



Human Resources & Risk Management

COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

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Dear County Department Head:

As part of the County's workforce/succession planning strategy and considering the County's budgetary capabilities in mind, our office has developed this guide to assist you in aligning your department objectives with a workforce that can help you meet them. This guide will assist you to review your current and future workforce needs and identify critical positions needed to meet your demands.

This is on-going process that requires upper management involvement. It is also essential that employees are allowed to take ownership of his/her individual development needs to assist in maximizing their potential.

Departmental Needs Assessment

The primary element of workforce planning efforts is an understanding of the current and future needs of your department. The following four-step departmental needs assessment facilitates this understanding. It starts by evaluating the department as a whole and works down to more specific information at the workforce level. Each phase of the assessment focuses on information that will be necessary to develop succession plans.

A. Departmental Priorities

The first step is an assessment of departmental priorities, beginning with an examination of the department's mission and objectives to help identify whether they are being met and what direction the department will be heading in the upcoming years.

The questions to be asked at this level include:

- What are the department's mission, goals, objectives, and core services?
- What are we doing to meet the department's mission, goals, objectives, and core services?
- Do we anticipate a change in our objectives or way of conducting business?
- Where do we want to be as a department in 5 years?

B. Department Structure

The second step will build upon the first by relating the priorities of the department to its actual structure. Programs, classifications, organizational charts, and budgets will be looked at in this step as they pertain to providing core services. Examining the structure of the department will identify whether we are ready to meet the future needs of the County.

The questions to be asked at this level include:

- What is the formal structure of the department (organizational chart)? Does it align with the department's priorities and overall goals?

- What percentage of the total budget is spent on personnel and professional development?
- What is the ratio between employees, supervisors and managers? Is this ratio consistent within all your sections or programs?

C. Efficiency

In the third step, the department's efficiency will be examined. Assessing the department's efficiency as it relates to departmental priorities and structure will create a picture of how the demands for services will increase or decrease in future years.

The questions to be asked at this level include:

- What is the nature of the work to be done, in terms of services, volume, location, and duration?
- What impacts your services? (i.e. funding, population, economy)
- How can you track your productivity better?
- Is the demand for services expected to increase or decrease? Will you have more or less clients to service in the next five years?
- What is the effect of technology on productivity?
- What factors would cause a change in workload? How will you plan for such events?

D. Workforce

The fourth step involves using the information gathered in the previous steps to determine current and future workforce needs. Specifically, this step identifies positions that are critical to your operations.

The questions to be asked at this level include:

- Which positions are most critical to your departmental operations? Consider such factors as:
 - a) What positions assist you in meeting mandated services, programs or core responsibilities?
 - b) What positions have a long training period or high learning curve?
 - c) What positions have a high turnover?
 - d) What specialized positions do you have where there is no service provider to meet interim service needs should you have no qualified employees?
- What career paths are generally followed or available for those critical positions?
- What training and development programs are available and how many employees participate?
- Where can employees obtain department specific professional development? (i.e. professional associations)

Employee Development Strategies

Once you understand the critical positions required to run your operations, you will be in a better position to focus your resources more effectively. Developing your employees is an essential component of planning for your department's future. Below are some employee development options:

Mentoring

Identify key professionals, supervisors and managers in your department and utilize their expertise as mentors to assist employees in developing along their career paths. Retired or soon to be retired employees could assist with newly-hired employees.

Tuition Reimbursement

Recognize employees for their motivation and interest in furthering their education, which will update their skills and knowledge of current practices and trends in the field. Reimbursement is available, encourage employees to pursue their education.

On-Site Development Opportunities

Allow internal and external professionals to come to the worksite and present personal development classes to employees.

Performance Evaluations

Performance evaluations are a valuable source of information for both employees and supervisors. Performance evaluations provide supervisors and employees an opportunity to discuss the employee's strengths and weaknesses. Supervisors can also take this opportunity to recommend developmental opportunities to enhance an employee's skills for future performance improvements.