

Linking Employee Assessments to Succession Planning

Soonhee Kim, Ph.D.

Due to widespread downsizing and an aging workforce, succession planning is rapidly becoming a key strategic planning tool for human resource management and for improving government performance and accountability. The purpose of this paper is to offer ideas on the connection between employee assessments and succession planning. After describing links between employee assessment and succession planning, the paper presents results from a survey designed to measure employee attitudes toward career development and perceptions of succession planning at the Nevada Operations Office of the Department of Energy. The paper analyzes how employee assessment procedures can take into account career development, training needs, retirement plans, workforce diversity, succession planning and mentoring programs. Last, the significance of employee assessment procedures for facilitating succession planning management decisions that comply with organizational objectives as well as strategic workforce plans is discussed.

Succession planning is an ongoing process of systematically identifying, assessing and developing organizational leadership to enhance performance.¹ Due to widespread downsizing and an aging workforce, succession planning is rapidly becoming a key strategic planning tool for human resource management and for improving government performance and accountability.² The use of succession planning is not limited to the public sector; developing leadership talent in a world of continuous organizational change is clearly an important goal for businesses and non-profits.³

As a result of its research on leadership development, the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) notes that integrating succession management into an organization's strategic plan is a logical step to be taken under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993.⁴ NAPA also states that a key factor in successful leadership succession is making it part of a range of human resource processes — for instance, performance evaluation and recruitment. The Government Accounting Office (GAO), in emphasizing the importance of leadership in a teamwork environment, also acknowledges the challenges of succession planning.⁵

One of the key components of succession planning management is assessment — of both the organization and its employees. For the most part, employee assessments have only been emphasized as part of organizational needs analyses.⁶ Van Wart believes that employee assessments that focus on employee values and opinions are

an important information source for helping organizations to make significant adjustments. As he points out, employees are key actors in determining training, self-improvement and career development needs as they affect succession planning. Thus, a primary function of a personnel office should be to provide employee assessments that also serve as sources of data for future workforce projections.

The purpose of this paper is to offer ideas on the connection between employee assessments and succession planning. In this paper, the results from a survey designed to measure employee attitudes toward career development and perceptions of succession planning at the Nevada Operations Office of the Department of Energy (hereafter DOE/NV) are presented. After describing links between employee assessment and succession planning, the paper looks at how the DOE/NV is establishing employee assessment procedures that take into account career development, training needs, retirement plans, workforce diversity, succession planning and mentoring programs. Last, the paper discusses the significance of employee assessment procedures for facilitating succession planning management decisions that comply with organizational objectives as well as strategic workforce plans.

Succession Planning, Employee Assessments and Career Development

In a recent study, the International Personnel Management Association (IPMA, now the International Public Management Association for Human Resources, or IPMA-HR) reported that many public sector organizations are struggling with employee age gaps resulting from downsizing decisions and hiring freezes; the most noticeable gaps are in the ranks of middle management.⁷ Many of these organizations are discovering that their employee populations consist of large numbers of workers with less than 15 years' experience and large numbers who are scheduled to retire within 15 years.⁸

Succession planning is now considered an important component of an organization's human resource and strategic planning processes, since it can ensure leadership continuity, prevent transition problems, and reduce incidents of premature promotion.⁹ In response to changing organizational and employee needs, succession planning can serve as an important means of systematically identifying the current or potential availability of internal organization replacements for key positions.¹⁰ Once job and personal requirements are assessed, succession planning can help create individual plans that focus on leadership development.¹¹

Pope¹² suggests that the combined processes of career development and succession planning can give any organization — public or private — a snapshot of available talent for meeting current and future needs. According to the IPMA,¹³ public agencies may not always have the wherewithal to establish formal succession planning programs, but they can prevent themselves from falling into many of the pitfalls associated with such succession planning processes as in-house promotions, mentoring programs, tuition reimbursement, "shadowing" opportunities, special assignments, cross-training and access to special committees and task forces. The IPMA report states that the key steps to successfully integrating succession planning and career

development in public organizations are establishing core competencies, encouraging self-determination, developing career planning, using technology for career development, recommending a strong career development program, taking a comprehensive and organization-wide view of career development, focusing on people, finding a champion and promoting realistic expectations.

The main components of succession planning are identifying and analyzing key positions, creating and assessing candidates and selecting people.¹⁴ Although most of the literature on succession planning is focused on executive-level transitions, Spencer and Spencer¹⁵ believe that it can also be applied to key jobs at any level — including those below the jobs that employees currently hold, since the current trends of downsizing and organizational change sometimes makes it impossible to sustain all workers in their present positions. Thus, succession planning is also being used to determine lateral job movement (e.g., to different functions, project teams or geographic locations) as well as executive replacements.¹⁶ Peterson¹⁷ believes that the business world in general is beginning to understand the strategic advantages of succession management, but Schall¹⁸ argues that public organizations have not paid sufficient attention to strategic succession planning, even in terms of executive leadership.

One topic that most researchers and practitioners agree on is the importance of employee assessments to succession planning in both the private and public sectors.¹⁹ According to several published reports, four reasons for conducting employee assessments with succession planning management in mind are a) determining the extent of an organization's pending leadership shortage; b) identifying needed leadership competencies based on services or program needs, values and organizational strategies; c) assessing employee strengths, skill gaps, developmental needs, and career plans; and d) monitoring the implementation of succession programs with top management support.²⁰ For organizations interested in integrating career development and workforce diversity into their succession planning programs, it is especially important to focus on the following issues when performing employee assessments: training needs, career development, interest in succession planning and mentoring programs, perceptions of diversity management and retirement plans.²¹

Several studies²² have all emphasized the integration of workforce diversity into succession planning. In the private sector, Allstate and Motorola serve as examples of companies that have used succession planning to ensure that diverse slates of qualified candidates are identified and developed for all key positions.²³ All Allstate employees receive assessments of their current job skills that include road maps for developing the required competencies for advancement within the organization. Options that are made available to employees include education, coaching and mentoring, classroom training, and a variety of career experiences. Partly as a result of this program, 40 percent of Allstate's executives and managers are women and 21 percent are minorities.²⁴ Starting in 1995, Motorola specifically targeted women of color; by 1999, 11 minority women held positions as vice presidents — an increase of 10 since 1991.²⁵

Nevada Operations Office of the Department of Energy

Since 1995, there has been a dramatic exodus of long-term DOE employees as a result of downsizing, attrition, and voluntary early retirements.²⁶ Due to the department's aging workforce, more than 25 percent of all employees and 70 percent of career Senior Executive Service (SES) personnel will be eligible for retirement within the next five years. In response to these significant turnover rates, the DOE has been emphasizing a combination of workforce changes and diversity management in its training, employee development and succession planning processes in its strategic plans since 1999.²⁷

As part of its succession planning program, the DOE/NV²⁸ adopted the use of long-range strategic planning to ensure that when vacancies came up that could impact management, leadership or mission accomplishment, replacements would be selected from pools of fully qualified applicants.²⁹ Key workforce concerns that were identified include: a) a large number of senior employees leaving the organization; b) a large number of GS15 positions filled by employees who are eligible to retire within 5 years; and c) no complex-wide training standards for team leaders or first-line supervisors.³⁰ Thus, some of the first succession planning actions taken were to establish training standards for employees who might someday fill team leader, first-line supervisor and deputy assistant manager positions. The program was also aimed at developing a talent pool of GS-14s and non-supervisory GS-15s for training in managerial and supervisory competencies. All GS-14s and non-supervisory GS-15s are eligible to participate; a training requirements database is established for every active participant.³¹

The DOE/NV program guidelines describe the procedures and benefits of succession planning. When filling a GS-15 position, a qualified participant's database is sent to a "selecting official." The database will contain information on GS14s and non-supervisory GS-15s who participated in managerial and leadership training, and who therefore received feedback on performance-related tasks. Thus, the selecting official will be able to determine not only if someone has received training, but also how well they are applying that training. The selecting official will therefore have access to slates of candidates who are better-trained and qualified as managers and leaders. According to the DOE/NV³² employees at all levels are benefiting from the managerial and leadership training opportunities given to their supervisors.

The DOE/NV has also started a mentoring program as a succession planning support system. Natural mentoring has long been recognized as an important element in learning and career success in business and management.³³ According to Gibb,³⁴ more formal mentoring programs are systematic approaches to bringing together senior and experienced people with junior or inexperienced people for the purpose of developing learning partnerships. The DOE/NV³⁵ mentoring program is open to all employees interested in enhancing their careers and/or personal growth. It is considered a mechanism whereby individuals can receive advice on how to develop specific skills and knowledge in order to achieve their professional and/or personal goals. By estab-

lishing a mentor program, the DOE/NV hopes to improve the job skills and abilities of its employees and thus enhance their potential for taking on higher-level responsibilities and for developing their career plans.³⁶

Survey Administration

Data was taken from DOE/NV employee assessment surveys completed in April 2000. Questionnaires were distributed to all GS12 (38), GS13 (117), GS14 (56), GS15 (22), and SES (7) employees at the DOE/NV.³⁷ Of the 240 distributed questionnaires, 186 were completed and returned by mail, for a response rate of 77.5 percent. The survey included 18 employee assessment items related to career development, skill utilization, participation in succession planning and mentoring programs, workforce diversity, and retirement plans (see **Appendix**, page 544). Responses to 13 items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 for "strongly agree" and 5 for "strongly disagree." Responses to the other five items were measured as yes or no. An additional seven items were added for demographic data collection purposes (i.e., type of position, retirement plan, gender, age, education, grade and race).

Results and Findings

Of the 186 respondents (110/59 percent male, 67/36 percent female), 80 held administrative positions and 98 held technical positions. A breakdown of age groups among survey respondents was 2.3 percent 20-29 years old, 54.3 percent 30-49 years old, 36 percent 50-59 years old, and 7.4 percent 60 years of age and above; 43.4 percent of the respondents were 50 years of age or older. The majority of respondents were either GS13 (93) or GS14 (41) employees.

Skill Utilization and Career Development

On the items pertaining to how employees perceive their skill utilization and career development at the DOE/NV, approximately 30 percent of the respondents indicated a need for more training to perform their jobs effectively, while 50 percent believed that they did not need additional training (**Table 1**). A majority (87 percent) felt that they possessed the necessary skills for promotion, but just over half believed that their knowledge, skills, and abilities were underutilized in their current job positions. Nearly 60 percent of the respondents indicated some form of participation in self-improvement efforts for purposes of career development. Slightly less than half (45 percent) of the respondents said that they noticed their managers' support of career development, and 43 percent believed that their previous promotions from one grade to the next had been timely. Almost two-thirds (61 percent) of the respondents believed that their managers' assessments of their job performances and competencies were fair.

Table 1. Skill Utilization and Career Development

Survey Items	Strongly Agree		Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		Total (%)	Mean* (s.d.)
	N (%)	N (%)			N (%)	N (%)		
Training needs	17 (9.1%)	39 (21)	38 (20.4)	69 (37.1)	23 (12.4)		186 (100)	3.22 (1.18)
Skill competence for promotion	77 (41.6)	85 (45.9)	15 (8.1)	5 (2.7)	3 (1.6)		185 (100)	1.76 (0.84)
Managerial support of career development	19 (10.2)	64 (34.4)	44 (23.7)	42 (22.6)	17 (9.1)		186 (100)	2.86 (1.15)
Timely promoted	21 (11.2)	60 (32.2)	22 (11.8)	47 (25.2)	36 (19.3)		186 (100)	3.09 (1.34)
Fairness of performance assessment	31 (16.8)	81 (44.0)	40 (21.7)	19 (10.3)	13 (7.1)		184 (100)	2.47 (1.11)
Skills being underutilized	41 (22.0)	52 (28.0)	31 (16.7)	43 (23.1)	19 (10.2)		186 (100)	2.71 (1.32)
Self development efforts	24 (12.9)	86 (46.2)	43 (23.1)	29 (15.6)	4 (2.2)		186 (100)	2.47 (0.98)

* Coding scales: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; and (5) strongly disagree

Gender Differences

A t-test was performed in order to determine differences in career development efforts between female and male employees. As shown in **Table 2**, statistically significant differences were noted in two areas. In skill utilization, the results indicate that males perceived greater underutilization of their skills compared to female employees ($p < .05$). In the area of self-improvement efforts, female employees had stronger perceptions of making self-improvement efforts compared to their male coworkers ($p < .10$).

Table 2. Gender Differences (T-test results)

Survey Items	Gender	N	Mean ¹	SD
1. I believe my knowledge, skills and abilities are underutilized in my current position.	Female	67	2.97	1.24
	Male	110	2.56	1.35
	Mean difference		0.41**	
2. I have made maximum use of job & educational opportunities by consistently engaging in extensive professional reading and participating in professional organizations, conferences and workshops.	Female	67	2.31	0.86
	Male	110	2.61	1.05
	Mean difference		0.30*	

¹ Coding scales: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; and (5) strongly disagree.

** $p < .05$ * $p < .10$

Succession Planning and Mentoring Program Participation

The gathered data show that 50 employees were participating in the DOE/NV succession planning program at the time the surveys were completed. The number includes 19 women and 31 men at the GS13, GS14, GS15, and SES levels (**Figure 1**). According to these figures, 94.4 percent of all GS14-, GS15-, and SES-level women and 64 percent of all GS14-, GS15- and SES-level men working at the DOE/NV were participating in the program. The numbers also include seven non-Caucasian employees. According to the data presented in **Figure 2**, 59 of the surveyed DOE/NV employees were participating in the mentoring program — 43 percent of the female respondents and only 27 percent of the male respondents. An additional 62 employees (34 percent) indicated a desire to take part in the mentoring program.

Figure 1: Participants in Succession Planning by Gender and Grade

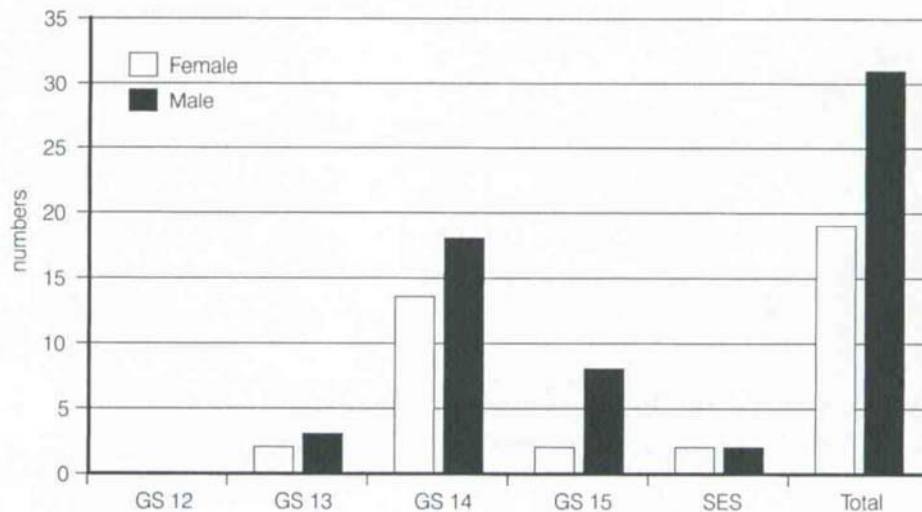
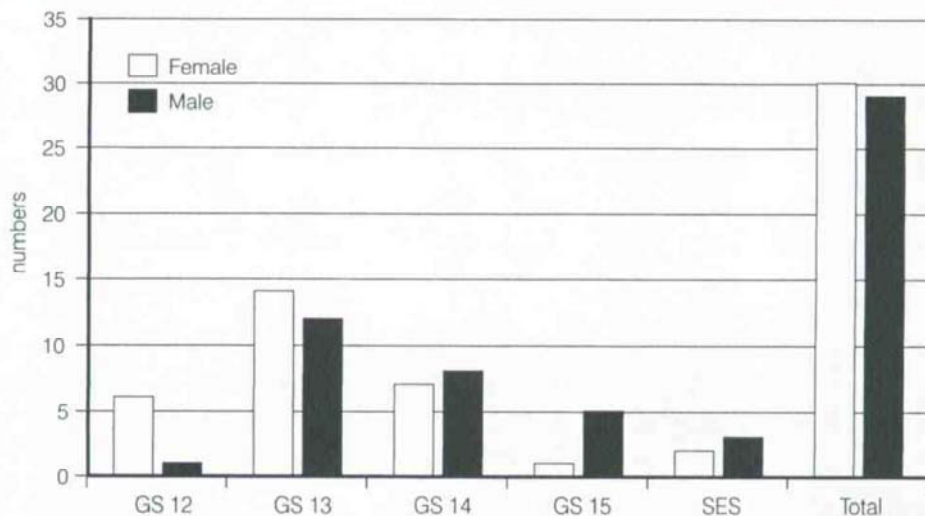


Figure 2: Participants in Mentoring Program by Gender and Grade



Employee Perceptions on Succession Planning, Supervisory Relationships and Workforce Diversity

Just over three-quarters (76.3 percent) of the respondents believed that the DOE/NV should include GS12 and GS13 employees in the succession planning program; 9.2 percent disagreed with this idea, and 14.5 percent were neutral. This indicates an employee perception that succession planning is an appropriate personnel management tool for general career development decisions as well as for executive positions. Just under two-thirds (61 percent) of the survey respondents answered "strongly disagree" or "disagree" to the statement, "I believe the majority of GS14 and higher promotions at DOE/NV have been based on good assessments of an individual's leadership, planning and decision-making abilities;" only 21 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement (**Table 3**). A comprehensive succession planning program could help in the design and implementation of development training for potential promotion candidates.

As the data in Table 3 show, only 31.7 percent of the respondents answered "strongly agree" or "agree" to the statement, "I believe the mentoring, sponsorship and coaching provided by supervisors to their employees, to enhance their employees' careers, is equally available to all;" 42 percent of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed with that statement. Furthermore, the majority of respondents (67.1 percent) agreed with the idea that "the DOE/NV advocates a diverse leadership workforce," while only 18.4 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Only 27 percent of the respondents believed that the mentoring program gave employees opportunities for effective short-term exchanges across functional areas.

Table 3. Perceptions on Succession Planning, Supervisory Relationships and Workforce Diversity

Survey Items	Strongly Agree N (%)	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)	Strongly Disagree N (%)	Total (%)	Mean* (s.d.)
1. Competence-based promotion of GS-14 and higher positions	12 (6.5)	29 (15.6)	32 (17.2)	56 (30.1)	57 (30.6)	186 (100)	3.63 (1.25)
2. Inclusion of GS-12 and GS-13 in the succession planning program	61 (32.8)	81 (43.5)	27 (14.5)	12 (6.5)	5 (2.7)	186 (100)	2.03 (0.99)
3. The impact of mentoring program on effective employees across functional areas	8 (4.3)	42 (22.7)	88 (47.6)	30 (16.2)	17 (9.2)	185 (100)	3.03 (0.97)
4. Supervisors' support of career development	14 (7.5)	45 (24.2)	49 (26.3)	45 (24.2)	33 (17.7)	186 (100)	3.20 (1.20)
5. Workforce diversity in leadership	31 (16.8)	93 (50.3)	27 (14.6)	21 (11.4)	13 (7.0)	185 (100)	2.42 (1.11)

* Coding scales: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; and (5) strongly disagree

A t-test was performed to determine if any statistically significant differences existed between assessments reported by employees who were and who were not participating in the DOE/NV succession planning program. According to the results presented in **Table 4**, significant differences were found for six items. Participating employees reported much more positive perceptions in the areas of managerial support of career development ($p < .001$), timely promotion ($p < .001$) and supervisor's support of career development ($p < .001$). The test results also indicate that non-participants had stronger perceptions than participants of their skills being underutilized ($p < .05$) and unfair performance assessment ($p < .05$). Finally, non-participants in the succession planning program showed greater support than participants for the broad scope of succession planning that included GS12 and GS13 employees ($p < .05$).

Table 4. Succession Planning Program Participants (T-test results)

Item	Succession Planning program	N	Mean ¹	SD
Managerial support of career development	Participants	53	2.30	0.88
	Non-participants	131	3.08	1.18
	Mean difference		0.78***	
Timely promotion	Participants	53	2.53	1.17
	Non-participants	131	3.32	1.35
	Mean difference		0.79***	
Fairness of performance assessment	Participants	53	2.04	0.90
	Non-participants	129	2.64	1.14
	Mean difference		0.60***	
Skills being underutilized	Participants	53	3.15	1.26
	Non-participants	131	2.53	1.30
	Mean difference		0.62***	
Supervisor's support of career development	Participants	53	2.53	0.95
	Non-participants	131	3.46	1.20
	Mean difference		0.93***	
Broad scope of succession planning	Participants	53	2.43	1.06
	Non-participants	131	1.85	0.91
	Mean difference		0.58***	

¹ Coding scales: (1) strongly agree; (2) agree; (3) neutral; (4) disagree; and (5) strongly disagree

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$

Retirement Plans

As shown in **Table 5**, the collected data indicate that 51 DOE/NV employees were planning to retire within the following two-to-five years. Of the 16 male employees who reported their intention to retire within two years, nine held GS14 (5), GS15 (3), and SES (1) positions. Only two female employees reported their plans to retire within four years, but 10 female employees were planning to retire within five. The results show that within the next five years, 16 GS14 employees, six GS15 employees and two SES employees were planning to retire.

Table 5. Retirement Plans by Gender and Grades (Numbers)

Retirement Plans	Gender		GS 12	GS 13	GS 14	GS 15	SES	Total
	Male	Female						
Next 2 years	16	0	2	5	5	3	1	16
Next 3 years	8	0	0	5	1	1	1	8
Next 4 years	5	2	0	2	4	1	0	7
Next 5 years	10	10	4	9	6	1	0	20
Total	39	12	6	21	16	6	2	51

Implications and Discussion

The study results show some support among the surveyed DOE/NV employees for the idea that succession planning can provide them with effective opportunities for career and leadership development in an environment currently marked by an aging workforce and pressure to downsize. The data show that DOE/NV employees believe that succession planning should open doors for GS12 and GS13 employees to earn positions at the GS14 level and higher. The results also show that the employees perceive a need for leadership assessments for such promotions. This implies a need for DOE/NV management to establish a strong link between succession planning and leadership/career development via clearly defined guidelines and models for leadership assessment and training in leadership competencies. Practices should emphasize employee self-improvement by promoting cross-functional and cross-sector job assignments, executive coaching and mentoring.³⁸

The results also indicate that succession planning management at DOE/NV is closely tied to the organizational objective of increasing the participation of individuals with diverse backgrounds (i.e., minorities and women) in management-level positions. For instance, the data show that 58 percent of the surveyed DOE/NV succession planning participants are female. Beeson³⁹ suggests that organizations use their succession planning reviews not only as a means of analyzing female and minority participation in their leadership pipelines but also as a vehicle for enhancing the visibility of diverse employee populations. Several researchers⁴⁰ have reported close links among staff diversity, rewards, recognition systems and succession planning.

The survey results show that the DOE/NV employees perceive a greater need for supervisory and managerial support for the purposes of career development and self-improvement. This finding implies a need for executive leaders and managers to be more aware of the importance of supervisory relationships, and to reaffirm their commitment to an organizational culture that encourages employee career development rather than grooming particular employees for specific supervisory or managerial positions. Also suggested is the need for DOE/NV to pay more attention to mentoring and similar support activities to achieve succession planning goals. For example, DOE/NV management might consider creating a recognition reward system for acknowledging productive mentoring relationships between employees and supervisors, making sure to spread its recognition throughout the organization.

Next, the results indicate that employee needs assessments must be conducted in order to evaluate how employees' knowledge, skills and abilities are being utilized in the performance of their individual duties. This task could be completed via individual interviews and surveys being conducted and collected by upper management, line managers and human resources departments. The gathered information would serve as an important resource for restructuring work units and creating individual development plans.

Finally, the study results show that employee assessments of retirement plans can provide significant information in terms of workforce changes that require succession planning. Periodic employee demographic surveys could include questions on retirement and career plans, which would help in the preparation of leadership training components to fill expected vacancies. Such training would take advantage of other databases with information on skill and leadership assessments, training information and projected career paths for individual employees.

It should be mentioned that none of these suggestions can be easily implemented unless government organization leaders make a commitment to changing their personnel management approaches from traditional hierarchical structures and decision-making patterns to a focus on workplace quality and the effective design and use of human capital strategies to enhance performance and accountability.

Conclusion

The data analyzed for this study suggest several directions for future research in terms of employee assessments, succession planning and strategic human resources management. Case studies of how various organizations have addressed succession planning, career development and workforce diversity challenges would provide support for or evidence against the implications of this study, and would help in the identification of additional succession planning-related strategic human resources management issues to be studied.

The two most important limitations of this study were a) the lack of data on employee skill gaps in terms of leadership competencies, and b) the lack of usable data for evaluating the DOE/NV succession planning structure and implementation. Both of these limitations should be considered when conducting new studies on succession planning process and outcome evaluation.

Appendix: Survey Items (Employee Assessments)

Items were measured on a five-point Likert-type scale, with 1 for "strongly agree" and 5 for "strongly disagree" unless otherwise noted.

1. I need more training to perform job effectively.
2. I am confident that I have the skills necessary to be promoted.
3. Management strives to provide me with varied job assignments and opportunities on special project teams.
4. Managers encourage me to participate in formal internal or external programs to further expand leadership knowledge and skills.
5. My promotion from one grade to the next has been timely.
6. Managers' assessments of my job performance and competencies are fair.
7. I believe my knowledge, skills and abilities are underutilized in my current job position.
8. I have made maximum use of job and educational opportunities by consistently engaging in extensive professional reading and participating in professional organizations, conferences and workshops.
9. I believe the majority of GS-14 and higher promotions at DOE/NV have been based on good assessments of individual's leadership, planning and decision-making abilities.
10. DOE/NV should include GS-12 and GS-13's in the succession planning program.
11. DOE/NV's mentoring program provides employees effective short-term exchanges across functional areas.
12. I believe the mentoring, sponsorship and coaching provided by supervisors to their employees, to enhance their employees' careers, is equally available to all.
13. DOE/NV advocates a diverse leadership workforce.
14. I participate in the mentoring program at DOE/NV. (Yes, No)
15. I would like to participate in the mentoring program at DOE/NV. (Yes, No)
16. I know what the succession planning program at DOE/NV is all about. (Yes, No)
17. I participate in the succession planning program at DOE/NV. (Yes, No)
18. I am expecting to get a promotion within the next few years. (Yes, No)

Notes

- ¹ National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA, 1997). *Paths to Leadership: Executive Succession Planning in the Federal Government*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Public Administration.
- ² See U. S. General Accounting Office (1999). *Human Capital: A Self-Assessment Checklist for Agency Leaders*, GAO/GGD-99-179, Washington, D.C.: U. S. General Accounting Office.; International Personnel Management Association (2000). *Personnel Research: Career Development Program II* (www.ipma-br.org).; West, J. P., & Berman E. M. (1995). "Strategic Human Resource and Career Development Planning," In. Steven W. Hays and Richard C. Kearney (3rd edition, Eds). *Public Personnel Administration: Problems and Prospects*. Englewood Cliffs: Prent.
- ³ See Hicks, S. (2000). "Succession Planning," *Training & Development* 54(3): 79-83.; NAPA; Pope, B. (1992). *Workforce Management: How Today's Companies Are Meeting Business and Employee Needs*, Homewood, III: Business One Irwin.; Buckner, M., & Slavenski L. (1994). "Succession Planning," In W.R. Tracey (Eds), *Human Resources Management and Development Handbook*, New York: AMACOM, 561-575.; Schall, E. (1997). "Public Sector Succession: A Strategic Approach to Sustaining Innovation," *Public Administration Review*. 57(1): 4-10.; Spencer, L. M., & Spencer S. M. (1993). *Competence at Work: Models for Superior Performance*, New York: Wiley; West & Berman.
- ⁴ NAPA
- ⁵ U.S.GAO
- ⁶ Van Wart, M. (1998). "Organizational Investment in Employee Development," In S. Condrey (Eds.), *Handbook of Human Resource Management in Government*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 276-297.
- ⁷ IPMA
- ⁸ Ibid.
- ⁹ Hagberg Consulting Group (2000). *Succession Planning* (www.succession-planning.com).; West & Berman.
- ¹⁰ Pope.
- ¹¹ Hicks; NAPA; Pope.
- ¹² Pope.
- ¹³ IPMA.
- ¹⁴ Bucker & Slavenski; Hicks; Peterson, A. H. (2000). "Succession Management," *Credit Union Magazine* 66(1): 54-57.; NAPA.
- ¹⁵ Spencer & Spencer.
- ¹⁶ Peterson; Spencer & Spencer.
- ¹⁷ Peterson.
- ¹⁸ Schall, E. (1997). "Public Sector Succession: A Strategic Approach to Sustaining Innovation," *Public Administration Review*. 57(1): 4-10.
- ¹⁹ IPMA; Pope ; Bucker & Slavenski; Schall; Spencer & Spencer.
- ²⁰ Hagberg Consulting Group; NAPA; IPMA.
- ²¹ IPMA.

- ²² See, for example, Beeson, J. (2000). "Succession Planning," *Across the Board* 37(2): 38-43; Crockett, J. (1999). "Diversity: Winning Competitive Advantage Through a Diverse Workforce," *HR Focus* 76(5): 9-10.; IPMA; Peterson; and Stewart, J. K. (1999). "Diversity Efforts Dragging Women of Color Find Progress Can Be Made, But It's Slow," *Chicago Tribune*, September 1, p.7.
- ²³ Crockett ; Stewart.
- ²⁴ Crockett.
- ²⁵ Stewart.
- ²⁶ U.S. Department of Energy (1999a). *Strategic Plan: Achieving and Promoting a Workforce that Looks Like America, a Comparison to Workforce 21*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Energy.; U.S.Department of Energy (1999b). *The Succession Planning Guide*, Washington, D.C. 20585 (www.hr.doe.gov).
- ²⁷ U.S.DOE, 1999a.
- ²⁸ U.S.Department of Energy, Nevada Operation Office (1999c). Nevada Operations office: *Succession Planning Program*, Human Resources Division.; U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operation Office (1999d). *Mentoring Program at DOE/NV*. Unpublished internal memorandum.
- ²⁹ Succession planning at the DOE/NV clearly indicates the importance of needs assessments combining strategic human resources management with succession planning. The succession planning program at the DOE/NV also emphasizes the importance of periodic evaluations and collaborations between management, line management, human resources management and development, and EEO/diversity. Therefore, the succession planning program at the DOE/NV reflects the connection between an organizational strategic plan and the objectives of a succession planning program. One of the strategic plans of the DOE is promoting and maintaining workforce diversity. Succession planning at the DOE/NV achieves this plan by proposing a link between succession planning and diversity management (U.S. DOE/NV, 1999c).
- ³⁰ U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operation Office (2000). *Succession Planning Program*, unpublished informal presentation by Human Resources Division in U.S. Department of Energy, Nevada Operation Office.
- ³¹ The training requirements are based upon competencies derived from the Senior Executive Services (SES) Core Requirements, the Management Excellence Inventory, and from private industry. The competencies are linked to courses, activities, required readings and, in some instances, developmental assignments. Training and development activities are entered into the data bank upon completion. On a periodic basis, the participants will be assessed on their ability to perform managerial and leadership behaviors and tasks. Each assessment cycle will measure the ability to perform different behaviors and tasks and the assessment results will also be entered into the database (U.S. DOE/NV, 2000).
- ³² U.S. DOE/NV, 1999c.
- ³³ Roche, G. (1979). "Much Do About Mentors," *Harvard Business Review*, January/February, 14-28.; Levinson, D. (1978). *The Seasons Of A Man's Life*, New York: Alfred Knopf.
- ³⁴ Gibb, S. (1999). "The Usefulness of Theory: A Case Study in Evaluating Formal Mentoring Schemes," *Human Relations*, 52 (8), 1055-1075.
- ³⁵ U.S.DOE/NV, 1999d.
- ³⁶ In November, 1999, the Human Resources Division, Training and Development Program, distributed a memorandum on the Mentoring Program parameters to all DOE/NV employees. Those employees, who expressed an interest in serving as mentors, were matched with those who expressed a desire to have a mentor. After the mentor and protégés were matched, the mentoring process proceeded with the following phases: 1) stage one- get acquainted; 2) stage two- plan and commit; 3) stage three- developmental discussions/assignments; and 4) stage four- evaluate the progress.

³⁷ Researches of the federal employment found that women and minorities are overall underrepresented in mid-level and senior grades. See, for example, Kellough, J. E. (1990). "Integration In the Public Workplace: Determinants of Minority and Female Employment in Federal Agencies," *Public Administration Review* 50(5): 557-566.; Guy, M. (1993). "Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Backward: The Status of Women's Integration Into Public Management," *Public Administration Review* 53(4): 285-292.; Naff, K. C. (1994). "Through the Glass Ceiling: Prospects for the Advancement of Women in the Federal Government," *Public Administration Review* 54(6): 507-514.; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (1992). *A Question of Equity: Women and the Glass Ceiling in the Federal Government*. Washington, DC: U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board. The workforce at the DOE/NV shows similar findings. According to employment data, the DOE/NV has a 53.9 percent male population (158) and a 46.1 percent female population (134). While the number of male employees of GS 14 and above is 61, the number of female employees of GS 14 and above at the DOE/NV is 27. Among 76 minority employees, the number of minority employees of GS 14 and above is 8.

³⁸ Hagberg Consulting Group; Peterson.

³⁹ Beeson.

⁴⁰ See, for example, Beeson; Hagberg Consulting Group; and Peterson.

Author

Soonhee Kim, Ph.D.

Syracuse University
Department of Public Administration
Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs
200 Eggers Hall
Syracuse, NY 13244
E-mail: sokim77@hotmail.com

Soonhee Kim is an assistant professor at the Department of Public Administration in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University. Her teaching and research interests include human resources management, public management, information resources management and program evaluation. Her most recent publications have appeared in the *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *Public Administration Review*, and *Public Performance & Management Review*.

Author's note: I would like to thank employees at DOE/NV for their participation in this study. Special thanks go to James Winget for his help on the survey research.

Copyright of Public Personnel Management is the property of International Management Association-USA and its content may not be copied or email multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for indiv