



Guidelines for succession development

26 JULY 2013

Background

The Division of Health Sciences' strategic planning process is led by the Divisional Executive Committee.

The Divisional Executive has identified eleven priority areas for planning and action. Succession planning is one of the eleven areas. These guidelines were discussed and agreed by the Divisional Executive at its meeting on 25 July 2013.

This document provides guidelines for Deans and Heads of Department to assist with succession planning.

Introduction

Succession Development is generally considered to be the systematic process by which junior staff are identified, assessed and developed to make sure that they are able to assume key senior roles within an organization. This is viewed as being important so as to ensure that there are sufficient staff to take up senior roles and so ensure the future performance of the organization. So-called "high-potential" staff are identified and/or recruited and then plans put in place to allow them to acquire and develop the broad range of skills and competencies required for them to fill the senior positions in the future. Within this "Company Model" the focus is on identifying leadership gaps, recognizing current and potential leaders and then developing recruitment and retention strategies.

There is a need to differentiate between succession planning/development and replacement planning. Succession planning/development involves training at ALL levels while replacement planning simply involves identifying back-ups for senior roles.

Division of Health Sciences

In 2012 within the Division of Health Sciences there were approximately 451 academic staff at the level of Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor. (214 Senior Lecturers and 237 Associate Professors and Professors). Of these 41 were Heads of Department, Deans or PVC.

HODS/DEANS/PVC

Age	Number	Percentage
≥60	14	34
50 - 59	23	56
40 - 49	3	7.5
30 - 39	1	2.5
TOTAL	41	100

PROFESSORS/ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

Age	Number	Percentage
≥70	12	5
60 – 69	78	33
50 - 59	86	36
40 - 49	48	21
30 - 39	13	5
TOTAL	237	100

SENIOR LECTURERS

Age	Number	Percentage
≥60	27	12.5
50 - 59	75	35
40 – 49	81	38
30 – 39	28	13
20 -29	3	1.5
TOTAL	214	100

In addition there were approximately 70 Senior administrative staff.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Age	Number	Percentage
≥60	13	18.6
50 – 59	27	38.6
40 – 49	20	28.6
30 – 39	9	12.8
20 – 29	1	1.4
TOTAL	70	100

(Figures provided by HR 2012)

In many respects the skewing of the age distribution is not surprising. It is unlikely that an academic staff member would be appointed as HoD /Dean or PVC in their 20s or 30s and even uncommon in their 40s. Equally, it is not surprising to see that the majority of Professors and Associate Professors are in the over 50s age brackets. Again as postgraduate training primarily in Medicine and to a lesser extent in Dentistry takes between 5 and 7 years it is not surprising to see the majority of Senior Lecturers in the 40 and 50 year age brackets. Nevertheless, it is important to have a process in place to ensure that there are staff who will be able to move into senior positions in the short and long term.

Succession Planning/Development

The key issues in succession planning/development within an organization are:

- it must be part of an integrated HR process that includes training, development and performance appraisal
- it should identify what positions and skills the organization will need in 5 or 10 years and include these in the training program
- it should identify those that are almost ready to step into critical positions as well as provide the opportunity for all staff to acquire and demonstrate the required skills
- the skills must be developed through work experiences, job rotation, projects and other challenging assignments
- a system for monitoring staff progress by senior management should be established
- it must include a system for providing feedback and encouragement to potential successors
- it must belong "to the organization" and not to the HR department in order to make sure it has the attention it deserves



A basic succession development plan should involve recognizing the talent which already exists within the organization. Critical gaps should be identified and then a targeted recruitment and retention strategy developed to fill these gaps. This is then followed by the development of training programmes for all staff at all levels so that they will be able to take up the various strategic positions as they arise over the next 5 to 10 years. During this time there must be monitoring of the programme which should include performance and compensation management, which in turn leads back to recognition of internal talent.

Issues within the University environment

ACADEMIC STAFF

Because of the nature of the university all academic staff should be given the opportunity of progressing their careers and in this context, succession planning is therefore synonymous with staff development. While staff development is already a responsibility of the Head of Department it should be done in conjunction with the Dean and HR.

A departmental staff profile should be developed so as to identify critical positions which will need to be filled in the short, medium and long term ie within the next 5 to 10 years. The profile should include gender, Māori and Pacifica backgrounds and be in accord with the Divisional and respective Faculty and School strategic directions. As recruitment is seen to be integral to succession planning, a strategic selective recruitment programme should be established together with the internal staff development programme.

Succession planning within a company is designed for internal succession, within the university it should be designed to allow staff to apply for senior positions but these should continue to be advertised and “new blood” continually be brought in if necessary. Notwithstanding, existing staff should be supported and developed to enable them to apply for and be competitive for senior positions both within this university as well as other universities worldwide.

Staff development should not only include support for research and teaching but also within the health sciences should recognize clinical leadership as well as personnel and financial management skills.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Succession planning for administrative staff should more closely resemble the “company” model above with potential managerial staff being identified and developed by rotation through various roles and challenging assignments.

There must be some incentives to encourage staff to take on these assignments and each manager should identify a potential replacement before they get promoted to a new position.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL STAFF

These staff often have specialized skills which are essential to specific research groups. They are often on 'soft' money supported by research grants. They present particular problems in terms of succession planning, as while it is important for them to develop their own careers and for the particular research group or laboratory to retain and develop their skills, future employment is dependent upon obtaining further externally funded research grants.

Recommendations

These recommendations should be read in conjunction with the strategic frameworks and policies of the Division, as well as the respective Faculties and Schools.

ACADEMIC STAFF

1. Succession development should be the responsibility of the Dean and where appropriate the Head of Department in consultation with and approval by the Dean. For Deans this lies with the PVC.
2. A departmental staff profile should be developed by each Head of Department and approved by the Dean. Critical positions identified and either developed internally or by selective recruitment. Critical gaps in the departmental staff profile should be identified and a strategic recruitment programme established to fill these gaps.
3. Human Resources should be asked to consider ways of supporting specific staff development programmes for all staff relevant to their academic level so that they can apply for senior positions within the University.
4. Staff development should not only include support for research and teaching but also within Health Sciences should recognize clinical leadership as well as personnel and financial management skills.
5. Leadership programmes to develop these skills should ideally be available for all staff especially junior staff and not just for new heads or Associate Deans.
6. Opportunities for staff to display leadership qualities should be identified and staff displaying these qualities rewarded. Staff should be made aware of these opportunities and they should be included in staff performance reviews and promotion considerations.
7. Positions should continue to be advertised and new blood brought in if necessary.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

1. Succession development for administrative staff should more closely resemble the “company” model with individual managerial staff being identified and developed by rotation through various roles and challenging assignments.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL STAFF

1. Research group leaders and laboratory managers should develop plans to retain and continually up skill scientific, technical and laboratory staff consistent with the departmental strategic directions and in accord with the Divisional and respective Faculty and School strategic directions.

Approved by	Divisional Executive
Date	25 July 2013