EFFECTS OF BOTTOM-UP VISIONING VERSUS ADOPTING A VISION ON EMPLOYEE BUY-IN: ANALYSIS OF THE BC MINISTRY OF FORESTS AND RANGE SUCCESSION PLANNING PROJECT

by

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ETHICS APPROVAL

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics for the research described in this work, or has conducted the research as a co-investigator of a project, or member of a course, approved by the Ethics Office.

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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. In addition, analysis of the visioning process relating to employee buy-in showed that different visioning processes seemed to lead to different degrees of employee alignment with change objectives. Opportunities for improving visioning were derived and recommended to the Ministry of Forests and Range.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate the following paper to my parents, May Hsiou-Mei Chou and Leo Chun-Ming Cheng, for their infinite support, and encouragement throughout my life and especially throughout the past year whilst perusing my MBA.

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I would like to acknowledge all the faculty and staff for their support, guidance, and wisdom. Without them, I would not have been able to complete the project on time. Also, I would like to acknowledge Leslie Bush of the BC Ministry of Forests and Range for her sponsorship of the project; and for her professionalism and enthusiasm in working with the SFU MBA Team. In addition, special thanks to Jennifer Douglas for helping me in proof reading my project. Finally, I would like to acknowledge members of the SFU MBA Team for their time and efforts that contributed to the success and the completion of the project.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nearly 50% of the British Columbia Ministry of Forests and Range's critical work force is expected to retire in the next 15 years. In dealing with such issue, the Succession Planning Committee has been formed to present a comprehensive succession analysis and present alternatives and recommendations to the Ministry. The Succession Planning Committee is part of the larger Work Force Planning Group which is consisted of five components: full workforce gap analysis, recruitment and retention plan, knowledge management plan, competency infrastructure, and succession plan (see Appendix A).

The following chapter describes the Ministry, its current situation, and the project as negotiated between the Succession Planning Committee and the SFU MBA Team.

1.1 Ministry's Function

The British Columbia Ministry of Forest and Range (MOFR) is responsible for the stewardship of 47 million hectares of provincial forest land. Additionally, the MOFR provides fire protection for over 84 million hectares. 90% of BC forest lands are publicly owned, placing an intensified responsibility on the MOFR for the management of these lands.

In total, the Ministry is made up of 4 divisions: Corporate Policy and Governance, Operations, Forest Stewardship, and Tenure and Revenue. Within the Operations Division lie the Northern Interior region, the Southern Interior Region, the Costal Region, BC Timber Sales and Fire Protection. These 5 segments contain 47 district offices/fire centers, 4 satellite offices and 19 field team locations. The Forest Stewardship division consists of: the Forest Analysis Branch, the Forest Practices Branch, the Forest Science Program, the Ministry of Forests Library, the Research Branch and Tree. The Corporate Policy and Governance Division consists of: the Business Improvement Branch, the Business Solutions Branch, the Information Management Group, Strategic HRP, and Strategic Policy Planning. Finally, the Tenure & Revenue Division consists of the Aboriginal Affairs Branch, the Economic & Trade Branch, the Resource Tenure and Engineering Branch, and the Revenue Branch. In all, the MOFR has approximately 2,500 full time equivalent employees (see Appendix B).

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 laidoff. But, as with many organizational changes, the results did not meet the expectations and the MOFR must now rehire 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 the 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 the US consumption) demand pressures will continue to mount for BC lumber products.

The weather in BC has posed additional pressures on the MOFR. 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 uncontrollable 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. Appearing roughly three years ago, the mountain pine beetle has ran unchecked 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. 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.

1.3.1 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 MOFR, mass work force exodus.

1.3.2 Canadian Demographics

The Canadian demographics have become an important concern for business and industry throughout the country. The largest generation of the aging Canadian population, the Baby Boomers (aged 40 – 59), has sparked new long-term planning in workforce succession and training. Although Canada's second largest generation, Generation Y (aged 24 and younger) is now entering the labour market and university; it remains to be seen if enough talents can be trained in time to meet the replacement demands for the retiring Baby Boomers.

Workforce pension and retirement provisions, as mentioned before, will present a serious challenge to the MOFR. 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 5 income-earning years. Finally, the mandatory retirement age for the government is age 65.

1.4 Project Objective

The SFU MBA Team's objective was to conduct a change audit concerning the MOFR Succession Planning Project. The SFU MBA Team examined the work completed to date, and analyzed Succession Planning Project using an 8 step process.

Based on this analysis, the SFU MBA Team provided a set of recommendations to assist the project manager, and the Succession Planning Committee to ensure successful implementation of the Succession Planning Project.

Within this analysis, the SFU MBA Team delved deeper into the "Stakeholder Analysis" portion of the audit by interviewing key stakeholders who are directly affected by the change project. Using the information gathered from the interviews, the SFU MBA Team then identified stakeholders' issues and concerns allowing the MOFR to develop strategies to address those issues. The project sponsors have expressed a particular interest in the risks of the project, both internal and external to the organization. Thus, this stakeholder analysis also identified key areas of risk posed by various stakeholders. An additional component risk analysis was provided with a project SWOT analysis.

In addition to the 8-step analysis (modified from the Inspire Action method, MacKay, May 2005), the SFU MBA Team conducted research on areas of academic interest and provided relevant findings to the Succession Planning Committee.

1.5 Purpose

The Succession Planning Project Manager expressed that the succession planning component is seen as the foundation for the Work Force Planning initiative. In other words, the succession planning component is fundamental to the success of the entire project. Therefore, the Succession Planning Project Manager was seeking assistants from the SFU MBA Team to identify and 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 MOFR Project Sponsors

Leslie Bush, Succession Planning Project Manager, was the direct sponsor for the SFU MBA Project; and Sandra Letts, Work Force Planning Group Manager, was the secondary sponsor.

1.7 SFU MBA Project Team

The SFU MBA Team consisted of Sheila Allen, John Cheng, and Rachel Glover from the Leadership and Organizational Change specialization.

1.8 Scope

The scope of this project was to examine all five phases of the MOFR's Succession Planning Project across three years. The Succession Planning Project was roughly one year into the project, which provided us with opportunities to examine the project's past efforts, current status, and future plans.

1.9 Deliverables

In late July 2005, Rachel, John and Sheila provided a power point presentation to the Strategic HR Group, which consisted of approximately 8 members. The presentation was held at the MOFR's Squamish office. The presentation included a summary of the change audit including a detailed look at the Stakeholder Analysis and Communications component of the audit, and the risk assessment of the change project. In addition, each member of the SFU MBA Team provided his or her focused research analyses based on each member's interests. Finally, the SFU MBA Team provided recommendations to the

Strategic Human Resources Group from a project consultant's perspective and answered questions the Group had.

1.10 Key Stakeholders

The key stakeholders of the project whose interests was given consideration throughout the project include Unions, the Succession Planning Committee, MOFR employees, the public, private forest companies and the BC government. The goal of the SFU MBA Team was to interview 4 Union officials, 4 Educational institutes who provided Forestry candidates, 11 MOFR employees from varying sectors and departments, 2 independent consultants, 6 forestry students, an executive member, and 4 members from the Succession Planning Committee. In total, the SFU MBA Team interviewed 31 key stakeholders. Key stakeholders were mutually identified and selected by the SFU MBA Team, Leslie, and Sandra.

1.11 Budget Resources

The project required the SFU MBA Team to conduct several in person and phone interviews. The cost of these phone calls was the responsibility of the MOFR. Phone calls were either placed by the SFU MBA Team from a local MOFR office, or MOFR and other candidates called the SFU MBA Team directly at their homes. All costs associated with travel to conduct one-on-one interviews were covered by the MOFR.

The SFU MBA Team prepared the necessary materials and presented them to the Strategic Human Resources Group; however all room fees, photocopies, use of projection equipment and other associated costs were the responsibility of the MOFR. It was agreed that should any other costs arise, all expenses associated with this project was to discussed with Leslie and Sandra prior to any spending.

1.11.1 Potential Issues and Constraints

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

Another possible constraint was due to other commitments. Some key stakeholders were not available for interview for the period between May and July, meaning that the SFU MBA Team could not collect interview data and conduct analysis. Therefore, it was essential for the SFU MBA Team identified the interview candidates with the Succession Planning Committee by May 13th.

A final project constraint was the inability to administer a survey. Leslie and Sandra have expressed a preference that a survey NOT to be done, because the Ministry was planning to administer its own survey in the near future. Thus, interviewing was the main form of primary data collection, and served to better identify areas of concern providing a foundation for future survey questions.

In summary, the SFU MBA Team conducted a change audit using the 8 factors from the Inspire Action (MacKay, May 2005), and collected information from various stakeholder interviews and formed strategies to address specific issues to minimize the

Succession Planning Project's risk of failure and to ensure its success as the foundation for other Workforce Planning initiatives.

In the next chapter, the findings and the analysis of the Succession Planning Project's change audit will be found. It will be followed by my individual research and analysis on the effects of bottom-up versus adapting a vision to employee buy-in. Finally, my personal insights and learning from the MOFR field project will be provided in Chapter 4.

2. BC MINISTRY OF FORESTS AND RANGE'S SUCCESSION PLANNING PROJECT CHANGE AUDIT

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the data collected and analyzed during the MOFR Succession Planning Project Change Audit. The SFU MBA Team examined the BC Ministry of Forests and Range'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, the MOFR is roughly one year into the project, which provided the SFU 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 its succession planning initiative. To measure their readiness, our SFU 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 (2005). The eight markers are: strategic alignment, project structure, change leadership, communication strategy, stakeholder analysis, risk assessment, resilient teams, and aligned performance. Throughout the chapter the Ministry's plans are analyzed 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 contract and to receive final approval from Leslie Bush, Succession Planning Project Manager, and Sandra Letts, Workforce Planning Group Manager. Thereafter, we conducted 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 Project by the Ministry of Forests and Range to date. Next, our Team conducted 31 interviews with various stakeholders. During our interviews, standardized questions were asked (see Appendix C) in order to compare and compile the data.

Finally, we conducted an in-depth analysis of the Ministry's change efforts and the interview data using the 8 markers as previously described. From the analyses, we were able to gauge the past successes and/or failures of the Ministry's 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, the SFU MBA Team prepared individual research papers. The findings from the papers were also used to form additional recommendations to the MOFR. The final deliverable was a Power Point presentation made to the Strategic Human Resources Group on July 13th, 2005 in the Ministry's Squamish, BC location. The following chapter contains an analysis of the MOFR's Succession Planning Project and a discussion of our findings and recommendations. References and appendices can be found at the end of this document.

2.3 Analysis

In this section, 8 markers will be used to conduct a change audit on the Succession Planning Project. The markers are: strategic alignment, project structure, change leadership, communication strategy, stakeholder analysis, risk assessment, resilient teams, and aligned performance. Additional recommendations are made to the Succession Planning Project after the analysis.

2.3.1 Strategic Alignment

The Strategic Alignment, the first element of the analysis, entails the alignment between the change initiative's purpose to the overall organization's strategy. If such alignment is found, the organization is determined to be efficient in investing its resources in the same direction towards a unified goal, thus increasing its competitiveness. If no alignment is found, the organization will lose its competitiveness by being pulled in too many different directions.

2.3.1.1 MOFR HR Strategy and Succession Planning Project

Strategy involves choosing a position in the market place—deciding on a unique mix of values. 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-off's.

Furthermore, 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 that, what it needs to do, 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.

Moreover, the Ministry of Forests and Range Human Resources strategies flow from six areas: Mandate, stewardship, leadership development, learning organization, workforce planning, and organizational wellness. These Human Resources strategies are part of a broader goal to become a higher performing organization. The Succession Planning Project's purpose is to ensure the continued effective performance of the MOFR by making a provision for the development and replacement of key people over time. Therefore, the Succession Planning Project directly aligns to the overall MOFR's HR strategy.

2.3.1.2 Challenges Identified from the MOFR Workforce Survey Analysis 2001 and 2004

Although the MOFR has clearly defined its foundation statements, there is still a critical challenge to communicate the foundation statements to a large and diverse group of employees, and to attempt to mold the culture of the organization according to its new foundation. An analysis of the past survey conducted by the Auditor General in 2001 and 2004 showed that the MOFR still has some challenges in this area (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004b).

A deeper analysis of the Auditor General Surveys from 2001 and 2004 (BC Ministry of Forests, 2004) showed some key areas for improvement in the communication, understanding, and behavioural adherence to the organizations foundation statements. For example, the survey showed that 1/4 of the work force have no clear understanding of the organizational foundation statements. In addition, in 2001, only 22% of employees in the Ministry agreed that executives provide a clear direction for the future. Although these points relate to the 'Communication Strategy' part of the analysis, which will be further discussed in this chapter, it is to note that the MOFR needs to increase employees' understanding of the foundation statements in order to increase their commitment to the organization and to any project change initiatives.

2.3.1.3 Importance of Visioning

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 Succession Planning Project's Vision is: *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 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 recommended that the Succession Planning Committee to clarify the vision before moving forward. The important factor here is to create the passion for the vision so that employees will have higher buy-in of the vision.

Overall, the Succession Planning Project is aligned to the MOFR's HR strategy. With the alignment between the two, the MOFR has efficiently invested its resources in the same direction to achieve a unified goal. However, it is recommended the Succession Planning Committee clarify its vision and increase employee buy-ins to better help the organization achieve its goals and reach its destination.

2.3.2 Project Structure

The second element in the analysis is the change initiative's project structure. Having a structured project approach will increase the efficiency and the effectiveness of the project process in obtaining successful project outcomes. This section will outline two key factors of the project structure: first, whether the Succession Planning Committee has defined a clear business case including success measures, which can be owned by organizational leaders; second, the identification of the Succession Committee members' roles and responsibilities.

2.3.2.1 Succession Planning Business Case and Project Management Tool

The Succession Planning Project has many of the elements of a successful project structure including the use of project management software and a clearly defined business case (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005g).

The Succession Planning Committee is currently using project management software to assist them in the project. During their June 16th meeting, the Succession Planning Committee used project management software to form a completed project task list, timeline, and action plan (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005g). The Succession Committee has also developed a clear business case to guide the Succession Planning Project (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005a). Discussions with Leslie and Sandra revealed that they have defined the case as centered on two main business objectives. One of the main objectives 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 retirements and successions (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004d). This includes minimizing hiring and replacement costs, as well as decreasing time lags associated with finding a replacement for retired employees.

However, one key part of a successful project structure that was missing from the Succession Planning Project is the integration of project success measures. Such measures are needed to monitor project progress and success, and to provide feedback to Committee members on the results of their efforts. Therefore, it is recommended that the Succession Planning Committee integrate project success measures. Relevant project success measures could be 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.

2.3.2.2 Committee's Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to clearly defining business case, a successful project structure must clearly identifying Committee members' roles and their responsibilities. In the MOFR's case, the Project Committee has identified the team leader, members' roles and their responsibilities (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004e). In addition, allocation of responsibilities and tasks has been done using the project management software (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004e).

During the May 13th phone meeting between the SFU MBA Team and Leslie Bush, Leslie indicated that tasks were given based on members' time availabilities and competencies. Therefore, one area of improvement for the Project Committee is to assign responsibility after the project success measures have been integrated into the project. Another opportunity for the Project Committee to improve allocation of roles and responsibilities would be to take other factors besides competencies and availability into consideration. Such factors could include the motivation and drive to complete the project, as well as the team members' duration of commitment to the project. This would ensure that the Project Committee's motivation and commitment is maintained to drive the project toward achieving its goals.

Overall, the Succession Planning Project has utilized some structured project approach and has a clearly defined business case. However, areas for improvement such as including success measures, and assigning members' roles and responsibilities by considering other factors beside availability and competencies were identified and recommended.

2.3.3 Change Leadership

Change leaders are those who are responsible and accountable for the success of the change initiative within the organization. Important elements related to change leadership include the identification of the reporting structure and the identification of the leaders' roles and responsibilities.

2.3.3.1 The MOFR Change Leaders

Change leadership implies that there is a leadership structure in place to take an overall accountability for achieving successful project outcome, and obtaining the necessary resources from the executive level. Essentially, it is important to identify the reporting structure (who reports to whom), and more importantly, to ensure that the change leaders are the people with the right 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 Project Managers who are responsible for the overall success of the project, and the members of the Committee have been chosen for their extensive government and forestry experience and leadership capabilities. One area of opportunity is a need for specialized training in change management for change leaders. To our knowledge, the MOFR has recently begun implementing such training. An additional area of opportunity would be to identify level of commitment and future career/personal plans of team leaders to ensure retention and group continuity.

2.3.3.2 Change Leadership Roles, Responsibilities and Accountability

Once the change leaders have been identified, it is important to ensure that clear lines of responsibility and accountability have been identified. Further, it is important to ensure that all the change leaders have the required change management competencies. Since both Leslie and Sandra possess extensive HR knowledge and they are from the Strategic HR Group in the MOFR, we believe they do have the competencies to lead and mange the project. However, from our stakeholder analysis and interviews, we have identified areas of opportunities for the leaders to further increase their competencies in order to ensure the project's successful outcomes; such areas are training for effective communication, identifying and reducing resistance, and meeting facilitation.

2.3.4 *Communication Strategies*

An important factor in gaining commitment to any change initiative is the effectiveness of its communication strategy. Open, honest, and constant communication is required at every stage of the change process, from identification of a need, to conception of a change project, and through the change initiative until it is completed. People left out of the communication loop can become problematic opponents to a change initiative and may never commit to the transition or the desired end state of the project.

2.3.4.1 *Succession Planning Committee Communication Strategy*

Currently the Succession Planning Committee has established excellent communication strategies to communicate among its members. Such strategies include conducting monthly meetings, using conference calls, providing meeting minutes and notifications, distributing all working documents via email, and updating project on internal website (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005h).

2.3.4.2 *Employee (Stakeholder) Communication Strategy*

From phone meetings with Leslie Bush and Sandra Letts, stakeholder phone interviews, analyses of the BC Auditor General's Public Service Survey, and the MOFR 2001 and 2004 Workforce Environment Surveys (BC Ministry of Forests and Range 2004a, 2004g) some shortfalls have been revealed in the Succession Planning Committee's communication to other stakeholders.

Although the Succession Planning Committee has an excellent communication strategy for itself, there is no defined communication strategy of the project's vision, purpose, and progress to all MOFR staff. The only communication channel used to update the project's progress to the stakeholders is the internal website. However, from the stakeholder interviews, we found that employees would prefer that the website was not the only communication medium. Therefore, it is recommended that the use of the intranet or the website should only be a supplementary form of communication. Important messages or complex information that could be easily misinterpreted are better communicated via face-to-face contact.

In addition, from our analysis of the MOFR internal surveys (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004a, 2004g), we found that employees did not have a clear understanding of Ministry's HR plan. Furthermore, it was indicated that they do not think the Ministry is making changes necessary to be successful in the future. In essence, most employees are not aware of the MOFR's Succession Planning Project's attempt to be proactive in countering the looming retirement concerns.

Thus, the SFU MBA Team recommended the Succession Planning Committee to include employees' participation in the project. By asking and receiving employees' feedback, and informing employees on the project progression will fosters support for the change initiative, and increases the likelihood of success for the overall change efforts.

Moreover, the SFU MBA Team suggested the communication of the project's vision and purpose by using videotape, face-to-face meetings with management, and informal networks which are later discussed in the chapter.

2.3.5 Stakeholder Analysis (20-60-20 Rule)

The 20-60-20 rule states that 20% of a change initiative's stakeholders will commit to a project immediately, 60% of the stakeholders will be unsure whether they are in favour of or against the initiative, and the remaining 20% will oppose the change initiative (Nancy McKay, 2005). In order to understand which stakeholder belongs to which 20-60-20 group, the Project Committee should perform a thorough stakeholder analysis. In addition, in order gain the most support from the stakeholders, the resources and time should be spent focusing on swaying the 60% of the uncertain stakeholders' commitment to the change initiative.

2.3.5.1 Identification of the Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Stakeholders

The Succession Planning Committee and the SFU MBA Team have identified the following Stakeholder groups: Employees, the Succession Planning Project Committee, managers, potential candidates for hire, the public, unions, government, employees' family and friends, forestry companies and environmental groups. These stakeholders can be subset into primary, secondary and tertiary groups. Primary stakeholders have a fiduciary relationship with the organization (Wexler, 2005). In other words, these stakeholders have a direct role in the company's financial performance, who can directly be affected by or can influence the project. Primary stakeholders include management, employees, and shareholders. Wexler (2005) suggests secondary stakeholders are those outside of the organization who can either 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 immediate power to influence it (Wexler, 2005). These are stakeholders with which companies usually take a stewardship relationship.

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 the MOFR's clients. Forecasting possible implications of stakeholder support or opposition will prepare the Succession Committee for many contingencies, and allow for more comprehensive planning. Appendix E 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 lose support from critical stakeholder groups, or will never gain support from potential allies who were improperly managed. By evaluating each stakeholder's potential to cooperate with or threaten the project helps mitigate any risk that could hinder the project's outcomes.

2.3.5.2 20-60-20 Analysis in the MOFR

Our analysis of an internal survey performed by the Auditor General in 2001 of the Ministry of Forests and Range 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 indicate that employees need to be managed properly with effective involvement and communication strategies to change these perceptions and elicit their commitment to the success of this project.

Based on our discussions with Leslie Bush, the Succession Project Manager, we believe that 20% of the committed stakeholders primarily consist of management and executive employees who have received key information and are currently aware of the severity of the MOFR's looming staffing crisis. The undecided 60% of the stakeholders, who should be the main focus of the Project Committee, are identified as employees with some knowledge of the Succession Planning Project. 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.

2.3.6 Risk Assessment (Stakeholder Interviews Data and Recommendations)

Risk assessment section contains the stakeholder interview data and recommendations formed by the SFU MBA Team. The following section is the summary of key findings and recommendations made to the Succession Planning Project in 5 different groups in the following order: unions, educational institutions, the MOFR employees, Forestry contracting companies, Forestry students, executive members, and the Succession Committee.

In addition, the Team has conducted a SWOT analysis which can be found in Appendix F. More detailed data from the stakeholder interviews will be found in the Appendix G.

2.3.6.1 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks for the Unions

The union officials we interviewed expressed the intention to be part of the Succession Planning Project by attending the monthly meetings and possibly taking on tasks for the project. Therefore, it is recommended to invite union representatives to be on the Project Committee so that the Project will encounter lower resistance from the unions and may create dual commitment in the MOFR. In addition, union officials were concerned about the current interviewing process for new employees by the interview committee, which is to look for key word answers from the candidate that do not consider candidate's experiences and competencies for the job. It is, therefore, recommended that the MOFR change its hiring process by focusing more on the evaluation of candidate's experiences to reflect unions' concerns in order to hire people with the right experiences and competencies. Additionally, the union officials suggest the interviewer should receive standardized training on how to conduct interviews to ensure the quality of the interview process. Further, some officials questioned the value of the current mentoring program to both the mentor and the protégé. Therefore, it is recommended that the MOFR formally recognize its mentoring program in order to increase satisfaction for both mentor and protégé. Finally, the officials recommend attempting to attract employees to expensive/isolated locations by increasing isolation pay, increasing vacation and medical allowance, introducing flexible working hours, and by making it a mandatory path in order for employees to move upwards in the hierarchy.

2.3.6.2 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risk for Educational Institutions

The professors we interviewed suggested that students were not aware of jobs offered by the MOFR, and 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, how to apply for jobs, benefits, and the Succession Planning Project. Additionally, professors told us 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 a variety of skills by cross training in different job positions and by receiving temporary job assignments. Further, many professors perceived that the MOFR pays poorly 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 to other companies in the industry. Finally, some professors we interviewed expressed that enrolment in educational programs can be swayed by negative or positive media coverage of the forest industry. Therefore, media relations are important to the MOFR because the public perception of the MOFR influences potential entrants into the industry. We suggest that the MOFR inform the media of the Succession Planning Project to create excitement among the public.

2.3.6.3 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks for Employees

The employee interviews, revealed that most employees do not know about the Succession Planning Project's vision and purpose, and that they were eager and anxious to receive more information about the Project. Therefore, it is recommended that the Succession Planning Committee communicate the Project's vision to the staff via various communication channels. In addition, it is recommended that constant and standardized updates be provided to all the staff regarding the project's progress in order to keep them informed and decrease their anxiety. Furthermore, similar to the union officials, employees do not see the benefits of having the mentoring program. Therefore, it is recommended that the benefits of the program for both mentor and protégé be identified. In addition, employees expressed the concern that they do not have enough competencies to apply for internal hiring because they did not have the opportunity to receive such competencies from their current job. For this reason, we recommend that the MOFR increase the opportunities of temporary assignments for employees to gain skill variety. Further, some employees said that they do not want to be promoted because the increased responsibilities are not proportional to the increased salary. Therefore, it is recommended that the MOFR to conduct a salary and responsibility review. Finally, employees are concerned with the interview process not including the evaluation of the candidate's experiences and attitudes; therefore, it is recommended to the MOFR to have job preview interviews. It is also recommended that future peers and/or supervisor should be part of the hiring panel to increase their satisfactions.

2.3.6.4 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks for Contracting Companies

From the interview with the Forestry contracting companies, we found that these companies perceive the MOFR as a competing employer for skilled candidates. Therefore, it is recommended that information on Succession Planning Project be provided to the contracting companies in the attempt to change their perceptions from a competitor to an alliance. In addition, it is recommended that MOFR work with contracting companies to share employee resources. The benefits of this action are that the companies could serve as a source of potential employees, and that the contracting companies may change perceptions about the MOFR.

2.3.6.5 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risk for Students

From the interviews with Forestry students, we found that they have very little information on how to apply for a job in the MOFR. From this, we recommend that the MOFR offer extensive information sessions on how to apply, and what the benefits are of working for the MOFR. We also found that most universities provide co-op programs and job postings for students; however, the MOFR usually does not pass on job openings to them. Therefore, it is recommended that the MOFR work closely with universities by informing them about new job postings. Furthermore, students said that the MOFR are usually late at posting job openings, if there were any, compared to other companies in the industry. Therefore, it is recommended that the MOFR posts job openings as early as possible to secure the best applicant for the position. Finally, it is recommended that the MOFR survey students in order to find out what factors influence their career choices. By finding out such factors, the MOFR will be able to better align the positions to such factors to attract more applicants.

2.3.6.6 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks for Executive Members

We found that, from the interview with executive members, due to other work related commitments, they usually do not attend the succession planning meetings. However, in order to increase their knowledge and to show their support for the project, it is recommended that they participate in the Project meetings. Further, the executive members suggest that the MOFR can be more proactive in keeping the Forestry students involved in the Succession Planning Project to increase their interest in the MOFR. In addition, the executive members said that employees' perception of the Succession Planning Project needs to be managed; the executive members play an important role in this area by formalizing a consistent message to staff promoting their support for the Project. Further, the executive members point out the needs for instilling the entire change initiative (Road Ahead) to current and future employees in order to incorporate it into the organization's culture. The SFU MBA Team recommends that these concerns be addressed.

2.3.6.7 Key Recommendations to Mitigate Risks for Succession Committee Members

Some members of the Committee expressed concern that some members might lose enthusiasm, so it is recommended that the Committee undergo team building exercises in order to maintain enthusiasm and motivation throughout the project. In addition, we found that the project's meetings were not efficient because all members have equal say during discussions, and as a result, it is difficult to form a decision if members have different opinions. Therefore it is recommended that the Committee elect and rotate a chairperson for the meetings to ensure equal participation and adherence to the meeting agenda. In addition, we found that there is minimum communication between the Succession Project and the other Workforce Planning change projects; therefore it is recommended that the Committee invite other project committees to be in the meetings and vice versa. Furthermore, members expressed that they want to invite unions to be in the meetings so that the unions can be better informed and possibly be assigned tasks to increase their buy-in in the project. Finally, some members were concerned that they do not have as much human resources and management knowledge and competencies compared to other members; therefore, it is recommended that the Committee receive standardized management and human resources training so no members feel excluded and incompetent to carry out this project.

2.3.7 Resilient Teams

Resilience measures a person's capability of coping with change. Having resilient teams reduce conflict, and increases creativity, trust, and performance. It is therefore, essential that those who will be affected by the project be involved during the change; and the key is to have open communication in order to reduce uncertainties. In addition, building resilient teams requires change leaders to use a coaching approach to increase team resilience and productivity.

Currently, the MOFR is not using any team building methodologies (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2005d, 2005e, 2005f, 2004f, 2004h, 2004i, 2003a). Therefore, the

SFU MBA Team suggested the MOFR build resilient teams by using a team coaching approach, understanding the dynamic of change, and adopting team building methodologies.

2.3.7.1 Team Coaching Approach

Team coaching approach identifies what parties will be affected by the change initiative and identifies how prepared the parties are relating to the change. This approach also identifies the consequences that may arise from the change to help management better prepared in dealing with unintended consequences. In the MOFR's case, although stakeholder groups have been identified, it is unclear from the given information whether coaching skills have been taught and are being used throughout the organization. Therefore, it is recommended for the MOFR to initiate and implement team coaching approach to determine the impact and the consequences that may arise from the Succession Planning Project.

2.3.7.2 Dynamics of Change

Conner (1992) suggests that change leaders should constantly look for ways to help employees to better handle change by teaching them the dynamics of the change and processes for managing change. By teaching the Succession Planning Committee the dynamics of change and the processes for managing change, the committee will be better at coping with and managing the change initiative.

2.3.7.3 Group Development Methodologies

Furthermore, it is recommended to the Succession Planning Project Manager to look into Lacoursiere's 5-phase model 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 a high productivity from the group. Recognizing Lacoursiere's model will allow the leader to understand why the phases occur, and how to better develop the group and move on to the next phase.

Another recommended model is Gibb's TORI theory of Trust. 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 develops and become productive (1978). If the leader of the group is able to pay attention and anticipate the situations which may arise during each phase of development, she will be better prepared to lead the group through the developmental phases.

2.3.8 Aligned Performance

The final element of the analysis is aligned performance. All change initiatives have to ensure all goals are measured and are aligned to the organizational strategy. In the MOFR's case, with the measurement of the outcome, the Committee will receive a more specific feedback and can re-evaluate its current strategies in achieving the goals. In addition, the Committee has to ensure the alignment of the project's goals to the MOFR's goals in order to be able to tie in with the reward system. If the outcome of the goals can be linked to rewards, it will encourage the committee behaviour required for the success of the project.

Currently, the Succession Project Committee has done an excellent job of developing its goals; however, there is a shortcoming of lining up goals and measurements with the rewards (BC Ministry of Forests and Range, 2004c, 2005c, 2005g, 2005h).

In order to assess committee member's performance in the Succession Planning Project, it is recommended that the measures of success be defined and used and then monitored on a regular basis by the project managers. In addition, the responsibility for these success measures must be allocated so that members of the committee are accountable for certain tasks within the goals.

Furthermore, part of performance management is providing feedback. In order to function and contribute effectively, members must receive both complimentary and constructive qualitative feedback. If their commitment is to be sustained, members must be recognized for what they are doing right, and given the opportunity to improve in areas where this is needed.

Finally, performance management must align rewards with success of the project goals. It is recommended that the Succession Project Manager find the resources and the right way to reward committee members for their contribution 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 committee 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 throughout this analysis, our MBA Team offers the following additional recommendations.

2.4.1 *Mentoring*

Currently, the Succession Planning and Work Force Planning Group have a formal mentoring program in place, and we recommend that they continue and expand this program. The Ministry currently has the mentoring program for many of their management positions, but we recommend that they expand this to non-management positions as well. The Ministry uses mentoring primarily to assist in career advising, knowledge transfer and personal development. In addition, they are trying to attract retired forestry employees in order to retain their expertise in the organization and pass it on to the replacement candidates.

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

The effectiveness of the mentoring program overall would be significantly increased by expanding it to all levels of employees and management. A mentoring program increases employee perceptions of career success and improves affective commitment, which leads to lower turnover intentions and employee retention, which is a key component of the Ministry's stated business objectives for the Succession Planning Project. Mentoring should be used even at the most junior levels of the organization, as this can help add to the diversity of experience a new recruit may have, as they are able to communicate their career needs to the mentor who can provide them with necessary resources and information. This program could also help improve perceptions of the

Ministry as an employer and increase their competitiveness in the scarce market for qualified graduates.

Also, it is important to develop success measures to improve buy-in for the mentoring program at all levels of the organization. Linking mentoring to business outcomes will increase executive and management support for mentoring. Success measures such as turnover rates, absenteeism, and return on program investment can all be used to measure the effectiveness of mentoring. Gathering feedback through interviewing mentors and protégés and communicating this to employees and managers could help achieve buy-in by demonstrating that mentoring does work.

Finally, the MOFR must take into account current dissatisfaction with the mentoring program and address it according to those recommendations made in previous section.

2.4.2 Succession Mapping

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, 1995a). As illustrated in Appendix H, a succession map is basically on 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’ between the position and 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. The succession map decreases replacement time by providing an overview of the readiness of candidates for certain opening positions.

2.4.3 Stock Flowcharting

Another useful tool that can be used by the MOFR is the stock flowcharting. This tool is used by organizations such as Weyerhaeuser to examine the composition, distribution, and flow of employees in, through, and out of the organization (Pinfield & Hirsh, 1998). These flowcharts are diagrammatical but operate along two dimensions: size of the job group, and salary level. Weyerhaeuser has used the flowcharts to establish lines of movement and promotion through the organization. Appendix I is an example of a stock flowchart developed by Ashley Bennington, a SFU MBA student, at the Canada Revenue Agency's Client Service Division at the Surrey Tax Centre.

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. Also, it can show where potential problems will occur in the future so that the Human Resources can more effectively allocate its resources. For example, if the successor of a certain critical position is not experiencing any in-flows of candidates, the planner can allocate more resources to prepare and attract more successors.

The Succession Planning Project 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. Thus, the Succession Planning Committee should implement both the use of stock flowchart and subsequent exit interviews to ensure success.

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. Furthermore, the Committee can look into getting managers onboard with the project's vision first; once their commitment has been assured, managers will be more willing to disseminate the information to their employees to further increase their commitment to the project as well.

Finally, the SFU MBA Team recommends the Committee look into the use of informal networks which include 'trust networks', 'knowledge networks', and 'technical networks' (see Appendix J). Many non-managerial employees will hold a high degree of influence in terms of technical knowledge, trust, and communication (Lawrence, 2004a). Therefore, identifying these informal networks is important to elicit true commitment from stakeholder groups (Lawrence, 2004a). For the purposes of this change initiative, trust and technical knowledge networks will be critical.

Using tools illustrated in Appendix J, surveys can be distributed to employees asking them questions regarding who they obtain information from, whose opinion they trust, and who they refer to for technical knowledge. From the survey data, managers can map out the information about trust or knowledge networks 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, those opinion leaders 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 because their potential impact on the project's success or failure needs 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 (Lawrence, 2004a). 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; additionally, the users of the map can determine where they would like the stakeholders to migrate to (i.e., cooperative and non-threatening). 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 Committee 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 experienced by employees of the MOFR. Therefore, it is essential that the project managers 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 Committee to look into assessing themselves along key competency areas related to change management.

2.4.7 Performance Measures

While the Succession Planning Project has a performance measure such as replacing retirees within 6 months at a 100% success rate (phone conversations with Succession Planning Project Manger) - 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 Project 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 retires today, what percentage of these positions could be filled by people skilled and qualified enough to perform that job at the same level of effectiveness and productivity? 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 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 Workforce 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 functional 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 useful tool the SFU MBA Team recommends to the Succession Planning Committee is the Vacancy Chains. As per 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 organization which will require additional positions to be filled (Pinfield, 1995b).

For Succession Planning and Workforce Planning, these vacancy chains determine all movements within an internal labour market. If movements are not possible because of unqualified candidates or lack of availability, then the Human Resources Department will have to fill those gaps with people from the external labour market. Vacancy chains can help management clarify all positions that will become vacant from one position to be filled.

2.4.9 Pilot Project

Once the people and processes have been put into place, and tools and training have been implemented, Burns & Martin (2002) suggest implementing a test plan – a 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. The pilot project would encompass all parts of succession planning but can be rolled out on just one division or unit. Using a pilot project would enable the team to identify areas of change required prior to rolling out the full program, thus minimizing risk, decreasing expenses and saving valuable time. An additional benefit of using a pilot project is to show upper level managers results, thereby increasing their level of buy-in for the project. This positive reinforcement can help to secure the necessary budget required to implement the project. Additionally, results can also show employees that the succession plan works, and is a valuable asset for them, thus solidifying their level of buy in.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview on the analysis that was conducted by the SFU MBA Team on the Succession Planning Project, and has included the proposed recommendations to address areas for improvement to ensure the Project's continued success. If the Succession Planning Committee follows these recommendations, the chance of achieving successful project outcome will increase. In the next chapter, an analysis of the effects on the MOFR's and the Succession Planning Project's vision to employee buy-in will be found.

3. AN ANALYSIS ON THE EFFECTS OF BOTTOM-UP VISIONING VERSUS ADOPTING A VISION ON EMPLOYEE BUY-IN

As the previous chapters have shown, the MOFR is currently developing and implementing its Succession Planning Project whose goal is to set up a pool of qualified candidates to fill in high-risk (critical) positions. From the stakeholder interviews conducted for the Succession Planning Project Committee, the SFU MBA Team has found that most of the employees know the MOFR's vision; however, most of them are not aware and do not know about the vision and purpose of the Work Force Planning Group which is responsible for the Succession Planning Project. This contrast inspired me to find out more about both the MOFR's and the Succession Planning Project's visioning process and their effects on employees' buy-ins.

Specifically, this chapter will compare and contrast the MOFR and the Succession Planning's visioning processes. I will argue one key difference in their processes, and how they involved employees in the visioning process affected the degree of employee buy-in to the vision. I will also show that how these visions were communicated and the content of each vision were so similar that they cannot account for differences in buy-in. Areas of opportunity will be recommended to the MOFR and the Succession Planning Project to further ensure their continued success.

First of all, the chapter will provide an overview of what vision is and why vision is important. In doing so, it will survey literature and research on different visioning processes. This will be followed by a comparative analysis of the MOFR and the

Succession Planning Project's visions and visioning process. Throughout the analysis, recommendations on areas of improvement will also be provided.

3.1 Vision Importance and Definition

El-Namaki (1992) and Zaccaro & Banks (2004) propose that having a vision in the competitive environment is critical to an organization because it can provide guidance on where the organization is going. In his study of 3 large organizations, James (1994) found that vision not only serves as a foundation for strategic decision making, but also a guiding mechanism for organization's strategic direction. In addition, Coulson-Thomas (1992) concludes from his analysis of 3 surveys consisting of 211 organizations and 4.1 million employees that the respondents believe that having a clear vision is very important to the success of the change of the organization structure, the change management, and the quality assurance programs.

In addition, having a local project vision is as important as having an organizational vision because it can guide team members in a direction towards the same outcome (Christenson & Walker, 2004). In the study of 800 new projects, Akgun, Lynn, & Byrne (2004) found that having a project vision results in more successful project outcomes because project goals, whether technical or business, are understood by team members. Conger (2000) also agrees that having and engaging a local vision is one of the essential factors to determine the overall success of the change initiative.

Although there are numerous of definitions of vision, in their survey of 100 organizations in UK, O'Brien & Meadows (2000) found that the respondents from the organizations describe vision as "a future-oriented concept that gave the organization a sense of direction". Kotter (1995, p.63) further describes vision as "Something that helps clarify the direction in which an organization needs to move". In essence, vision is the future state that the organization wants to achieve.

Furthermore, when forming a vision, the vision developer has to find the common value on which a shared vision can be built (Kolzow, 1999). Shared vision will not only relate to employees better but also encourage them to bond together and work together to make the vision a reality (Kolzow, 1999). Kolzow (1999) further proposes that the use of interviews and focus groups are great tools to discover the shared values from employees.

3.2 Visioning Process

Kolzow (1999), and Snyder & Graves (1994) propose that visioning is a top-down initiative that is exercised by the leaders of the organization. Their view is supported by O'Brien & Meadows (2003)'s research in 8 large organizations in UK where they found that visioning processes consistently follow a top-down approach. They also found, however, that a top-down visioning process usually encounters difficulties in getting employees' buy-in and getting commitment to the vision (O'Brien & Meadows, 2003). Rather than using a top-down process, O'Brien & Meadows (2000) found that a bottom-up approach, where vision can be developed by a team of managers, employees, produces better result.

Interestingly, Bennis & Nanus (1985) and Kolzow (1999) suggest that when developing a vision, leaders analyze the organization's past experiences, present resources, and future trends. In addition, Bennis & Nanus (1985) suggest that leaders can take what is available from the organization and provide it with a form and authority, and articulate the vision to followers. In other word, leaders can use an adopting approach to form the vision. The contrast between a bottom-up approach, proposed by O'Brien & Meadows (2003) and adopting approach, proposed by Bennis & Nanus (1985) will serve as the basis of the main comparative analysis in this chapter.

The following table provides an overview of the MOFR, and the Succession Planning Project's visions relating to different dimensions of comparison that will be discussed later in the chapter. The main difference is the "visioning process"; where the MOFR had a bottom-up approach that included employees' participation, the Succession Planning Project had an adopting approach where no employees were involved in the developing process.

Table 1: Comparison Between the MOFR's and Succession Planning Project's Visions and Visioning Process

	MOFR	**Succession Planning Project**
Vision	"Diverse and sustainable forest and range values for BC"	"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"
Visioning Process	Bottom-Up, employee participation	Adopting, no employee participation
Team Based Approach	Yes	Yes
Structured Project Approach	No	No
Visioning Training	No	No
Communication of Vision	Top-Down Formal, Moderate Communication	Top-down Formal, Minimum Communication
Content of Vision	Lack the "people" element	Lack the "people" element
Proposed Conclusion	Bottom-up approach with employee participation will result in higher employee buy-in on the vision	Adopting approach and no employee participation will result in lower employee buy-in on the vision

To aid the understanding of the readers, before the comparative analysis, an overview of each vision's developing background is provided.

3.2.1 Ministry of Forests and Range's Visioning Process

MOFR's vision: "Diverse and sustainable forest and range values for BC". From the interview with the Succession Planning Project Manager, the Deputy Minister formed the Vision Working Group, which consisted of 18 MOFR staff to develop the MOFR's new vision. It took the Vision Working Group 7 months to complete the new vision. During the developing process, the Group conducted interviews with employees and hosted focus groups to further understand employees' thoughts and asked for their input on the new vision (Bush, Email, June 30, 2005). Furthermore, although the vision was completed after 7 months, it was not until after 9 months that the Deputy Minister communicated to the rest of the organization via an email memo. The reason for the delay was that the new vision was communicated to the management first (Bush, Email, June 30, 2005). The Deputy Minister used formal face-to-face meetings with managers and asked for their endorsement to the new vision before he sent out the memo to the rest of the staff.

3.2.2 Succession Planning Project's Visioning Process

Succession Planning Project's 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".

Similar to the MOFR's formation of the Vision Working Group, the Succession Planning Project formed a committee, which consisted of 16 members from different divisions of the organization, to carry out the Succession Planning Project. However, unlike the MOFR, which formed its own vision, the Succession Planning Project Manager and the Committee adopted their vision from the Work Force Planning Group.

First, the Manager and the Committee members held meetings to discuss whether the Work Force Group's vision was suitable for their project; they later agreed on the vision's suitability and adopted the vision. No employees other than the Committee were involved in the discussion (Bush, Email, June 15, 2005). Currently, the Succession Planning Committee is the only stakeholder the SFU MBA Team interviewed who knows thoroughly the project's vision and purpose. The current communication strategy to other stakeholders is the use of the website, which provides information on the project's vision, purpose, and progress.

3.3 Comparative Analysis

3.3.1 The Benefits of a Bottom-Up, Team-based Approach

Having a team approach is better than an individual approach because an individual has less time and energy for widespread data collection. With more input collected, the team can better identify the shared ideas and perceptions to form a shared vision to increase employees' buy-ins.

Another benefit of the team based approach is that since the new vision is finalized and promoted by the group, the group will be more equipped to convince the rest of the organization to buy-in because the group consists of the employees themselves. Social Proof is the most effective technique to persuade a similar other to perform the same behaviour (Ciadini, 2001). Customer testimonies, for instance, are the best persuasion tool to encourage other customers to buy (Ciadini, 2001). Therefore, I believe a team-based approach will increase employees' buy-ins on the new vision since the vision was finalized and promoted by their peers.

The final benefit is that with a group developing the vision, it can be more efficiently institutionalized throughout the organization. Bennis & Nanus (1985) suggest that the vision will be effective only if it gets communicated and institutionalized in the organization. Lawrence's (2004b) Organizational Learning Cycle demonstrates the path from an individual intuition, to group *interpretation*, and then *integration* of the intuition to the organization level; in return the organization *institutionalizes* the intuition. By forming the vision from the group level, the vision can be institutionalized in a shorter time compared to if it was formed at the individual level (see Appendix M for the Learning Cycle).

In both visioning processes, a team approach was used as the MOFR formed the Vision Working Group, and the Succession Planning Project formed the Committee to develop their visions. The difference was that MOFR has conducted interviews and focus groups to collect employees' input and thoughts to form a shared vision. On the other hand, the Succession Planning Project Committee only discussed the suitability of the adopted vision and no employees were allowed to participate in the discussion. I believe employees were less aware of and committed to the Succession's vision because the Committee did not fully exercise its energy and time to generate employees' input. (Employee participation and employee buy-ins will be further discussed later in the section.)

Therefore, I propose that organizations should take advantage of the team approach and utilize its combined energy and time to collect data from employees to form a better shared vision based on employees' input and thoughts. Having a team that does not conduct the collection of data, the team is not taking advantage on the benefits of having a team-based approach. As a result, the organization or the project will not be able to realize the full potential to form a shared vision.

Kakabadse, Kakabadse, & Lee-Davies (2005) agree that employee participation during the formulation of the vision will increase their commitment to the vision. Involving all levels of employees while developing the vision will also gain their trust to commit to the new vision (Yearout, Miles, & Koonce, 2001). Although the research shows that currently organizations follow a top-down approach visioning process, it is suggested that they should include wider employee participation to encourage their adoption and commitment of the new vision (O'Brien, Meadows, 2003). Similarly, Collier, Fishwick, & Floyd (2003)'s survey of 6,394 individuals in 601 organizations find that when employees are involved, the change initiative is perceived to be less influenced by political interests and employees are more likely to commit to the outcome. In addition, Kirkman & Rosen (1999) argue that having participative inputs not only motivates employees but also improves employees' commitment to the outcome.

I agree that with employees' input and participation the final outcome of the vision will be more easily committed to, because employees were able to input their thoughts during the process. I believe that without such participation, employees will feel excluded and will feel pressured to endorse the vision after it is communicated to them from the management or the vision developers. Pressuring employees to commit to the vision that they did not have a say in will result in a negative effect: resistance. As a result, the organization and the project will encounter more difficulties in carrying out the change initiatives or implementation. Therefore, the most important thing in ensuring the success of the employees' adoption of and commitment to the vision is to include their participation in the visioning process.

Overall, the MOFR's bottom-up visioning process had a positive impact on employees' support and commitment because employees were able to participate in the process and the new vision was finalized by their peers. In addition, the MOFR was able to take advantage of its team approach to collect widespread of data by hosting interviews and focus groups to form a shared vision. On the other hand, the Succession Planning Committee did not fully utilize the advantages of having a team approach; and the succession vision will generate less commitment from employees because they were not included in the formulation of the vision.

While the most important elements of the visioning process are team and bottom-up approaches, other elements also need to be examined in which the following analysis will be based on.

3.3.2 Structured Project Approach

McHaney, White, and Heilman (2002) found that in the 199 successful projects, the characteristics that contribute to the project success included having a structured project approach. Although researchers show that organizations prefer to use an informal approach during visioning, adopting a formal process and methodology to increase efficiency and quality of the outcome is recommended (O'Brien, 2000; Meadows, 2003).

Unfortunately, in the MOFR's case, the vision developers were not given any visioning guidelines, (Bush, Email, June 15, 2005). Similarly, the Succession Planning Project Committee did not receive any structured guidelines or methodologies on visioning process. I believe that the MOFR and the Succession Planning Project should provide visioning guidelines to the future vision developers. By adopting formal methodologies in future vision developments, the project will be adopted and implemented more quickly, saving both time and money.

3.3.3 Vision Training

In their study of 112 organizational leaders who belong to a professional association, Thoms & Greenberger (1998; 1995) found their visioning ability improved after they had undergone the vision training program. With the proper training and the right guidelines, the vision developers will be able to perform tasks more efficiently and effectively (Yearout et al., 2001). Zaccaro & Banks (2004) suggest that the reason organizations neglect visioning training is that they are usually short-term minded so that they neglect systematic leadership developmental programs.

In the MOFR's case, the vision developers did not receive any training on visioning (Bush, Email, June 15, 2005). Similar to their counterparts, the Succession Planning Committee did not receive training either (Bush, Email, June 30, 2005). This lack of training meant that the teams were not properly prepared so they were not in the best position to succeed. Therefore, in order to not be trapped in the short-term mindset and in order to achieve the most efficient and effective visioning process, it is recommended that the MOFR provide the vision training for the members who are part of the vision developing group for the future visioning projects. Having the right training and the right skills, vision developers will be able to form the vision in a more efficient and effective way.

3.3.4 Communication of the Vision

The importance of communicating the vision to both internal and external stakeholders in order to gain their commitment to the vision cannot be overlooked (Kozlow, 1999; Synder, Dowd, Houghton, 1994). Woodward & Hendry (2004) have shown that communicating the vision and the direction to followers is essential especially when undergoing a change initiative such as implementing a new project so that employees are more likely to have lower resistance to the change. Further, El-Namaki (1992) suggests that if the vision is not well communicated, it will disappear during the process of implementing changes and key strategies. Thus, since research shows that one of the hurdles when implementing change is ineffective communication of the vision, it is proposed that the purpose and the vision of change must be communicated clearly in order to gain commitment from employees (Coulson-Thomas, 1992).

Furthermore, O'Brian & Meadows (2003) found that while communicating internally, a top-down approach such as using news letters and meetings was not completely successful at gaining employees' commitment to the vision. Kakabadse et al. (2005) suggest that it is important to communicate in the right way to an audience in order to gain their support. El-Namaki (1992) proposes that in order for the vision to be effective, one of the key factors is that the vision must be well communicated to key managers. In essence, the vision needs to be communicated, and communicated in the right way to effectively increase buy-ins from the stakeholders.

In the MOFR's case, the Deputy Minister made an excellent decision by choosing to use a face-to-face meeting to ensure managers' understanding of the vision and to show the importance of the vision. Committed managers will be more likely to carry out the vision and pass the vision on to their employees. Although having a formal communication channel such as a newsletter to communicate the official new vision to employees is essential, it should not be the only communication method. As using only a top-down communication approach will not be effective enough to attract people's buy-ins.

As with the MOFR, areas of improvement for the Succession Planning Committee's communication can be identified. As stated, the Committee only uses the website to communicate to the stakeholders its purpose, vision, and progress. Therefore, it is recommended that the Committee communicate to the rest of the organization via a diversified communication strategy because the Stakeholder Interview data shows that employees do not want to be communicated to by emails or the website anymore.

Other than formal communication, it is suggested that the MOFR and the Succession Committee can capture the opportunity by using informal communication channels. Kotter (2001) suggests that informal networks, unlike the formal hierarchy, can better deal with the coordinating demands resulted from non-routine activities and changes. Furthermore, informal communication networks can be utilized by leaders as reinforcement to effectively ensure buy-ins on the new vision (Krackhardt and Hanson, 1993).

3.3.5 Content of the Vision

Although there is no set element in a vision's content, Snyder et al. (1994) propose that vision has to include goals and objectives that relate to employees' everyday activities so that they can relate to the vision. In addition, research concludes that cynicism will form if employees cannot see the relevance of the vision to their daily activities (O'Brien & Meadows, 2003).

Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, & McGrath (2003) suggest that while content varies for every leader's vision, there are "core themes" of the content. Core content themes include the mentioning of the change, identifying the ideal goal, and identifying how people are to take actions in order to achieve the vision. However, Sashkin (1989) states that the vision usually does not include mentioning how people should act in order to make vision a reality. If people do not understand how to act to achieve, they will lose their interest and lose motivation to make the vision a reality. An analysis of both the MOFR's and the Succession Planning visions suggest that they both mentioned the ideal outcome; however, they did not mention how people should act relating to the realization of the vision.

Kouzes & Posner (2002) stress that focusing on the ideal will stretch people to imagine the possibilities and will provide a sense of purpose to the people so they will be motivated in achieving the vision. In addition, Kozlow (1999) also propose that by including the ideology in the vision, people can stretch themselves to achieve greatness in the long-term. Therefore, by including the ideal outcome in their vision, the MOFR and the Succession Planning Project will be able to motivate people to achieve the vision.

On the other hand, neither vision includes 'people' in the vision, so that employees will have a harder time relating their work to the realization of the vision. In addition, employees could become cynical which will hinder both the MOFR and the Succession Planning visions. It is, therefore, suggested that the MOFR and the Succession Planning Project include the 'people' aspect in the future visions so they can relate to the vision and know how to carry out the action to achieve it.

3.4 Conclusion

From the comparative analysis, the major difference that emerges between the MOFR and the Succession Planning visions was their visioning process: a bottom-up one versus an adopting one. I propose that the MOFR's bottom-up approach that included employee's participation will result in higher employee buy-in's on the vision compared to the Succession Planning's adopting approach which included no employee participation.

In addition, I have identified areas of opportunity such as adopting a structured approach, providing visioning training to vision developers, communicating vision to stakeholders, and including the "people" element in the content of the vision for both the MOFR and the Succession Planning Project.

Finally, it should be noted that since all the data were collected from the SFU MBA field project, I do not have the longitudinal scientific data related to the visioning process and buy-ins on the vision to further support my proposal on the benefits of having a bottom-up approach. Therefore, the proposed argument on bottom-up approach and employees' buy-in could be further researched in the future studies.

4. EXPERIENCES LEARNED FROM THE MOFR FIELD PROJECT

When our team was conducting the field consulting project for the MOFR, I have gained invaluable first hand experiences both from the team and the client. This experience will always stay with me and will assist me in future consulting projects. Specifically, what I have learned is:

4.1 Client

4.1.1 Ease of Access to Information

The consultants, as a third party, have easier access to information than the parties that have sensitive relationships with the client. For example, we were able to help our client by asking the unions interview questions which could be viewed as too aggressive by the unions if they were asked by the client.

Furthermore, I think some information that is better collected by the third party instead of by the client themselves. For example, I believe we were able to collect a more honest response from the forestry student, Succession Planning Project Committee, and from the contracting companies who work with the MOFR.

4.1.2 Interviews Consume Time

Interviews can take more time than planned as we cannot control an interviewee's availability. For example, we did not have control over when the interview candidates were going to be in the office or when they were going to take off for previously determined vacations. We had some difficulty contacting some of the interview candidates. Although the third party is more likely to have access to people and information, it depends on when the person who has the information can be reached.

Also, we did not know whether people whom we contacted who did not reply were away on vacation or just did not want to help us. Fortunately, we allowed ourselves huge headroom on time by starting the project early and by getting more candidates from the project managers.

In addition, when conducting interviews, most of us were not able to limit the time to 30 minutes as most of the interviewees were enthusiastic and they wanted to tell us more about their thoughts and feedback. In the future, I think in order to have the most efficient interviews, I will try to focus on the task and not get distracted. I will specify the interview duration and state that it is important to respect both of our times in advance.

4.1.3 The Need to be Empathetic

Employees will tell the consultants more than the consultants expected if they are unsatisfied with the organization. During some of the interviews I had to be empathetic to the interviewees when they started to tell me about the unsatisfactory aspects of their jobs. I had to try to steer the interview back while not to offend the interviewees and that took quite an effort. For example, during one of my interviews, the interviewee complained that he has been inputting his suggestions to initiative succession program in the MOFR for 8 years, however, his suggestions never been heard by the management.

This experience will help me be more prepared when I face this situation again. I will also be specific about the need to respect the determined interviewing times.

4.1.4 The Need for Project Manager's Support

We found that the project manager, or the client, has a very important role in establishing our credibility as consultants. We should have asked the client to establish and present our credentials to the Project Committee so that they would show higher respect to us and our work.

In the summary meeting of the latest succession planning meeting, the Project Committee expressed their concern with the SFU MBA Team's value. Their doubts about the team prove that the need to establish consultants' credentials and recognize consultants' work is important in the beginning of the project.

4.1.5 The Need for a Project Timeline

Establishing a project timeline is a critical part of communicating among the team and to the client because it helps clarify progress at each interval of the project. Having a timeline also makes it easier to monitor the project's progress at each time interval and the team can make necessary adjustments to the project's progress accordingly.

For the next project, I will include a project timeline in the project charter and in the project contract as we have done with the MOFR project.

4.1.6 Audience-minded Deliverable

The deliverables have to be tailored according to the audience. For example, when we first started the project, we thought that we were going to present the findings to the Succession Planning Committee, so we always kept them in mind in terms of our presentation. However, one week before the presentation, we found out that we would present to the Strategic Human Resources Group, so we had to change our mindset and tailor the presentation to the specific group in order to effectively communicate the relative materials to them. If an audience cannot relate to the materials of a presentation, they will lose interest and will not absorb the important information in the presentation.

4.1.7 Start Project Early

One of the most important things I have learned is that when we know who our client is, we should start as early as possible to ensure the quality of the project. The benefits of starting early are:

It takes time to learn about a project. We need to know what the project is about, and it will take time to catch up to the project's current state. For example, it took us a week to know what the client really wanted us to do in terms of content of the deliverables.

Furthermore, as mentioned, we did not have control over the interview candidates' availability so that the entire interview process took longer than expected. Fortunately we started early so that we had some headroom when the activities needed more time. Starting early will also provide time for an unplanned event.

4.1.8 Establish and Maintain Good Relationship with Client

The importance of forming and keeping good relationships with clients cannot be overlooked because their word of mouth may lead us to new projects in the future especially when the clients are government or big entities.

4.2 Consulting Team

4.2.1 Intra-team Communication

Effective team communication is essential to a project's success. One example we had was the deficiency in communication that led to some confusion with the latest interview questions we developed. One member of the team did not have the updated interview questions and it was not until we were compiling the data together that we noticed differences in some of the questions. Fortunately, the questions were just slightly different and we were in the early phase of conducting interviews. If we had discovered this later into the process, some of the interview data would be worthless because they could not be compiled together. As a result, we would not be able to develop a set of solid recommendations from the interview data.

Therefore, it would be in the team's best interest to keep track of the document versions and ensure everyone receives all the information, especially when it is sent by email. Specifically, when sending emails, a person should ensure to click on "reply to all" button instead of "reply". This way, everyone will have the same information.

4.2.2 *Use of Meeting Agendas*

It was not until halfway through the project that one of the members proposed the use of meeting agendas to keep meetings more efficient and focused. Although we discussed what we were going to do before the meetings, we always got side tracked and we were not able accomplish the verbally agreed tasks. Having an agenda would have kept the team focused on the tasks and ensure the team's productivity within a predetermined time.

4.2.3 *Have a Driver on the Team*

Having a driver, an enthusiastic person who keeps project on schedule through out the project, on the team really helps the team to start early and stay focused throughout the project. The driver in the team acts as a monitor of the timeline and always promotes the urgency for keeping on track. For example, during the semester when the workload kept increasing and the team was not as focused on the MOFR project, the driver on the team sent out to-do lists for the next project phrase to keep the team focused and on track.

4.2.4 *Clarify Expectations and Code of Conducts*

Clarifying each individual's expectations and code of conducts on how to work together are essential to team's success. In the beginning, we had talked about how we are going to work together by having open communications. However, we did not specify what 'open communication' means to each person.

During the project, I was surprised and frustrated that one of the team members not to reply to emails and return phone calls. Another team member and I waited until close to the end of the project to confront the member. After the confrontation, we clarified on each individual's expectations. The team them re-grouped and performed a spectacular presentation to the client. I believe we should be more specific on each person's expectations and set a clear code of conduct so that no miscommunication or misunderstandings take place during the project's lifespan. In addition, if there was anything that upsets an individual, he/she should not wait until the last minute to confront the problem because it will not increase the team's performance as much as if the problem is identified earlier.

4.3 Conclusion

The MOFR field consulting project has provided me with valuable experiences that helped me to identify areas that I should pay attention to in future consulting projects. Specifically, the experiences I gained are: consultants have easier access to sensitive information and/or stakeholders than the clients, effective intra-team communication is needed for project success, interviews usually take more time than planned, the need to be empathetic when conducting interviews, the need for the client's supports to ensure the respect for the consultants, the benefits of having a project outline, tailor the deliverables to specific audience, start the project early in order to have spare time for unexpected events, meeting agendas keeps the team focused during meetings, and it is invaluable to have a driver who keeps the team focused throughout the project.

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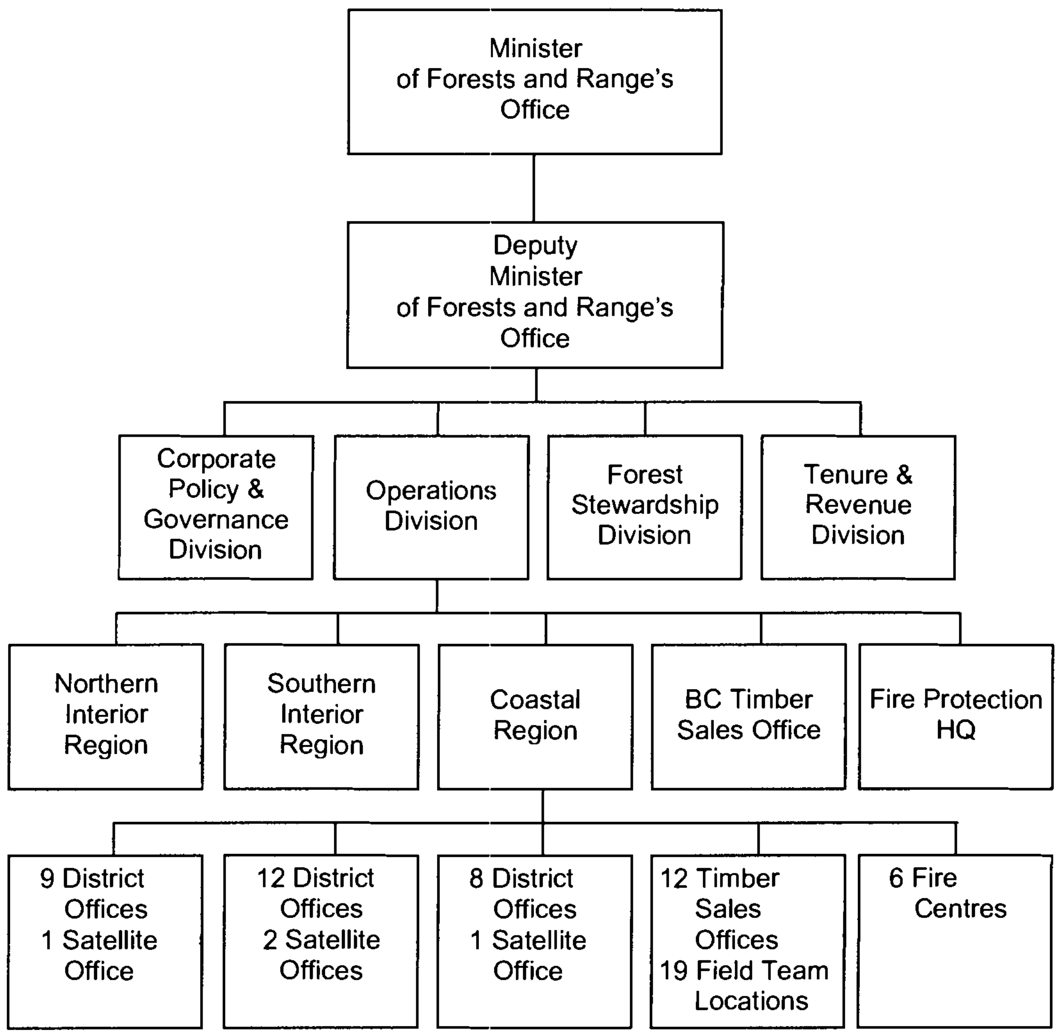
APPENDICES

Appendix A.

Organizational Chart



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

Appendix B.

Project Hierarchy MOFR Road Ahead Revitalization Initiative

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

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 & its succession planning 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 therein as they pertain to the MOFR.
6. To explain succession planning to the stakeholder groups as defined by the MOFR: In a word, succession planning, to the MOFR, is filling the critical positions within the MOFR & having a pool of qualified candidates ready. The Work Force Planning contains the five steps: Gap analysis, recruit & retain, etc...

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 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?
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 Succession Planning Project 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 Succession Planning Committee?
7. What could be improved in the Succession Planning process.
8. Additional Comments.

Four Succession Planning Team 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 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

We understand that positions in undesirable &/or expensive locations are hard to fill. What could you offer as ideas to attract & 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 Forest Service, its mission and vision.

Core Values

Integrity	Open, honest and fair
Accountable	Responsible for our own decisions and actions
Innovative	Encourage and support each other to create new and better ways to do our business
Respect	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 Team	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 with buzzwords. This penalizes those who have had a lot of experience but do not do well in interview situations. You 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

- 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 the 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 – 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; 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 there 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

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 Succession Planning Project was, or that the Ministry was involved in anything of that nature.

The perceived impact the MOFR succession Planning Project have 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 looser – 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 an 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 Team 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 team

- 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 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'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 is 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

Legend

Column 1: Name

Column 2: Years to Retirement

Column 3: Current Performance
*** = Excellent
* = Satisfactory
/ = Unsatisfactory

Column 4: Competency Development
*** = Developed
* = Satisfactory
/ = Undeveloped

Column 5: Willing to be promoted?

Column 6: Willing to transfer to other regions /departments?

Enforcement Managers, SIR					
H. Jarvis	4	***	*	Yes	Yes
H. Piper	11	*	***	Yes	No
C. Juser	19	/	*	Yes	No

Enforcement Managers, SIR					
R. Bush	12	*	***	No	No
A. Kyle	13	•	***	No	Yes
W. Long	17	***	/	Yes	No
B. Storey	22	/	*	Yes	No

Project Managers, All Regions					
F. Goland	5	***	/	No	No
C. Pitts	8	***	/	No	Yes
M. Murry	12	•	***	Yes	Yes
S. Golds	19	*	*	Yes	Yes

Scientists, NIR					
S. French	12	***	*	Yes	No
W. Chan	12	***	*	Yes	Yes
T. Peters	18	***	***	Yes	Yes
G. Fritz	22	*	*	Yes	Yes

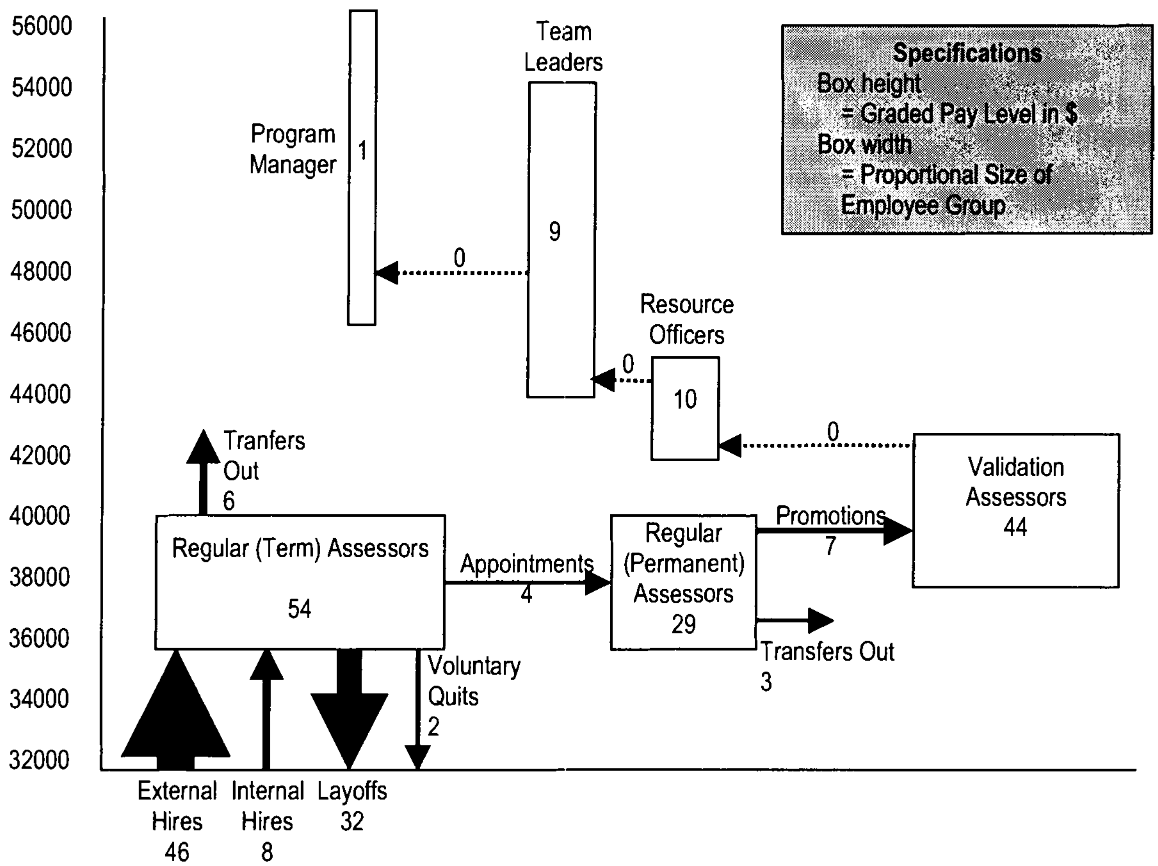
Technical Supervisors, SIR					
S. Ramos	15	*	/	Yes	No
C. Hood	20	*	*	Yes	No
L. Scheitz	22	***	*	Yes	No
B. Lee	26	/	***	Yes	Yes

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

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

Appendix I.

Human Resources Stock Flowchart 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?

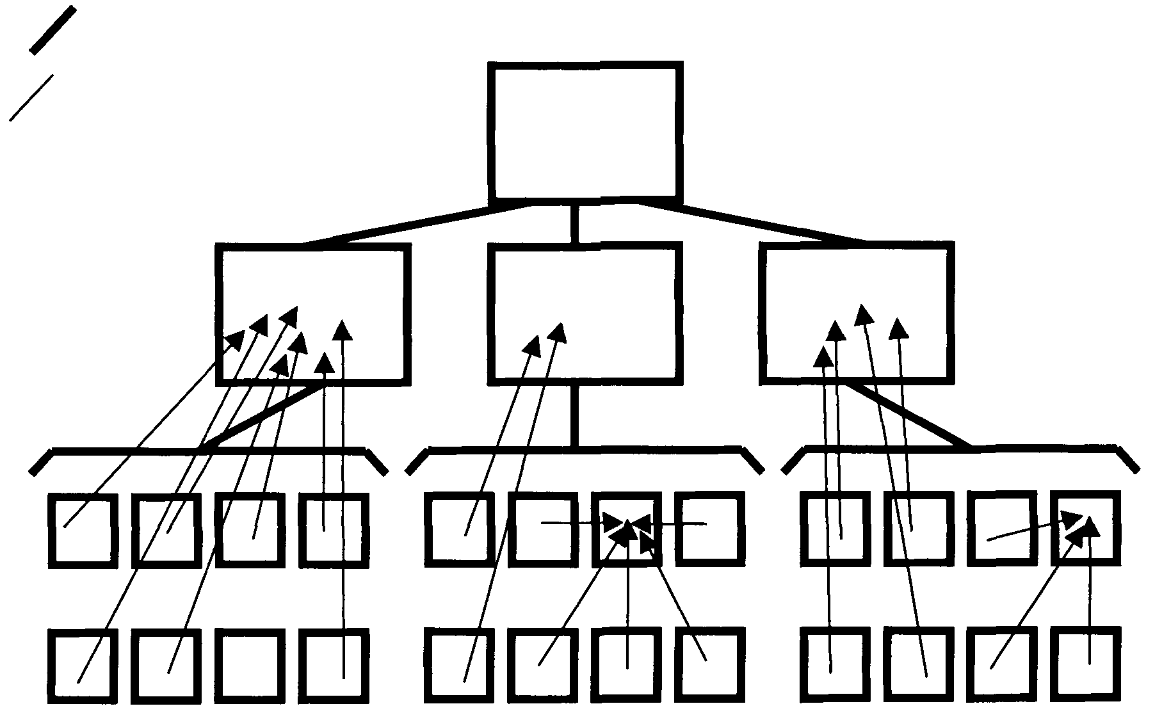
Trust Network

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.

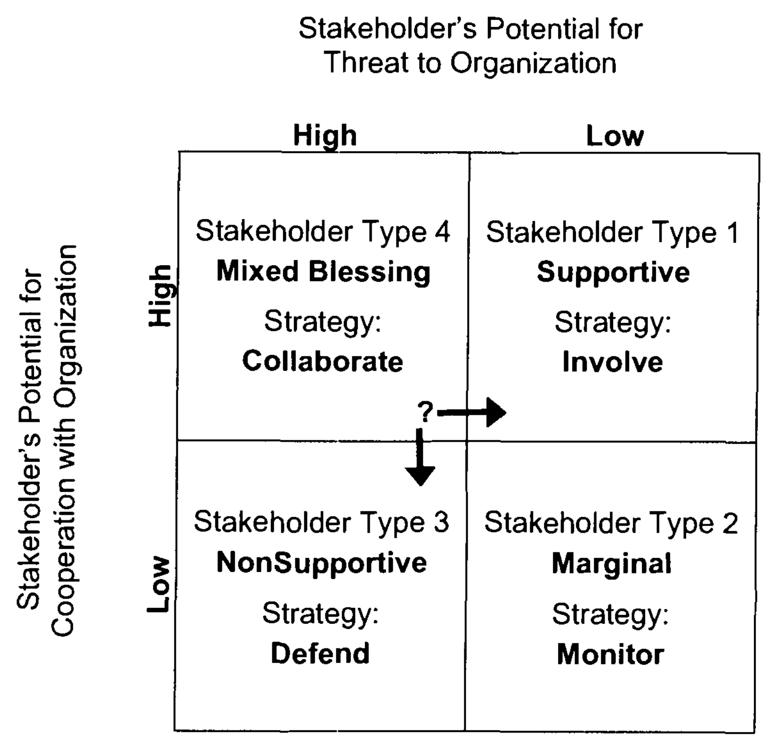
Overall, be sure to watch for **holes** in the informal trust networks. Supervisors and managers identified as not being consulted heavily in any informal network will be largely ineffectual in managing stakeholders and eliciting commitment for a change project.

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.

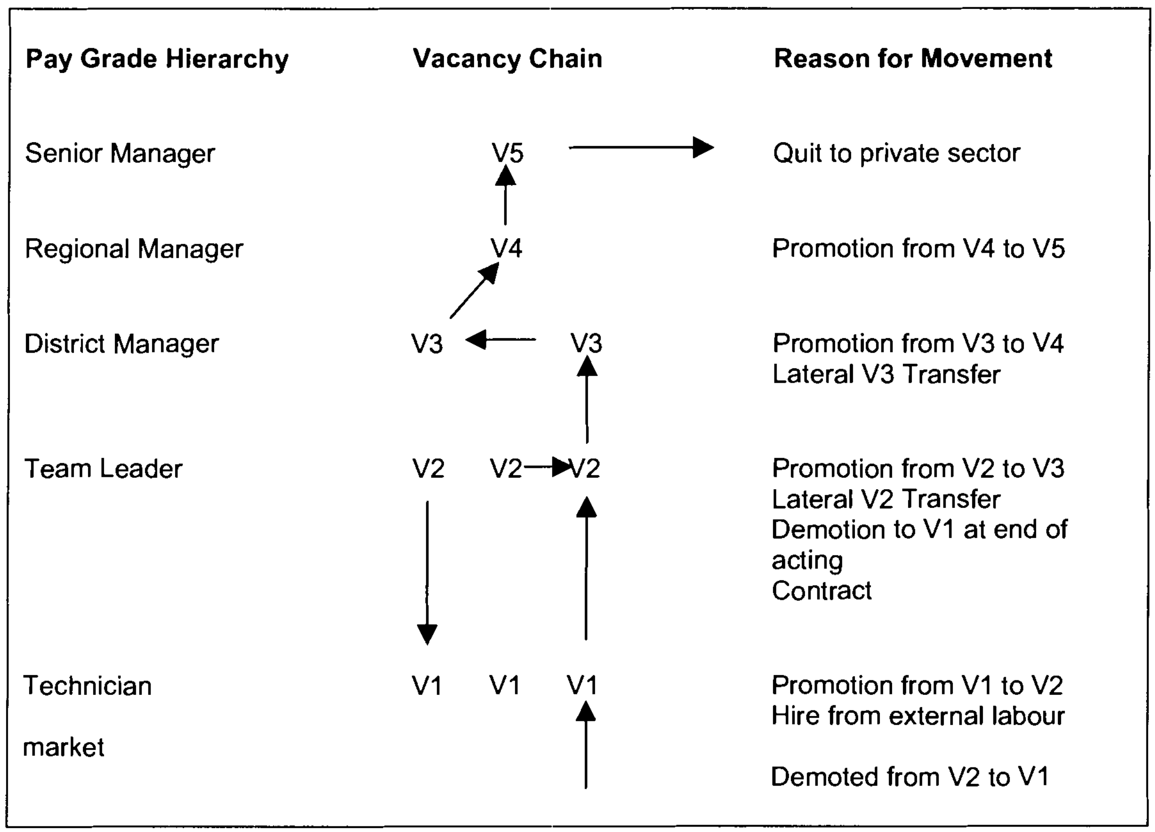
Stakeholder Map



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

Appendix L.

Vacancy Chains

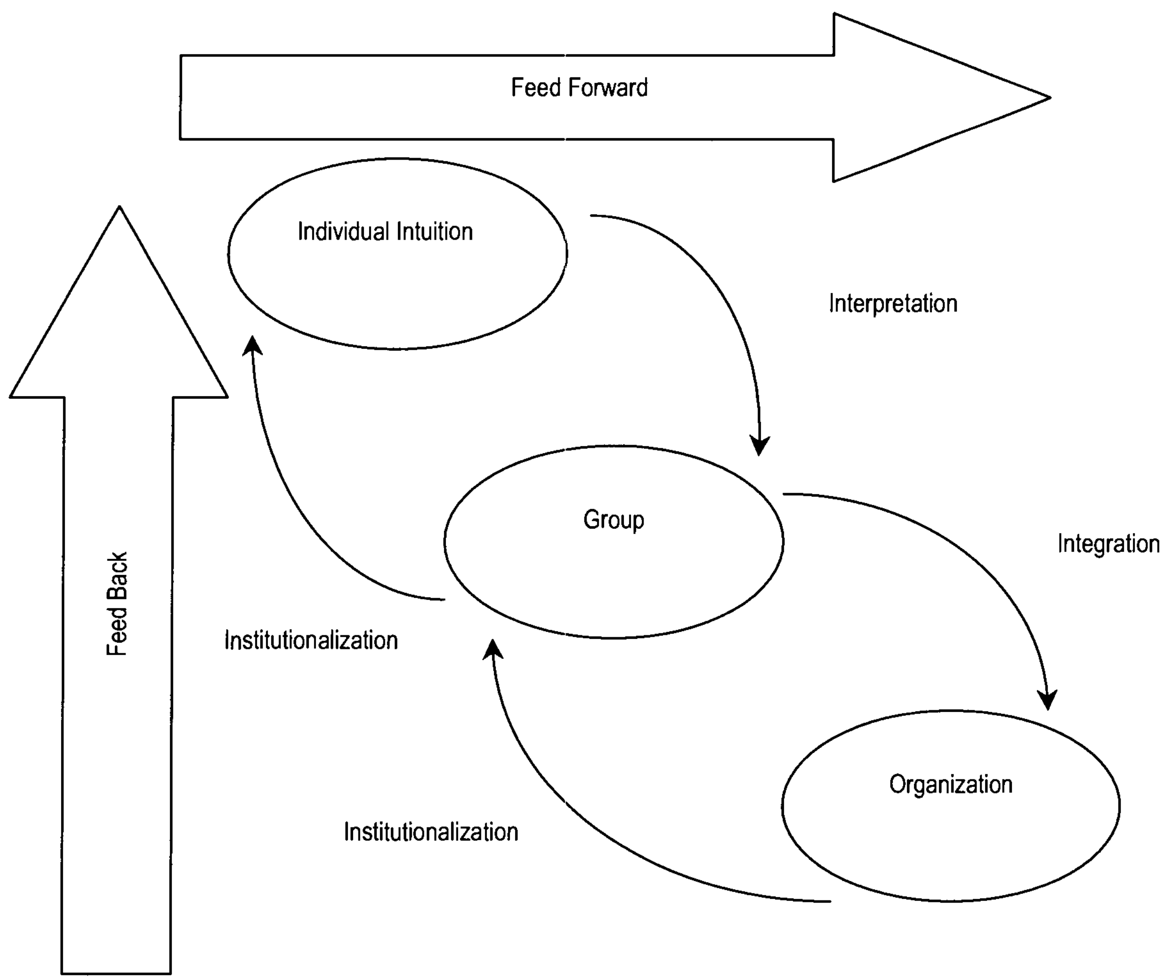


Note. Recreated from Ashley Bennington's figure (2004d, by permission).

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.

Appendix M.

Organizational Learning Cycle



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