The core elements of the project should remain the same; however, feedback should be continuously used to make improvements (Burns-Martin, 2002). In addition, Friedman (1990) suggests that many large organizations have a staff role dedicated to succession planning. The addition of this role can ensure effective and efficient project management and can serve to deal with the issue of accountability.

A final phase of maintenance is celebration of successes. As there will be many people involved who have worked hard toward the attainment of various goals, marking of achieve via celebration can provide encouragements and gratification for a job well done. This can serve to further inspire and motivate continued success.

Currently, the MOFR has not reached any of its targeted milestones and has therefore not had opportunity to celebrate. However, moving forward, this will be an important component to add to the project.

3.7 Mistakes and Pitfalls

Obviously, in this process, there is ample room for error at any one of the phases or stages in succession planning. However, Lewis 2002 offers three common mistakes many leaders have made:

1. Ignoring the necessity of succession planning
2. Ill consideration of all issues

3. Waiting until the last minute to get started

Further, Roz McCay, as cited in Jayne (2003), offers common traps made by executives:

1. Thinking that they know who the potential candidates are already
2. Lack of follow through
3. Cutting corners or cancelling programs in times of economic downturn
4. Choosing people to fill positions based on last years issues
5. Creating talent pools to match leaders and not jobs
6. Not letting people learn form their mistakes
7. Losing patients with the time to implant the system or the processes involved

Further, Schall (1997) suggests the following barriers to public sector succession planning being taken seriously:

1. Leaders may show reluctance to take on the task. This may be due to fear in acknowledging the fact that 'everyone is replaceable.
2. Leaders may feel that 'succession management is 'not their job'. Often, short term planning and the lack of foresight hinder this process.
3. Succession is seen as a replacement issue rather than a part of strategic planning. This diminishes its importance in the eyes of leaders, as they cannot see the importance of stakeholder involvement.
4. In the middle of changing government bodies, environments, constraints and regulations, leaders may abandon plans. This uncertainty of how to carry on long-term plans and how to embark upon succession planning can cause the initiative to fail before it has begun.

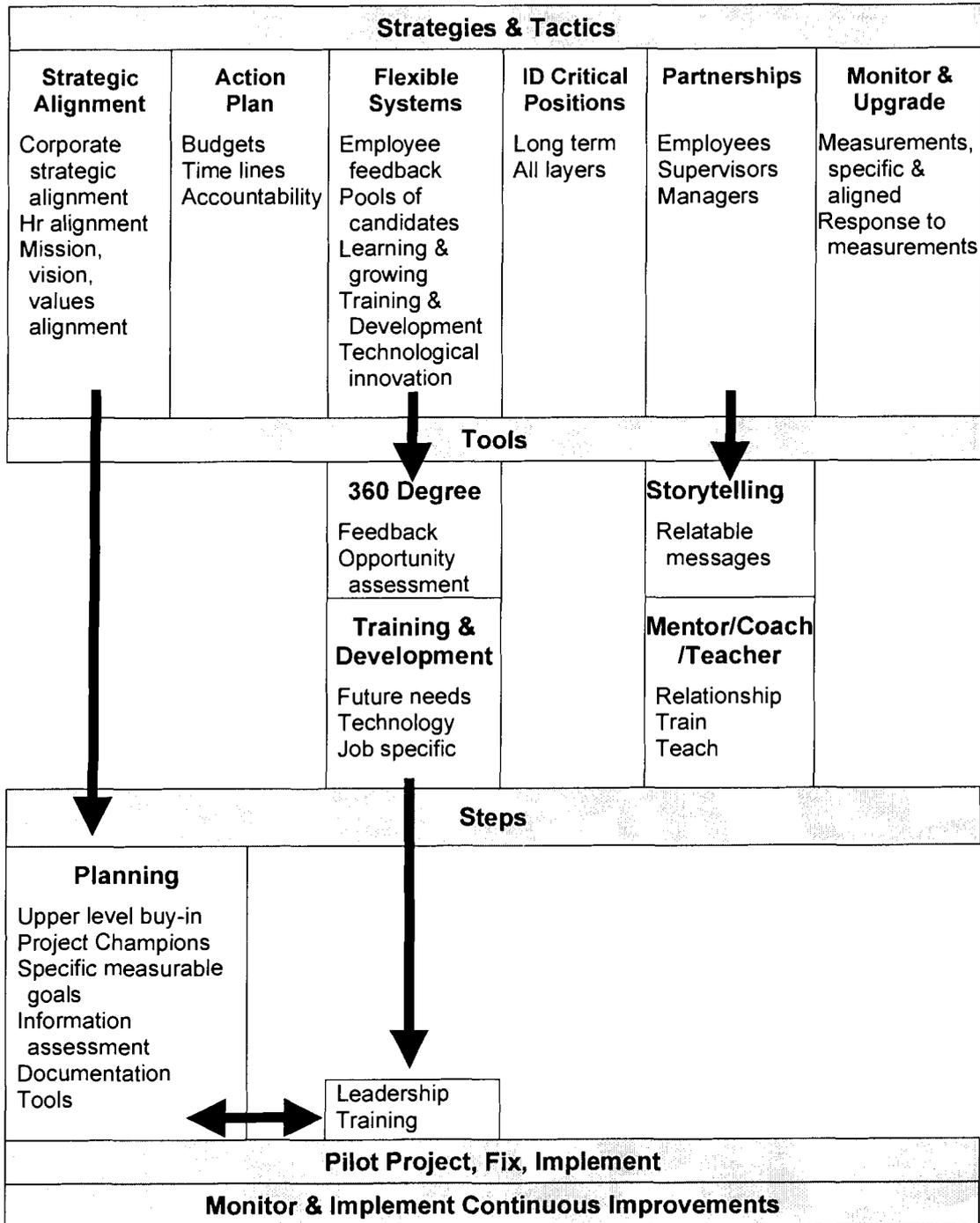
Additionally, one may offer that ignoring strategy, the misuse of tactics or failure to adhere to all steps may lead to the failure of the succession planning project. In light of the fact that 70% of all change initiatives fail (Conner, 1992), and that succession planning is vital to organizational stability, being cognizant of these mistakes is imperative.

The first step to avoidance is acknowledgement. By acknowledging that mistakes are plausible, and identifying current weaknesses, the MOFR can avoid some of the above mentioned mistakes. More specifically, the Ministry is under significant time pressure to devise, test, and measure the plan prior to mass exoduses beginning within the next 5 years. Other areas for the Ministry to be particularly cognizant of are considering all the issues, cost cutting, focusing on last years issues vs. next years needs, not achieving full staff involvement to feedback, not securing leadership buy in and ever pending government turbulence.

3.8 Model for Succession Planning

Tying together the concepts discussed in this chapter, figure two outlines the flow of the proactive succession planning process. First, succession strategies and tactics are analysed. Next tools for succession can be used to gather information and provide the necessary training to build a foundation for the planning phase. Whilst assessing training and development needs, leadership training may be identified as necessary and thus before moving to the next phase, may need to be conducted. Third, planning which is linked to the organizations strategy commences. Fourth, a pilot project can be conducted using the strategies, tools and plans decided upon. From this pilot, an assessment of the effectiveness of tested tactics, tools, and plans, against established success measures, can be performed. Next, from this assessment, adjustments can be made to any element of the succession plan. Finally, the project can be implemented throughout the organization.

Figure 2. Strategies, Tactics and Steps



Note. Figure created by the author.

3.9 Conclusion

Succession planning is a trend, which has been increasing over the past decade throughout the global economy. Having the right people in the right place at the right time can mean the difference between prosperity and failure of an organization (Papiernik, 2000). Moreover, having the right leader, at the right time is essential (Risher and Stopper, 2002). Risher and Stopper (2002) add that succession is a broad and continuous process, not an event and that building a talent rich organization is essential.

Recent shifts in work place demographics have highlighted the need for retention and employee development .As demonstrated in this paper, companies have been striving to improve their competitive advantage by using succession management to develop and retention of high potential employees and to create talent pools from which to fill key positional voids. Being proactive and preparing for the unexpected is the flagship of succession planning. Planning and managing succession will decrease the risks of, and pain associated with, key positional voids. This research chapter compared the MOFR succession planning to that of succession planning research to uncover linkages and opportunities for improvement. Additionally, this chapter provided succession planning background information, strategies, tactics, steps, and mistakes most often made.

Overall, the MOFR has recognized the need for and importance of succession planning and has begun the first steps of this process. The overall success of the program will depend on thorough investigation of areas of succession planning and a commitment to the organizations long-term vision of having the right people in the right place at the right time.

4. FIELD PROJECT REFLECTIONS

Throughout the process of conducting the Change Audit, I learned a number of valuable lessons and can now reflect upon insights and opportunities for improvement in future projects. This chapter will be a brief reflection of what I have learned about field projects and about going into organizations to study them. Additionally, I will describe what our MBA Project Team did right and what I would do differently in future.

4.1 What I Have Learned about Field Projects

As this was the second field project I have completed with the MOFR, my learning's were less than the previous project, however, there were many additional components to this project which lead to additional opportunities for learning.

4.1.1 Project Charter

First, I learned how to write a project charter and the importance of establishing clear client expectations. The project charter encompassed several important areas such as scope, MBA group deliverables, client deliverables, budgets and time lines. Without clearly establishing these areas in advance, I can see that many issues could have arisen during our project.

By defining budgets and time lines, both groups were able to rectify their expectations and level of project commitment. Essentially, as this consulting project was conducted 'free of charge', it was important that the Ministry be responsible for all phone

bills and printing costs associated with the project compilation and presentation. As a result of making this expectation clear, all expenses of this project were reimbursed to our MBA team promptly upon completion of our presentation July 13th, 2005.

Additionally, as time was limited due to the project deadline, it was necessary to establish time lines for the MOFR to provide interview candidates and documentation. The Ministry and the project group modified the charter until it was suitable to our Professor, our MBA Project team and the MOFR Project Leads. Establishing the project Charter was key to our project success. In support of this, several MBA students working with other companies did not reinforce the importance of deadlines and consequently fell behind the MBA project deadlines.

Another reason the Project Charter was essential was to manage client expectations. Specifically, the charter laid out what the clients wanted, how our MBA team would collect data, assimilate information and provide specifically 'deliverables'. This helped our project team to stay focused. For example, during our meetings, we often referred back to the charter to ensure that our team was completing what we had agreed to within the correct time frame. Additionally, the MOFR did not ask us to add additional information to our presentation as the charter served to provide the MOFR with a clear picture as to what they could expect.

4.1.2 Conducting Interviews

The next valuable lesson I learned about field projects was that a myriad of potential issues could arise when conducting interviews. First, establishing specific interview candidates as well as the number of interviewees is important. Unfortunately, it is impossible to forecast scheduling conflicts, vacations and other difficulties, which can hinder the timeliness of conducting interviews. However, by allowing a four-week

interview window, many of these problems were avoided. Additionally, by e-mailing candidates to set up appointment times, I was able to avoid multiple calling and time lags.

Second, it was important to identify the MOFR's responsibility in contacting the interview candidates first in order to establish the 'value' of this process. Our project contact did talk with most candidates or send out an e-mail informing candidates to expect our call. Unfortunately, some problems arose in one office when other staff members had told candidates that they should not be answering non-MOFR interviews. Once brought to the MOFR project leads attention this matter was rectified. However, going forward, I would suggest a phone call or a more specific email outlining the project, the importance of the project and the credibility of the MBA team, could have elevated this miscommunication.

Finally, it is important to establish how the interviews will be conducted and what will be said, aside from the questions during the interview process to maintain consistency among interviewers. Consistency is important to ensure that interviewees are given the same experience thus avoiding interview bias. Unfortunately, our team did agree on the questions to be asked, but we did not rehearse how we would ask the questions, or what information would preface the questions. In addition, during the June succession planning meeting some candidates expressed concern regarding the importance and purpose of our interviews. Since I prefaced my interviews with an explanation of who I was, what our project entailed, and how the interviews would help the succession team those members I interviewed did not express concern regarding the importance of uncovering the level of risk (uncovered during conversations with committee members). Therefore, I feel that had our MBA team of provided standard

information (ensuring consistency) prior to asking the interview questions, this issue could have been avoided.

4.1.3 Project Manager Support and Edification

A final lesson regarding field projects is the importance of creating value. As shown in the above example regarding Succession Team Member's interviews, if value is not perceived and interviewers are not valued, resistance to the process and the information can result. Fortunately, as a result of the above example, I realized that our MBA team did not effectively create value to the Succession Committee. This discovery enabled me to rectify this issue effectively.

Although the primary change leaders Leslie Bush and Sandra Letts saw value in our project, I knew that if our MBA team wanted to be given appropriate consideration it would be important for our team to be perceived as credible prior to our final presentation. Therefore, prior to the final presentation I spoke to Leslie on the phone and described my concern. She agreed to support our work and promote us during our introduction at the Strategic HRM meeting. To assist her in preparing for this introduction, John, Rachel and I sent Leslie a copy of our bios, the number of hours we had spent on the project and the estimated consulting fee for the project should this have been a billed project. Leslie was very accommodating in that she detailed all of this information during her introduction and consequently, our audience was very excited to hear our findings.

In hindsight, I think I should have done a better job 'selling' our team and our project from the beginning. To do this, I should have considered all of the information as listed above regarding the value of the projects and bridged this information with the

value the results of the project would have for the organization. However, I think that given experience, this process will come more naturally.

4.2 What I Have Learned about Studying Organizations

4.2.1 *Various Stakeholders*

When studying organizations it is important to understand that there are many stakeholder groups. There are those whom have hired the consultants to do the job, there are those who will be directly affected by the research findings, and there are those who will be indirectly affected by the consultant's findings. When conducting interviews it is easy to become emotionally involved in one stakeholder's point of view, which can create bias or distract from an impartial analysis. Unfortunately, although I was aware of the possibility of becoming emotionally involved with interviewee's point of views prior to conducting interviews, I found myself falling into this trap. For example, occasionally during the interview process I found myself saying, "yes I agree". Although this was not a major issue, I think that focusing on 'staying neutral' during the interview process will help me to become a more effective interviewer.

4.2.2 *The Importance of Focus*

Another area of importance when studying organizations is to maintain focus on the project at hand. During the process of our analysis, it was difficult to stay focused on the Change Audit of the Succession Planning Committee. At first, we were often distracted by the other change initiatives being conducted by the Work Force Planning Group. In this case, our team had a difficult time identifying what we were auditing, and what we were not auditing. To help us stay focused our project team constantly

referenced the succession planning objectives. However, we still could not help but extract additional information pertaining to other groups in the Work Force Planning Group. Fortunately, this information proved valuable when making recommendations to the Strategic HRM group at the July 13th meeting - thus allowing us to express our understanding of the interrelated issues and to present ideas as to how we may be able to assist other Ministry Project Groups, going forward.

4.2.3 Establishing Feedback Mechanisms

Another important learning regarding studying organisations is the importance of establishing feedback mechanisms and expectations surrounding feedback. As projects have a time line, it is vital to establish communications expectations. Our group was fortunate in that we specified the importance of timely responses to our e-mails in the Project Charter. In addition, the Ministry responded to all emails quickly and with the detail required. However, on the occasions that e-mail communications were confusing, I simply arranged to call Leslie (MOFR project lead) and discuss the issue. She was very receptive to this and this served to clear up miscommunications quickly. This experience served to remind me that timely feedback must be managed and that when in doubt regarding e-mail messages - phone.

4.3 What Our Project Team Did Well

Fortunately, our project team did a number of things well, which allowed us to work efficiently and effectively as a team. In point form, the following in a brief list, of things John, Rachel and I did well at, as a team:

- Started our project early – during Easter break which allowed us to stay on schedule

- Established a project charter with time lines and clear expectations
- Met weekly to input and asses new data so there was no backlog of information
- Communicated with the Succession Planning Committee Lead regularly to keep client informed of progress
- Maintained positive client relations
- Provided valuable feedback to the client via accurate and thorough assessment and research findings
- Maintained a level of professionalism when conducting interviews and communicating with the MOFR Succession Planning Committee

4.4 What I Will Do Differently in Future

As my intention is to become a consultant and an educator upon completing my MBA, it is valuable, at this time, to assess what I will do differently when working on future projects. Specifically I have chosen five areas: to study and practice interview techniques, to maintain consistency with my project team, to establish value to the client, to set group meeting agendas, to set clear and specific group expectations and to 'check in' with my project team to asses and modify communications and expectations throughout the life of the project.

4.4.1 Study and Practice Interview Techniques

In the future, I would like to study interview techniques to ensure that my project team is conducting interviews in a non-biased and effective manner. Additionally, I think that it is important to practice interviewing with my group members in order to maintain consistency among interviewers (as described above). In addition, practicing may flesh out the need to preface questions with information. It is my hope that by practicing interviewing techniques I will become more skilled at remaining neutral thus avoiding becoming emotionally involved with interviewers answers to questions. Finally, by

studying interview techniques and methods, I will improve upon the quality of questions asked, and the data retrieved.

4.4.2 Establish Value

Another essential part of consulting is creating value for clients and having them understand and appreciate the value the consultant will deliver. In the future, I will continue to assess client's interests to uncover how I, as a consultant, can best serve these and as such, add value to their organization. Additionally, I will ensure that the company sponsors understand the value I bring to the organization and promote this value among stakeholder groups to ensure the positive receipt and effective use of information.

4.4.3 Meeting Agendas

In the future, I will establish meeting agendas from the beginning of the project. Unfortunately, during our project we did not start using meeting agendas until three-quarters of the way through the project. Before this time, there was some miscommunication regarding how long meetings would take, when meetings were scheduled, and what items would be covered in meetings. For example, one of our group members missed three of our scheduled meetings. For this reason, I plan to use meeting agendas from the onset of future projects to ensure the group is prepared to meet, to help us stay focused, and to allow members of the group to set aside enough time to complete the tasks required.

4.4.4 Set Clear and Specific Group Expectations

Unfortunately, there was some miscommunication in our group with regard to who was to perform what tasks and in what time-frame. Unfortunately, communications via e-mail proved ineffective in many instances and as a result, this perceived unequal distribution of workload created some resentment among group members. For example, one of our group members responded selectively and sporadically to e-mail messages. When later confronted, this student stated that there were just 'too many e-mails' to keep track of. I think that it is impossible to foresee who may or may not have effective time management skills from the onset of a project. Also, It is difficult for one member of the group to expect all other members to work at the same pace. Hence, this incident did bring to light the need to outline expectations as opposed to making assumptions regarding how the group would communicate, what each member would be responsible for and in what time frame communications and tasks would be achieved. Therefore, in the future, it will be important, when working with a consulting team, to outline clear expectations and to assess and amend as issues arise throughout the life of the project.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this project has brought to light many important issues and as such has taught me valuable lessons regarding consulting projects. The above reflections highlight what I have learned about field projects, studying organizations, and what our MBA Project Team did effectively as well as what I will do differently in future. In all this was a very educational and valuable experience.

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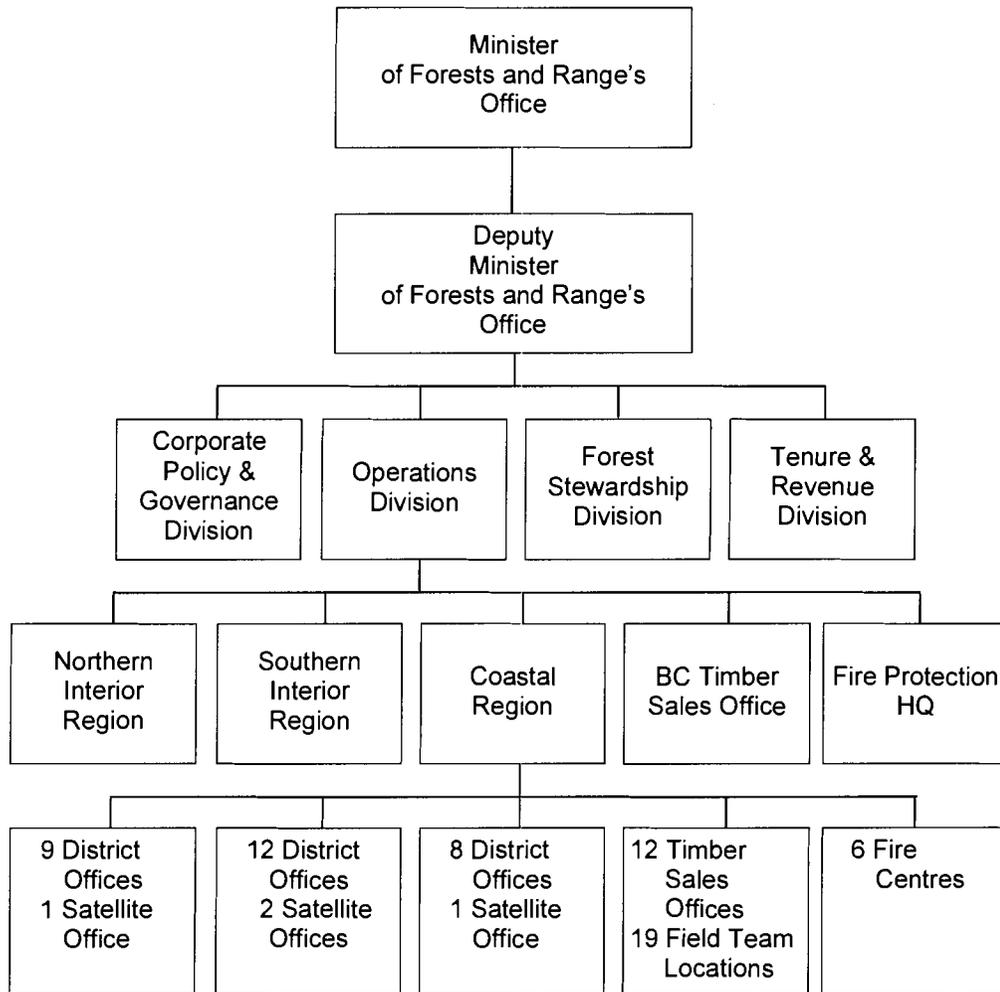
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Appendices

Appendix A.

Organizational Chart



Note. BC Ministry of Forests and Range (2005) Strategic Planning.

Appendix B.

Project Hierarchy MOFR Road Ahead Revitalization Initiative

<p>1. Leadership Improve leadership at all levels.</p>	<p>2. Workforce Planning The right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time. (Our change audit scope)</p>
<p>3. Organizational Wellness A healthy, safe workplace where all employees understand and practice a good work – life balance.</p>	<p>4. Learning Organization Understand, support, and practice ongoing individual and corporate learning.</p>

Note. Developed by Facilitator Training Group (2005) for the MOFR.

Workforce Planning Components

1. Workforce Gap Analysis
2. Recruitment/Retention Plan
3. Knowledge Management Plan
4. Competency Infrastructure
5. Succession Plan

Appendix C.

Interview Questions

Goal of Interviews

1. To assess the understanding each group has regarding the MOFR and its succession planning project in order to identify areas of risk and opportunity.
2. To assess the level of involvement each stakeholder desires.
3. To identify and rate the level of risk each group has to the succession planning project.
4. To foster ideas regarding retention and attraction of employees as they pertain to the succession planning vision.
5. To better understand the supply and demand of labour and factors as they pertain to the MOFR.
6. To explain succession planning to the stakeholder groups as defined by the MOFR.

Interview Questions

Four Union Officials

1. What is the union's understanding of the succession planning initiative currently being developed by the MOFR?
2. What do you think is the role of the bargaining unit in the ministry's succession planning process?
3. We understand that positions in undesirable and/or expensive locations are hard to fill. What could you offer as ideas to implement succession strategies for these areas?
4. What are the benefits of the current staffing and/or succession planning process? What could be improved?
5. Do you think the current ministry recruitment processes will be effective in meeting the future succession needs of the Ministry? If not, do you have any suggestions for improvement?
6. One of the goals of succession planning is to develop pools of employees that would be eligible to compete on positions. Do you have any suggestions on how the pools should be populated? I.e. self-identification, personality assessment career pathing set out in EPDP (Employee performance and development plan)?
7. What risk or advantage does the bargaining unit see to the Ministry's adoption of a succession strategy?

Four Educational Institutes Offering Forestry Programs

1. What forestry programs do you offer? Explain.
2. How are the programs designed to meet the needs of the public and/or private sectors?
3. What companies target your school for graduates? How do they do this – job fairs etc.?
4. Do you get feedback from these agencies? How could this be improved?
5. Have you experienced an increase or decrease in enrolment within the past 5 years and why?
6. What do you expect enrolment trends to be? What are the key drivers for enrolment?
7. Are students looking to gain industry specific experience via forestry companies before applying to the MOFR? Why/Why not? Do you think this is a viable strategy?
8. What is your perception as the MOFR as an employer?

Eleven MOFR Employees (varying sectors and departments)

1. What is your understanding of the workforce planning working group and the succession planning project team currently working in MOFR?
2. Would you want to be involved in the succession planning project of the MOFR? If so, to what extent would you want to be involved - sub group/ team participation, surveys, interview, or no process involvement?
3. Do you think there is opportunity for advancement in the MOFR? Explain.
4. What could be improved in the process of advancement - availability or type of opportunities or the process of selecting and developing candidates?
5. Do you think the current Ministry recruitment processes will be effective in meeting the future succession needs of the Ministry? If not, do you have any suggestions for improvement?
6. One of the goals of succession planning is to develop pools of employees to be eligible to compete on positions. Do you have any suggestions on how the pools should be populated? I.e. self-identification, personality assessment career pathing set out in EPDP (Employee progress development plan).
7. What role do you see personality assessment playing in determining succession candidates, communication strategies, training, coaching, and/or management capabilities?
8. We understand that positions in undesirable and/or expensive locations are hard to fill. What could you offer as ideas to implement succession strategies for these areas?

Two Forestry Contracting Companies

1. Are you aware of the MOFR succession planning project?
2. What impact will the MOFR succession planning project have on your company if any?
3. Do you currently recruit future candidates directly for educational institutes?
4. Is your company currently undergoing succession planning?
5. Do you perceive an opportunity to become involved with the MOFR and information share regarding succession planning?

Six Forestry Students

1. What are your career plans – immediate future, short term, long term?

2. Why did you enrol in the forestry program?
3. What are the key factors in your career choice? Rank: location, pay, opportunity for advancement, stability, status.
4. What is your perception as the MOFR as an employer? Rank: location, pay, opportunity for advancement, stability, status.
5. How did you conduct your career search – career fairs, internet, University?
6. What is your opinion of working for MOFR related contractors to gain industry experience first after graduation? Would you prefer to work for MOFR right away after graduation, please explain?

One Executive Member

1. What is your understanding of the MOFR Succession Planning Project?
2. Why is the MOFR Succession Planning Project important?
3. What would the ideal project outcomes be?
4. What does success look like to you?
5. What do you perceive to be primary risks (internal & external) associated with this project?
6. Are there any other stakeholders you feel should be on the MOFR Succession Planning Committee?
7. What could be improved in the succession planning process?
8. Additional Comments.

Four Succession Planning Committee Members

1. What is your understanding of purpose and importance of succession planning?
2. What is the motivating factor for your joining the succession planning team?
3. What advantages do you see to being involved in this process?
4. Are there any other stakeholders you feel should be on the MOFR Succession Planning Committee?
5. What could be improved in the succession planning process?
6. What are the benefits of the current staffing process?
7. What are perceived to be the restriction of the current process in getting appropriate candidates?
8. What role do you see personality assessment playing in determining succession candidates, communication strategies, training, coaching, and/or management capabilities? See changes to question in sections above
9. We understand that positions in undesirable and/or expensive locations are hard to fill. What could you offer as ideas to attract and retain people in these locations?

Appendix D.

Foundation Statements

Goal, Vision, Mission, Values

Long-Term Goals

- Sustainable Forest Resources
- Sustainable Forest Benefits
- Effective and Responsive Forest Manager

Vision

Diverse and sustainable forest and range values for BC.

Mission

To protect, manage and conserve forest and range values through a high performing organization.

Employee Value

People are valued for their contribution and dedication to the MOFR, its mission and vision.

Core Values

<i>Integrity</i>	Open, honest and fair
<i>Accountable</i>	Responsible for our own decisions and actions
<i>Innovative</i>	Encourage and support each other to create new and better ways to do our business
<i>Respect</i>	Show respect by listening to and recognizing a diversity of values and interests, work with each other in a spirit of trust, mutual respect and support

Appendix E.

BC Ministry of Forests and Range Stakeholder Analysis

Identified Stakeholders	Current State	Recommended State	Strategy to Use
Primary			
Employees	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Involve + Communicate
Succession Planning Committee	Supportive	Supportive	Maintain working groups
Senior Managers	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Communicate + Deliver Results
Middle Managers/Supervisors	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Involve + Communicate + Train
Potential Employment Candidates	Marginal	Supportive	Communicate
Human Resources Management	Supportive	Supportive	Involve + Communicate
General Public	Marginal	Marginal	Communicate
Unions	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Consult + Communicate + Involve
Media	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Communicate
Deputy Minister		Supportive	Improve relations + communicate +aware
Secondary			
Family and Friends	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Communicate via employee
Government	Supportive	Supportive	Communicate + Deliver results
Alternative Employers	Non-Supportive	Marginal	Communicate to candidates – Benchmarking
Post Secondary Institutions	Mixed Blessing	Supportive	Communicate and Consult
Forestry Companies	Supportive	Supportive	Communication
Tertiary			
Green Peace	Marginal	Supportive	Communicate
Environmental Groups			

Note. Created by the MBA Project Team.

Appendix F.

Stakeholder Interview Results

4 Union Officials

The union's understanding of the succession planning initiative currently being developed by the MOFR

- Dealing with retirement and departures and how to replace these people into the future
- Career pathing and advancement processes
- Next 5 – 10 years the baby Boomers will be leaving and the MOFR will need to get both external and internal employees and transfer knowledge in a smooth way
- Cross training so people can transition into new jobs via mentoring and training

The role of the bargaining unit in the Ministry's succession planning process

- Union leaders and member would like to be involved and provide input from the 'grass roots'. They would like the opportunity to provide feedback, and have a clear understanding of the organizations issues and concerns for the future
- Union members would like to have representation on the project committee to provide input and to communicate to members with accurate and timely information. Some union officials cited instances where they have been involved with other sub-groups & committees on joint ventures and where this has been successful i.e. registered forest technology committee

How to deal with succession planning in undesirable and/or expensive locations

- Isolation pay
- Incentive for market adjustments
- After 2 years lateral out of undesirable locations
- Assistance with housing costs
- Additional incentives such as vacation allowance to fly out to visit relatives, medical allowances to visit doctors in larger centers, flexible working hours (later days earlier days etc), child care allowance, more time off, telecommuting
- Mandatory to work in an undesirable location to get promoted or use this as a points system toward promotion, i.e., 10 points for having worked in an undesirable location

Benefits of the current staffing process and suggestions for improvement

- Eligibility list is a good idea, i.e., employees are given one interview and then they go on a list for 6 months; this could help create pools
- Merit based system is good
- Asking more questions regarding job experience in interview would be preferred vs. asking questions and looking for buzzwords. This penalizes those who have had a lot of experience but do not do well in interview situations. The MOFR may not be getting the best candidates
- The current process is good in that it is easier for the interviewers to interview to give points and it avoids interview bias
- More in service recruiting would be preferred via strategic career pathing
- Many feel that job qualifications are artificial and that it should be easier to apply. In other words, decrease the parameters around experience required and focus on competencies, skills and abilities
- Use mentoring to build competencies and add to on-line profile to help fill candidate pools. Must give credit for being involved with mentoring. The results of mentoring must be measurable.
- Need to have more consistency in interview processes. Managers should be better trained

Suggestions to improve the hiring process to meet the future needs of the MOFR

- No the current process will not be effective
- Need to add internal training to maximize internal potential
- Get more new recruits by posting outside. For example, improvements could be made by being at universities, high schools, and information sessions. Communicate to get schools and universities on board
- Include an advertising strategy to promote education and advancement opportunity within the MOFR – like the army does

Suggestions on how the pools of qualified candidates should be populated

- When interviews are done for a positions create a top 10 list. Use these interviews to pre test candidates before actual positions become vacant. This could save time and money.
- Pools can be populated by self-declaration via EPDP, mentoring participation, training and development participation
- A note of caution: the MOFR has to be committed to support this over time which requires long term planning and commitment. This cannot just be the 'flavour of the day' – it is annoying, discouraging and not motivating.
- Need managers to be trained for consistency to ensure filling pools is fair
- Psychometrics tools are excellent if they are accurate, legitimate and fair. They should be one measure used to fill pools

Risks and advantages the bargaining unit (union) sees in the Ministry's adoption of a succession strategy

- "Flavour of the month"
- Not recognizing people who have been around for a long-time i.e. Overlooking more experience personal in terms of training and opportunity.
- Union is all for good succession planning. They would like to see more need more employees
- The union feels there are more positives than negatives associated with succession planning. They see it as a proactive measure.

Other Union comments

- A communication strategy needs to be developed to ensure that all ideas and inputs are heard
- A survey would help uncover more information regarding what employees are looking for and how they would react to new opportunities
- Survey private sector employees to find out how the MOFR can become more attractive to these employees

4 Educational Institutions Offering Forestry Programs

Forestry programs offered

- One year Forest Resource Technician Certificate
- Two years Forest Ecology Technician Diploma. The 2 year diploma program is national credited and students who graduate from the Certificate program can enrol in the Diploma program if their grades are outstanding
- Bachelor of Natural Resource Science Degree. Educate students of all areas of resources, recreation, wild life management etc.
- Bachelor in Forest Resources Management
- Bachelor of Forestry in Forest Operations
- Bachelor of Science Natural Resources Conservation
- BS Forest Science
- BS Wood Product Processing

How the programs are designed to meet the needs of the public and private sectors

- Accreditation process in which the institution ensures the program meets the minimum National Standard Skills
- Advisory Committees that assesses the needs at the current industry skill sets
- Work with Association of BC Forest Professional to ensure we include the new provincial standards
- Add input from practitioners. Our programs are designed to generate employees who have the ability to do a variety of tasks and communicate with varying stakeholder groups

What companies target school for graduates and how they do this?

- Job postings
- E-Jobs bulletin board
- Direct contact from staff
- Co-op and career fairs

A wide range of companies:

- MOF
- Forest Consultant
- Small regional municipals
- First nations
- Mostly are BC based companies (private)
- Some international firms

How feedback from these agencies could be improved

- Feedback is usually done in an informal way: "students provide feedback to us after they were hired or through word of mouth from the companies to the staff"
- Co-op feedback
- Industry conferences

Enrolment trends and causes of such over the past five years

Trends

- First 2 years we saw decrease in enrolment and for the remaining 3 we see a slight increase
- There seems to be a 2-4 year spike spins i.e. a 6-year cycle. The only way to stop this is to take limelight out of the forestry. Increase positive forestry image in the media. Improve media communications.
- In the past 5 years overall enrolment decreased by 11% - it is the lowest level of enrolment since 1993.

Causes

- Downturn in the forest sector has reduced confidence in the employment prospects of forestry: softwood dispute, media publicized closing mills, environmental perceptions, misunderstanding from the public that this is not environmental friendly
- The poor environmental image of the forest sector has turned students off of considering forestry as a career choice. Often parents are affected by this and discourage their kids from entering this field
- There is an acute lack of knowledge (which we have verified through focus groups) of the various roles, responsibilities and educational opportunities that "forestry" offers at the high school, university and adult (parent) level

- Stereotypical perceptions of the forest sector as white, male, labour-intensive, low-tech, and undereducated, with lumberjacks, millwrights and truck drivers being the most commonly understood jobs in the forest sector
- Consolidation and streamlining by major licensees has reduced the amount of advertising and community involvement by forestry companies, which reduces the "positive presence" of this sector in the minds of the public
- Outsourcing of jobs from major licensees to consultants has made the job market and a career path much less recognizable or certain
- Decrease in the interest of youth to work in a rurally based industry

Future trends and projections

- We expect the demand to be increasing because the industry has regained its strengths. For BC, graduates will receive professional status
- Media, environment, cyclical
- Unless the general image of forestry shifts in the public's mind, enrolment in forestry programs will continue to decrease
- The number one key driver in enrolment is the perception of a healthy, well-paid job market. Students and parents alike will orient themselves towards where they perceive the stability and career prospects to be
- The perceptions of social standing would need to be improved i.e. a well-educated professional is seen as more desirable than a labourer
- There must be a concerted, widespread, long-term effort in communicating the true nature of forestry work and education, from conservation to wood products processing, and a dispelling of the myths and stereotypes that predominate people's perceptions

Are students looking to work with the MOFR after graduation or gain experience elsewhere after graduation?

- No not necessarily. They see MOFR and the rest equally in terms of job and organization because what they look for is experience first. They go where they can get a job
- Co-op is effective in helping familiarize students with understanding certain employers and working environments. Students want to work for both the MOFR and private employers to get an understanding of what both are like

Professors' perception of the MOFR as an employer

- MOFR job offering for graduates are more narrowly defined because they do not seem to be very flexible in terms of working in different positions to gain a variety of job skills
- Consultants provide more variety in terms of experiences
- Although MOFR and other companies' salary level is about the same to start, after few years, the discrepancy is huge
- MOFR is not paying as much as the other companies do if an employee has more experience but fewer years of seniority

- Managers may have more responsibility and authority but they are paid less than private companies

NOTE: Instructors are very powerful in that they influence student perceptions. Developing a communications strategy will help increase positive students perceptions of MOF.

11 MOFR Employees

Understanding of the Workforce Planning Working Group and the Succession Planning Project Team

- Limited or no knowledge of either of these groups. However, it is known that the Ministry is beginning to focus on succession planning, but that is about it.
- Succession planning is important
- Some employees are aware of the mentoring and job-shadowing programs; however, they feel that they are working for nothing, there is no support, and there are time constraints on when mentors are available
- Employees have a sour taste in mouth regarding mentoring. They feel that there is not enough time to do this and not enough resources are available to support the program. There is no unified system of mentoring and it is not monitored in a way to add to the employees competencies

Level of involvement employees would like to have in the Succession Planning Process

- Employees would like to be involved at some level
- Would like to be involved with mentorship and training programs rolled out by succession planning
- Some would consider being on a committee that deals with succession planning
- Some would like to be survey to provide input on ideas
- Time of involvement is a concern – perhaps no time to be directly involved, but would like input recognized.
- Some feel that they have put in suggestions regarding succession planning to their superiors but that they have not been heard. They would be happy to volunteer but are not given opportunities and their ideas are not heard.
- Those employees who do not wish to be directly involved wish to be informed regarding outcomes
- Employees suggest formal roll-outs vs. rumours and website postings and e-mails that they have no time to read

Other input

- Workforce planning really needs a heightened awareness, what some find frustrating is that the MOFR is still in an 'old mindset'. The suggestion is to rebuild policies, adopt new HR processes including innovative hiring processes

How employees feel about the opportunity for advancement at the MOFR

- Hoping that there will be substantial opportunities due to the number of staff planning to retire over the next several years.
- There're opportunities, but some are limited for example Scientific Technical Officer 4's have to go work and live in Victoria
- There're opportunities, but it's limited by people's own choices
- At this time not many opportunities, but down the road yes....
- Yes there are opportunities, but fewer for technicians, feeling being replaced by professionals

Suggestions for improving the MOFR's ability to offer advancement and or the selection process

- Increased opportunities to have temporary assignments or work closely with existing managers that may soon be leaving in order to gain experience and knowledge. Another advantage of temporary assignments is that it allows employees to 'test the waters' in terms of jobs – people are reluctant to move their families if they are not sure they will be happy in a position
- Incentives should be offered for receiving higher education or professional development
- There is a misalignment of salaries. Sometimes getting a promotion means being paid less money - this needs to be improved
- More diverse skills training and lower the barrier for gaining different skills – must suit emerging lifestyle preferences
- For BC Timber Sales lateral transfer is not an option, but in other parts, it is. Enabling lateral transfers within the same location and classification would provide employees exposure to different jobs and may save money by avoiding a bidding process.
- Local management needs more input into staffing decisions, mentoring, and secondments
- Counselling service needs to be implemented to improve leadership abilities thus far training not effective

Perceived benefits of current staffing process

- Knowledge-based interviews are effective in determining how competent candidates are.
- A posted competition puts everyone on a level field
- Competency based interviews are preferential; however, this should be assessed by allowing candidates to relay experiences not just list items or key words interviewers are looking for
- Lots of opportunity to move around - it's good to have people move around.
- By going to competency based hiring, it should allow people with less experience to get jobs

Perceived to be the restriction of the current staffing process

- Sometimes I think the geographically restricted postings run the risk of excluding some potentially superior applicants
- Seniority blocks entry as former work history is not accounted for (i.e., if you don't have 1827 consecutive hours)
- Exams alone do not reflect one's complete expertise
- There should be some loyalty to former employees
- Short-listing may not get the right people at the final interviews
- In the case of the behavioural interview there may be too much emphasis to what experiences a person has had, when they might be an ideal candidate. Perhaps a combination of knowledge as well as experience
- Not enough FTE openings
- Some of the competency questions do not accurately reflect jobs – they should be more
- External recruitment is poor business – MOFR should be personally investing in their future. Leaving hiring to outsiders results in poor decision making – local managers should be directly involved in selection process
- Failure in the short-listing process i.e. MOFR may not be using the right tools- if we were looking for people who could really fit in we need to assess who wants to get on board
- Job competencies should be assessed by professionals

The role personality assessment or psychometrics testing should play in determining succession candidates, communication strategies, training, coaching, and/or determining management capabilities

- It would help to identify leadership styles, areas for improvement, as well as strengths, so that training could focus on key areas.
- It would help identify career paths candidate might be best suited for and identify areas for improvement
- Extremely important – good attitude is important. Need to be willing to do the job
- I believe in more of the person's common sense, willingness to learn, ability to learn, and willing to be mentored and coached.
- This needs to be done more, especially interviewing. This could also be used to determine whether the person is in the wrong position, need to reshuffle
- Must be taken as only one part of the process and must be developed by someone qualified

How positions in undesirable and/or expensive (remote) locations be filled more easily - ideas to implement succession strategies for these areas

- Perhaps make the mandatory requirements for these positions slightly less stringent, thereby giving applicants who are willing to relocate the opportunity

- Make it easier for people to laterally transfer out of these locations by following up with these people – don't just put them there and forget about them
- Increase salary, benefits and moving expenses
- Telecommuting. Fund it
- To retain these employees long term in remote locations, MOFR must be more competitive. For example, private companies offer medical travel expenses and the federal government offers more money and allowances.
- Travel time for managers needs to be accounted for. Moving to a remote location means always traveling to meetings and although we may get some time off, the workload is such that it is impossible to take flex time and still complete all duties
- The group in the 40's is feeling left out - younger workers expectations are big - people want to be promoted after 6 months. It is important to make sure everyone is included in the process of succession
- Flexibility with hours
- More vacation time
- Increased flex-time
- Make it a necessary step if you want to move upward and work in the South, you have to work in the North first. Offer this as a means to a fast track to a better job
- Workout facilities

2 Forestry Contracting Companies

Awareness of MOFR Succession Planning Project

- Neither of the contractors contacted had any idea of what the MOFR Succession Planning Project was, or that the Ministry was involved in anything of that nature.

The perceived impact the MOFR Succession Planning Project has on private companies

- Perceived negative impact mostly. Fear will lose valuable employees to the MOF- already have lost several. However, they would prefer to deal with their former employees than new recruits because of experience in the industry.

The student recruitment process

- Yes, both recruit from educational institutes such as UBC, UNBC, technical schools, etc.
- Currently succession planning
- Yes, both are involved in some form of succession planning. They are experiencing challenges in having a lack of people to advance into senior positions.

Information sharing and level of desired involvement with MOFR succession planning

- Yes, they would be interested in information sharing, mainly in the form of sharing information regarding employees who the ministry can't hire or who wish to move into contracting

6 Forestry Students

Career plans - Short term

- MOFR for the summer
- Gain 2 years worth of forestry experience in order to complete the work requirement for the ABCFP. Currently working as an Assistant Forestry Engineer for a local forestry company in the Lower Mainland
- Work for an Alberta contracting company in the area of Silviculture
- Work for non-profit agency
- Like to learn broad issue of sustainability
- Employed by Forestry company
- To graduate and travel a bit

Career plans – Mid term

- Finish the program
- Stay in Alberta for 3-5 years then move back to BC
- Conservation jobs in Scotland or England

Career plans –Long term

- Stay with MOF
- Masters Degree in Forestry or Wild Life Management and move back to BC
- Interested in working with MOF
- Unsure, most likely to work in the private forestry companies and move up
- Secure a management position. That may be as an Area Engineer or a Woodlands Manager or maybe even work my way up to District Manager or Chief Forester
- Possible Masters, most likely looking for conservation officer/biologist jobs in the lower mainland. I may also look at government jobs

Why students enrolled in their respective programs

- Variety in terms of programs and what they offer
- Friends in the program
- Wasn't stuck in the office
- Want to have an impact on the environment
- More beneficial to understand the entire picture instead of just one thing
- Family is in forestry
- Helps with resource management
- Protect environment
- I love the outdoors

- Subject of interest

Key factors influencing student career choice

- Nature of work
- Stability
- Pay
- location
- advancement
- status

Note: actual ranking could not be determined with this small pool of interviewees. A survey would better flesh out data

Perception of MOFR as an employer

- Largely influenced by professors input
- Need to communicate messages from MOFR directly
- Mixed results

How students conduct career searches

- Networking with people inside the forestry
- Internet
- Careers fair
- Instructor contacts
- Talk to employees within the firms of choice
- Co-op program involvement
- University job site
- Government job site

Note: Suggest surveying to identify ranking

Student opinion of working for MOFR vs. contractors

- Prefer to work with MOFR first but the requirements were too high
- Knowing how to apply to MOFR would help: when to apply and advertise hiring dates earlier. Most private industries have post jobs in January and the MOFR hires in spring.
- MOFR is not open to hire people with less experience - they should provide quantifiable mentorship
- Contractors offer limited experience opportunities

- Would not want to work with MOFR right after graduation
- Working for the MOFR right out of school would be a great idea and would love to work there to build up my field experience. It is the perfect starting point for any recent graduate that wants to make a difference and use the knowledge and resources that the MOFR can offer

Executive Member

Understanding of the Succession Planning Project

- Understanding they are doing a framework of succession planning so that when they do a pilot they will be ready to roll it out
- Dealing with an aging work force needs to be proactive and knowledge transfer is essential
- This group is putting together the framework, key positions, competencies and options

Why succession planning is important

- An organization is only as good as people it has working for it.
- Need to have pool with motivated competent, people to increase diversity

The ideal project outcome

- Good understanding of which positions will become vacant and when.
- Have a process in place where we have qualified and motivated candidates to fill vacancies
- The program is well monitored on an on-going bases - not just a one time deal
- A proactive part of the MOFR culture

Perceived risks associated with the project

- Dither and get hung up in process – not moving forward
- The concept of a pool may leave some thinking that there are winners and loser – this perception should be avoided
- Knowledge loss may occur to prevent this MOFR needs to develop a specific, measurable, consistent mentor program
- External risks are the difficulty to enter the ministry – high qualifications prevents entrants and diversity is necessary

Stakeholder involvement

- University and industries should be involved initially
- Project leaders should be present at all succession meetings to show support and offer ideas.

Suggestions to improve the succession planning process

- Employees are unaware of the details of Road Ahead
- Succession group must communicate vision, ideas, incites and updates directly to management teams to give an update so that momentum isn't lost
- Stress knowledge transfer component. It is critical to continue on with succession planning
- Run a pilot quickly – get it in play from a profile point of view to sustain momentum and to show results
- Make sure employees understand Road ahead is part of 'who we are'

4 Succession Planning Committee Members

Succession teams understanding of purpose and importance of succession planning

- Aging work force → MOFR: 2015 or 2020, shortage of people because of retirements, and plus government is not attracting enough recruits → be proactive
- Has to do with the future - putting people in the right place at the right time.
- Developing people within and outside the firm (external, and internal)
- Knowing where the MOFR is going and how to get there without wasting time and effort
- Continued efforts for fit – suitability, capabilities, skills, and performance
- Factoring experience into competencies

Motivating factors for joining the Succession Planning Committee

- Being prepared and proactive
- Belief in government
- To quit talking and start doing → get the ball rolling
- Want to give something back to the government
- Enjoys career and wants others to
- Secure future

Advantages to being involved in the succession planning process

- To learn from the process
- To learn new skills to pass on
- Input on direction
- Gain understanding
- Input my own idea
- Help others

Other stakeholders that should be on the Succession Planning Committee

- Pretty well rounded I think
- Perhaps structuring meetings more to ensure a well-rounded and structured discussion to ensure points are taken and the process is moved on.
- A meeting facilitator could maintain control and focus and decrease wasted time
- Other reps from other teams should be involved (e.g. retention and recruit group etc.). This would ensure communications and decrease overlap
- The union - but if they must be open and realistic and should have some responsibility

Suggested process improvements

- More communication to the entire workforce on the project's progress and should update the project on the web page so that others can see
- More training for the committee on strategic human resource management: What it is and how it relates to others in the organization and how are all the pieces of the Work Force Plan fit in
- Ensure equal input: encourage open and honest response from all members and energize a good group dynamic

Benefits of the current staffing process

- Now that we're separated from the Public Agency that we're becoming more efficient for the staffing
- More opportunities to be on the panel and gain interviewer experiences
- Opportunities to move throughout the province
- Opportunity to learn new skill and meet new people.
- Standardized process (guidelines)

Restriction of the current staffing process

- Less support level because the agency do it for the MOF. MOFR didn't have to pay for anything, but now it is fee-based service. And the Agency doesn't report to MOFR and they providing MOFR with advice and not service
- In service limitations of unions
- Union restrictions
- Hard to get certifications, and certain positions need those certifications and not everyone is able to get certifications due to room, money, time, location.
- Too set → need flexibility

The impotents of psychometrics testing

- Not all - past work experience and work standards are the most important things
- Some value and interpretation is important

- Very important to a certain degree and has to do with cost and time involved

Ideas for filling positions in undesirable and/or expensive locations

- Isolation allowance should continue
- Lateral transfer after 2 years
- Additional holidays
- Annual leave in the contract - need to consult with the unions
- Lower qualifications
- Mentorship
- Subsidize housing
- Living allowance
- Don't forget about these people – involve them in succession out
- Like RCMP → earn your boots. Everybody has to move in order to move up.
- Offer job flexibility
- Accommodations allowance

Appendix G.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities

Internal Strengths

- Massive internal information
- Employee pride
- Employee resilience
- High employee retention
- Positive front line management relations
- Employees happy with pay scale
- Excellent training (safety, orientation)
- Effective teams
- Forward outlook
- Experienced people
- People from different departments on committee

Internal Weaknesses

- Survey structure is inadequate for effective conclusions and targeting problems
- Survey analysis carries incorrect assumptions
- Information dissemination
- Performance appraisals not maintained
- Perceived poor relations with upper level management at lower levels
- Internal inequities in workloads, work ethic, and rewards
- Misaligned reward and reinforcement mechanisms
- High average employee age
- Lack of accountability (i.e., performance appraisals and committee success)
- Not ready early enough to deal with unintentional hires
- Training required on how to lead change?

External Threats

- Limited recruitment pool for middle and upper echelons (Gen X)
- Change in world lumber trade – Planning group
- Mountain pine beetle infestation
- Possible Droughts (1998, 2003, 2004, 2005?)
- Increasing number of intense forest fires
- Change of government / May 2005 election
- 5 to 15 years to mass retirement by Baby Boomers

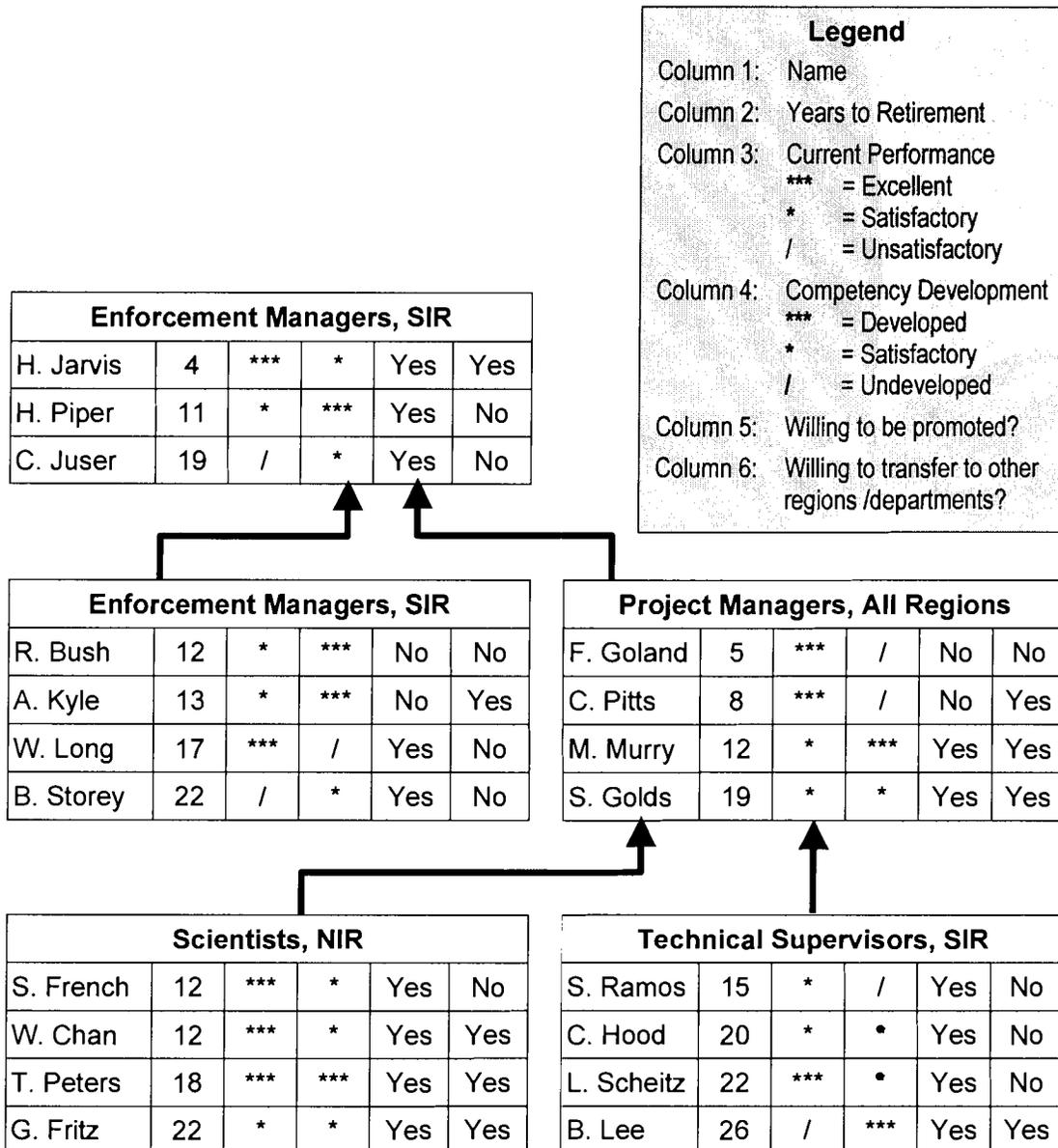
External Opportunities

- New Forest and Range Practices/Wildfire Act/replaces Forest Practices Code? Leslie
- Lumber market expansion into China. Increase market demand = increased monitoring and practices.
- Large pool of new university grads/specialization (Gen Y and X)
- Privatization of other government sectors creates a recruitment pool of available employees
- New technologies available (i.e., statistical analysis software, info management software, communications)

Note. Created by the MBA Project Team.

Appendix H.

Succession Map

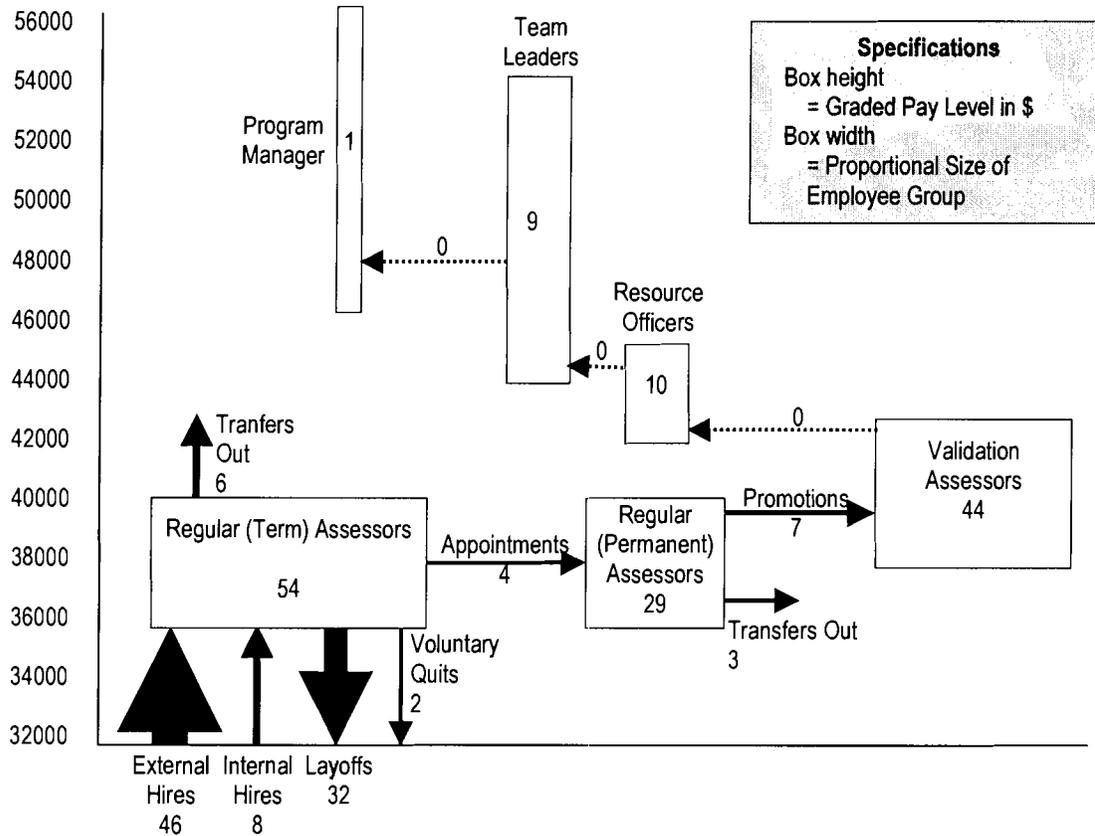


Note. Recreated from Ashley Bennington's figure (2004b, by permission).

Items on this chart do not depict actual members of the BC MOFR or any other organization, thus, names and positions are used for illustrative purposes only.

Appendix I.

Human Resources Stock Flow Chart of Canada Revenue Agency Surrey Tax Centre's Client Services Division



Note. Adapted from Ashley Bennington's figure (2004a, by permission).

Appendix J.

Informal Networks

Survey

Trust Network Questions

1. If you wanted to tell someone something, and trust they won't tell others, who would that be?
2. Out of all your coworkers, whom do you trust to stick up for you the most?
3. Who is the best at making AND keeping agreements with you?

Information/Technical Network Questions

1. Who do you go to first to find out information on how to do your job?
2. Who has the most specialized/practical knowledge about your team's tasks?
3. Who are you most comfortable in approaching for technical help or information?

Communication Network Questions

1. Who is your chief source of information about management or organizational initiatives?
2. Typically, who has the latest information on job tasks or deployments?
3. If you wanted to inform others of something you've learned, whom would you tell to spread it quickly?

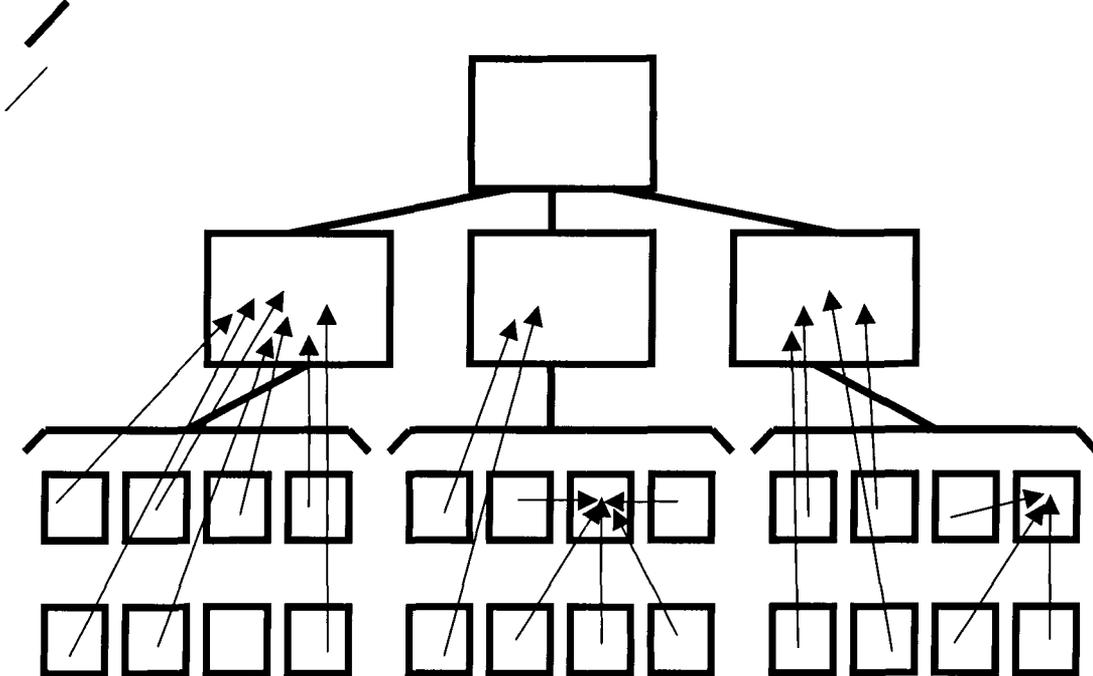
Trust Network

As can be seen above, despite the formal structure in the organizational chart, one supervisor and two employees are key players in the **informal trust network**. These people should become **change champions**.

Information Networks (aka The Grapevine)

In the **informal communication network** above, note that the supervisors are relatively uninvolved in communicating information to their subordinates. The manager conveys information to the supervisors, but the lower level employees by and large rely on key players at their own level. These key players will be the ones reading the Intranet, or the news, and should be leveraged by managers and supervisors to help communicate information about the change initiatives to the rest of employees.

Technical Networks



Note. Adapted from Ashley Bennington's figure (2004c, by permission).

In the **informal technical network**, a wide range of people are consulted on task related issues. In succession planning, the team on the left will be problematic in that if their supervisor is promoted, a very knowledgeable replacement will have to be found to provide all eight employees with technical advice. This is not so much the case in the other two teams. In addition, for lower level employees to be identified as pivotal in the technical network, a good deal of knowledge will be lost if they are promoted to another department or region and can no longer be reached by their former coworkers.

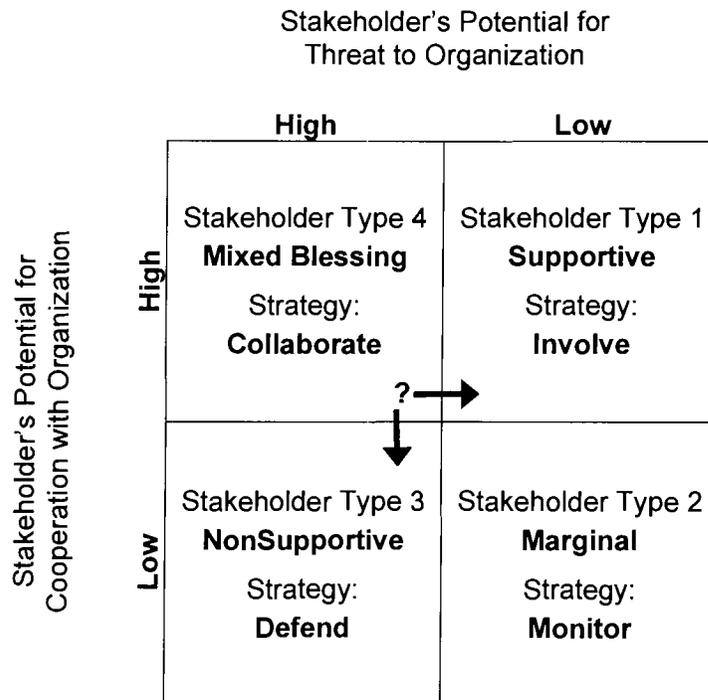
Overall, be sure to watch for **holes** in the informal trust networks. Supervisors and managers identified as not being consulted heavily in any informal network will be largely ineffectual in managing stakeholders and eliciting commitment for a change project.

Bowties, too, are dangerous for networks with respect to succession planning. "Bowtie" employees are pivots to disseminate information to employees above, below, or across teams. Promoting a bowtie out of a network can break down several sub-networks at once and create dysfunction, so very qualified replacements will have to be found.

Identifying change champions out of informal networks is critical. Trust and communication networks are important in rolling out changes as large as the Workforce Planning project, especially since you want to manage employees and other stakeholder groups to be supportive rather than neglected or unsupportive.

Appendix K.

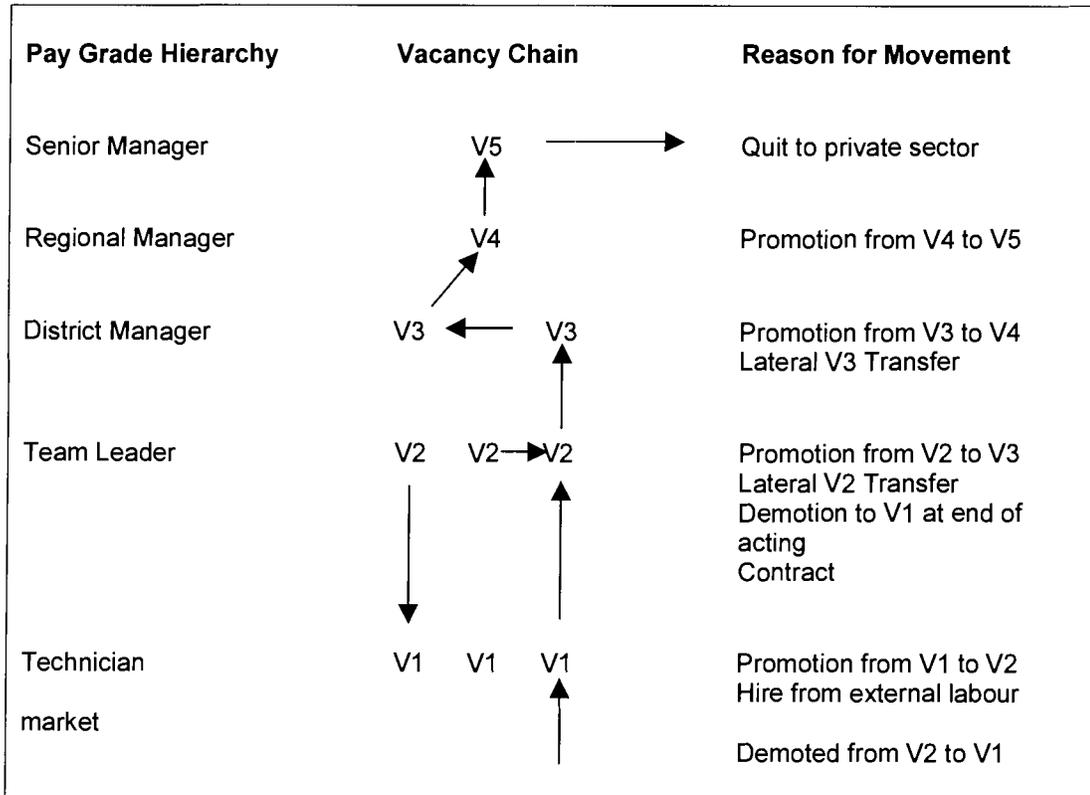
Stakeholder Map



Note. Recreated from Tom Lawrence's (2004, October) lecture notes.

Appendix L.

Vacancy Chains



Note. Recreated from Ashley Bennington's figure (2004d, by permission).

Based on this example of a vacancy chain, one person quitting at the top produced seven separate staffing actions for replacements, rather than focusing on the one replacement at the very top. For succession planning and workforce planning, these vacancy chains determine all movements necessary within an internal labour market. If movements are not possible because of unqualified candidates or lack of availability, then the HR department will have to fill those gaps with people from the external labour market.