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PREFACE

Many factors influence an organization's performance. One such factor is management succession. Management succession is the process of staffing the various managerial positions which become vacant as a result of transfers, promotions, retirements, resignations, terminations, or deaths.

For many years, organizations have struggled with management succession and its sometimes adverse effects. These adverse effects can be considerably minimized, however, if organizations approach this event with a designed plan of action.

The methodology used in this paper will utilize the traditional descriptive model. This paper will summarize the recent attention given to management succession in the last decade and its application to law enforcement agencies. It will describe the results of inadequate planning. This paper will also propose the tools to give organizations the necessary capacity to plan for this crucial event.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Law enforcement agencies undergo many changes throughout their extended lives. One change which can have a profound effect on a police organization is management succession. This process involves filling managerial positions that are vacated through transfers, terminations, promotions, resignations, or retirement. Regardless of size, management succession is a recurrent and often painful problem for all organizations.[1]

Although this problem has existed since the early inceptions of organizations, management succession has not been given much attention until the last two decades. This seems quite strange considering the importance of management succession, especially at the top management position, and the complexity of the process of selecting the right individual and the ramifications of an improper selection.[2] The predominant attention to this fundamental problem has been addressed by researchers as it exists in the private sector organization. By comparison, virtually no studies have been performed which were specific to public sector organizations. These studies, however, can be applied to virtually all organizations because organizations, public and private alike, share basic characteristics which are

intrinsic.

Organizations spend time determining two things at once: the requirements of the organization in the future and which people will best meet those requirements.[3] Organizations will assess individuals on past performances, intelligence, future availability, interests and desires, and supply and demand.[4] As management succession is studied, two primary goals are discussed:

- Finding the best candidate for the managerial position

- Management of the succession process that will minimize:
  - the organizational disruption
  - interpersonal jockeying that are almost inevitable[5]

CHAPTER TWO

ADVERSE EFFECTS OF MANAGEMENT SUCCESSION

Although management succession is a natural and unavoidable event, it presents the law enforcement agency with various adverse effects. These effects can be even more pronounced in smaller agencies without a cadre of back-up managers.[6] The decision about who will be chosen for a particular position is sometimes clouded or swayed based on the human emotions of hate, bias, greed, jealousy, and revenge.[7] These adverse effects are experienced by the individual candidates for the vacant positions, the individual(s) making the succession selection, and the organizations as a whole.

Individuals who find themselves candidates for a vacant position compete with other individuals which creates a moderate level of stress. This stress is sometimes intensified by competing with individuals who are known by the candidates. In some cases, candidates are friends, and, in other instances, they are worst enemies.

If stress on the individual competitor is not enough, the individual who wins the position now finds a different type of stress. Oftentimes, the new manager has to replace a person whom everyone else remembers as perfect and who represents an ideal that the newly-appointed supervisor

fears can never be met.[8]

Adverse effects are also felt by the decision makers in the succession event. Most are quite aware that the choice of an agency's top administrator is an important decision that they will make because this decision determines the future course and health of the agency. A bad choice may be costly, troublesome, and embarrassing.[9] The trick for decision makers is to select someone who will extend the agency's string of successes.[10] If the current chief administrator is assigned to pick his successor, this decision can be the most important decision he/she will ever make.[11] If this is the case, decision makers must realize that only a few great leaders can relinquish power to someone who may upstage them.[12]

Another area decision makers have to reckon with is deciding whether to promote from within or outside. When an agency needs to make big changes, outsiders are freer to deliver the necessary shocks. Insiders are too encumbered with favors owed to others who have helped them on their way up.[13] On the other hand, political forces inside an agency favor the selection of an insider. In large agencies, an insider causes less disruption to the existing structure.[14]

By far, the entity experiencing the greatest adverse effects from management succession is the organization itself. From the entire department to the smallest division, various problems arise which consume management's

time, deflect management's attention, and, thus, have a real impact on performance.[15] When a manager or employee is promoted, his/her department/division is thrown into disarray.[16] Possible outcomes may result in the staff becoming overworked, confused, and frustrated, and efficiency, productivity, and morale may drop.[16] In fact, Pfeffer viewed succession as one of the few situations in which redefinition of organizational strategies and practice occur.[17]

Although these adverse effects seem insurmountable, several recent studies have suggested that consideration of organizational circumstances at the time a succession occurs enhances understanding of succession's consequences. With this understanding, these above-mentioned problems can be minimized, or even eliminated, through the implementation of a good succession plan.[18]

CHAPTER THREE

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT SUCCESSION

In order for organizations to prepare for succession, personnel planning is paramount. Planning is defined as the process of preparing a set of decisions for action in the future, directed at achieving goals by preferable means.[19] Planning for personnel is future oriented, and comprehensive personnel planning encompasses all the components of human resource management.[20] In order to meet personnel requirements of succession, developmental experiences must be given to those managers who are placed in the department's succession pool. These are coaching and mentoring experiences (as the coach or mentor), assignments which test a manager's individual capabilities, activities that require building internal and external networking, and responsibilities in change and transformation events.[21] After the establishment of developmental experiences, police departments can begin identifying replacements for key managerial and executive positions by formulating competency-related criteria.[22] Like management development, career pathing, and assessment and selection, succession planning requires gathering, refining, and using data that relate to the identifying, evaluating, and developing processes for competency-based information.[23]

Competency information can be utilized to its fullest extent by creating succession planning programs with these steps:

- Decide which criteria is to be used in identifying key replacements. Implicit within this effort is the identification of key positions for which candidates are sought.

- Analyze position requirements, including competency requirements. Information should be categorized by management level, job family, competency level, or some combination of all three.

- Evaluate candidates against the competency criteria by a profiling process to determine their degree of fit.

- Determine the competency requirements levels and the readiness levels of candidates, then determine the developmental activities needed to move a candidate toward readiness. Periodically during the course of these developmental efforts, candidates can be matched against various positions to determine the degree of readiness for intermediate positions.[24]

Establishment of these criteria and the identification of readiness levels can be done with knowledge, skills, and ability information that separates the requirements of and differences between position demands. With a consensus on position demands, organizations can begin planning for their long-term needs of qualified candidates to fill important slots. In addition, establishing criteria allows police organizations the opportunity to create developmental activities that match future allocation requirements.[25]

Once competency-related criteria are developed, departments can initiate succession planning with varying

levels of sophistication. At the basic or bottom level, succession planning is handled informally with one executive simply asking another executive to provide the name of a subordinate that he/she feels is best suited to serve as a backup.[26] Once this is accomplished throughout the department, a series of backups are developed for each critical position. With this backup system in place, many feel this is sufficient for the succession planning. A major shortcoming of this type of planning is that those individuals who possess the needed talents are oftentimes overlooked. When this occurs, the department suffers from a lack of qualified leadership.

In the second level of sophistication, executives are again asked to prepare a list of backup individuals, but recommendations are made with supportive data for their choices.[27] The supportive data most likely will come in the form of a working appraisal system. This system should ideally limit personal bias and other forms of subjective opinions and reflect an individual's actual work performance. Although this level of succession planning is better than the first, it still leaves room for error in promoting individuals beyond their capabilities.

In the third level of succession planning, the affected individuals are included in the discussion and their career goals and potential for growth are incorporated into the plan. This can be accomplished by assessment centers or

through the use of psychological testing. An appropriate
assessment should consider issues such as:

- Aspirations of the individual

- Opportunities within the organizations as
  contrasted to the aspirations

- Intellectual capacity

- Use of intellect

- Interest profile relative to aspirations and
  organizational opportunities

- Level of managerial expertise relative to career
  path position demands

- Job-related traits and/or personality factors[28]

In the fourth level of succession planning, the
developmental needs of these identified individuals are
considered and their strengths can be heightened.[29]
Professional development is broadening the staff's
abilities, while career development is getting them ready
for the next position up the career ladder.[30] Grooming the
skills of potential supervisors occurs before they are
promoted rather than on-the-job. This grooming, in many
cases, crosses more than one functional area to insure that
development is broad based.

At the optimal level of succession planning, all jobs
within a police organization should be measured. When an
opening occurs, the organization can gauge the size of the
promotion.[31] The current job of the individual considered
for promotion should be measured and then compared to the
position of possible promotion. If this new position is

less than a 10% increase in job size, this should be viewed as a mere lateral transfer. If it is a 10-15% increase, it is considered a standard sized promotion. A large promotion ranges anywhere from a 16-25% increase. Promotions consisting of a larger percentage should be scrutinized with the utmost care because the department could be setting the individual up for failure.[32]

Police departments that engage in all sophisticated levels of succession planning place themselves in a proactive position concerning their department's managerial needs. To do otherwise places the department in crisis management when an unanticipated managerial vacancy occurs.

Organizations have utilized many different types of management succession planning in the past. Some of these "plans" are quite limited in scope. Some have utilized a predetermined succession plan in which the chief executive officer picks a younger successor and passes the responsibilities of his/her office to this person, much like runners in a relay race pass a baton.[33] This process is limited to the individual whims of the present administrator, but it is less controversial than the classical horse race that develops when two or more individuals are told they are being considered for the same position. During the past decade, a different design has emerged. In this design, a team of executives report to the chief executive officer. If designed effectively, this

group becomes more than a set of individuals working
together; it is truly an interdependent, interacting team.[34]

Some experts in human resource management feel that
additional emphasis should be placed on what work an
organization's managers will be performing in order to
obtain specific objectives before considering who those
managers will be. This emphasis combines a task orientation
toward managerial work performance outputs with a people
orientation toward succession candidates.[35] This has been
appropriately labeled strategic management succession.

Strategic management succession planning is a
systematic process that prescribes managerial output and
personnel requirements over a period of three to five years.
More simply stated, a strategic succession plan is directed
toward an organizational vision of future managerial work
performance outputs, roles, and people. A typical strategic
management succession plan possesses the following three
characteristics: it is a part of the overall objectives of
the department, it is evolutionary in nature, and it is
authoritative.[36]

After considering the overall objectives of the
department, the projected work outputs of the managerial
positions are assessed. Once completed, the human resource
needs of the department can be formulated. This type of
planning is also evolutionary in nature because it projects
how accountabilities in specific managerial positions should

develop in order to meet the work output needs of the department. It also states how the skills and numbers of incumbent managers will have to change in order to effectively carry out those responsibilities.[37]

Authoritativeness is the third characteristic. This plan extends to current managerial output and future requirements of incumbents, and hazards a guess about what they may turn out.[38] This plan proactively states what the managerial outputs and incumbent requirements must be in order to achieve the overall departmental objectives.

Strategic management succession has produced many positive benefits, some of which are listed below:

- Informing senior management of projected changes in managerial work performance outputs and roles, and in numbers, types, and characteristics of both managerial positions and incumbents required to fulfill the strategic plan.

- Aiding human resources in gathering, analyzing, presenting, and managing the data in the above paragraph, and using those data to conceptualize and administer an effective strategic management succession plan.

- Securing support and resources needed from top management for implementing the succession plan.

- Assuring appropriate numbers and kinds of qualified managers to produce the work outputs the organization needs for future success.

- Providing for unbroken managerial continuity.

- Identifying high potential internal and external candidates for existing or future positions.

- Satisfying (deserving) employees' career advancement aspirations.

- Proactively creating and managing planned change

and the organization's future.[39]

A practical guide for most organizations for designing and implementing a strategic management succession plan may include the following sequential components: a strategic vision statement, a planning database, objectives, implementation strategies, and evaluation and feedback.[40]

The strategic vision statement guides the department in determining the type and numbers of managerial levels, positions, roles, and personnel needed to fulfill the overall departmental objectives. It evaluates existing positions, either redesigns or eliminates them, or creates new positions which are necessary to accomplish stated goals in the objectives.

The planning database consists of situational analysis and forecasts of work demand and incumbent supply.[41] This database must be complete, accurate, and constantly updated. The objectives are simply the desired outcomes for which resources will be dedicated in the plan's implementation.[42] During implementation, a schedule designed to attain objectives through implementation strategies is developed and placed into action with the aid of detailed sequencing steps and time tables.[43] The final step is evaluation and feedback. As with any dynamic program or system, the accomplishments must be periodically measured against the succession plan's planned outcomes. Any shortcomings must then be addressed in the design and implementation stages.[44]

With periodic and consistent evaluation, the plan can remain flexible to adapt to a constantly changing environment.

During the transition period from one executive to another, police organizations can experience disruption in their coordination of previously stated objectives. Through a planned series of activities, police departments can minimize organizational and individual stress, including that of the new leader, and reduce the overall organizational "downtime."[45]

One way to accomplish this is the development of an automated succession plan. An automated succession plan generally consists of nine basic steps, and although each plan will be unique to each police department, they all share some basic characteristics. Following this predetermined plan makes this process of succession smooth and relatively painless.[46]

The first step is selling the system. As with most changes, employees at all levels should be involved in the implementation process. The more employees involved in the process, the easier it is to sell the system because they will usually adopt it as their own creation. Benefits of the system should be explained to all parties. Workshops should then be established for managers and line employees. These workshops should include:

- Instructions for completing detailed job descriptions. A sample should be provided.

- A list of sample job skills and codes, which will

serve as a guide and "thought provoker."

- Clear response deadlines.[47]

In step two, each manager should write a detailed job description for each position under his/her span of control.[48] In step three, employees should fill out job descriptions for their positions. Although supervisors have also written job descriptions on each position, new insights are gained from those who actually perform the job. In step four, steps two and three are compared.[49] As with performance evaluations, the supervisor and subordinate discuss the two job descriptions and arrive at a consensus concerning this position. These job descriptions need to be performed each year because of changing environments.

Once the preliminary foundation work is done, it is time to start on the actual succession planning in step five.[50] Employees must receive training in preparation for their upward mobility. This training can be developed and performed in-house, or it may be derived from external sources. This training emphasis, as well as other training, needs' to be tracked or documented. When this is accomplished, track training in step six is completed.

In step seven, the department needs to define succession by organizational components or divisions.[51] Division heads should compare their employees' skills, experience, education, and achievements against those listed in the job description for the job they would be promoted

to.[52] A ranking of these prospective candidates should then be performed with a new training emphasis toward shoring up the skills necessary for the new position. A minimum of two individuals should be groomed for the next management level, since one candidate could leave the department as the vacancy occurs.

The next step is maintaining communications with the training and developmental teams. A department's successes or failures should be discussed in order to improve the overall succession plan. The last step is to automate the succession plan.[53] The advancement intentions of each employee should be known and periodically checked. Training should be an ongoing process, and the performance of each employee should be consistently tracked.

Each department is unique in and of itself. Succession plans will most likely differ slightly, yet these basic steps will help meet the needs of succession in a manner that helps improve efficiency, productivity, and morale throughout the department.[54]

CHAPTER FOUR

SENIOR LEVEL MANAGEMENT

Since succession planning for the senior level position is extremely critical to the overall short and long term health of a department, this type of succession planning will be given additional attention in this paper. The department should consider certain factors involved in the decision process of selecting senior level management replacements. To accomplish this, it must consider the more relevant senior level factors without losing general applicability, help to diagnose problems in this type of selection process, and refrain from dictating methods. Certain other considerations must also be considered. Emphasis must be made on the following aspects: the strategic orientation of that position, the evaluation of the candidate's past performance as a function in its organizational context, and the nature of the overall department.[55] The assessment of risk is crucial to the selection decision process because it focuses attention on the consequences of a poor decision. While context factors are relevant to all management selection decisions, they are especially crucial to those involving the senior level management positions.[56]

Members of a department know that the choice of the

department's chief executive officer is the most important decision the elected officials will make--the decision that determines the future and overall health of the department. Most large U.S. organizations change their chief executive officer only about once every eight years. A bad choice can be costly, troublesome, and embarrassing. The process of making this choice often places a department at its very limit. It is considered the ultimate people problem.[57] The selection of the best candidate has to be chosen in a way that minimizes organizational disruption and maximizes morale.[58]

The individuals selecting the successor have two basic responsibilities: to pick the best person to become the new chief executive officer and to manage the succession process in a manner that minimizes the disruption and interpersonal jockeying that usually accompanies any change of leadership at the top. The structure of the top level left by the departing chief executive officer deeply affects the power of those responsible for selecting the successor.[59]

As stated before, succession can have profound effects on a police organization. The type of succession, when it occurs, and, particularly, the abilities of replacement managers, all need to be accounted for when assessing the likely affects of succession.[60] As demonstrated by the reanalysis of the Lieberson and O'Conner (1972) data and an independent examination of 193 manufacturing organizations

over a 19-year period, Weiner and Mahoney (1981) found that leadership accounts for more variance in organizational performance that did many environmental factors.[61] Based on these findings and others, it seems increasingly clear that succession is a complex phenomenon with multiple effects depending on timing, the choice of inside or outside successors, and the individual abilities of the successors.[62]

It is for these reasons that career development programs are an essential component of the overall human resource management effort. If police organizations are to succeed with minimum disruption, individual employees must be developed to their fullest potential to provide the organization with an endless pool of qualified replacement candidates. These organizations must create a systematic form of succession planning which identifies employees who possess the proper developmental experience to fill these important positions.[63]

There are five criteria for developing a successful executive development program. The first criterion involves the extensive and visible involvement by the current chief executive officer.[64] Personal involvement with a program's success lends a certain level of authority to that program and virtually assures every member's cooperation towards that success.

The second criterion is a clearly articulated executive

development policy, strategy, and philosophy. This policy will be fashioned in a unique manner around each department's history, culture, and environment. Despite this uniqueness, four broad objectives emerge in the executive development process:

- Executive development ensures that qualified personnel exists to fill current and future executive assignments.

- Executive development perpetuates the organization's heritage and shapes its culture through communicating its mission, beliefs, values, and management practices.

- Executive development prepares managers to respond to complex issues of the changing environment.

- Executive development enables the department to broaden the perspectives of the management team through balanced career assignments coupled with educational experiences.[65]

The third criterion is that the executive development policies and strategies are directly linked to a department's overall strategies, objectives, and current challenges.[66] Departments can ill afford to engage in activities which do not directly promote the operational efficiency of the department. The fourth criterion of successful executive development processes include an annual succession planning process, planned on-the-job developmental assignments, and customized, internal executive education programs.[67]

The succession planning process involves four elements:

- Pro-active plans are in place which identify key positions and individuals

- Developmental needs for individuals are identified and addressed

- Plans are regularly monitored

- Annual planning and review cycle are in place.[68]

Successful succession planning includes on-the-job development. These on-the-job development programs are usually composed of the following:

- Individuals are assigned to task forces which address specific problems.

- Job rotation in critical positions which last from one to two years.

- Temporary assignments keyed in certain developmental task.[69]

Executive education programs are also essential components of a successful succession plan. These executive education programs can be either internal or external. The latter can be accomplished with the enlistment of institutions of higher learning. Timothy Dees, in his article on modernizing police management, suggests that changes be made in the police manager's management style.[70] This can possibly be achieved with a business or public administrative degree.

The fifth criterion of a successful executive development process is placing the responsibility of executive development with line management rather than with the human resource function.[71] It also means that line management has to be comfortable with empowering people. Empowering people does not imply merely talking about it.

It means giving the employee the opportunity to think, to be creative and to fully participate in change. It also means to trust employees in all matters, both small and major matters of significance to the employee and the organization.[72]

Although their environments, constraints, and overall objectives may be different, public sector organizations, such as police departments, are not immune from the effects of succession. Police administrators have the same responsibility of developing their personnel. In this age of growing accountability, police departments can not continue to operate as they did in the past, but they must begin utilizing career development and other human resource management programs to minimize the effects of succession.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

In any succession, setbacks occur. Whether they are temporary or more lasting in duration, they can be minimized by instituting a transitional process. This process can be implemented in only four steps. The objectives of the first step are to ensure that all individuals involved in the process understand the concept.[73] This includes knowing what, why, when, and how the actions will happen. Second, each party must commit to partial ownership of the outcomes through cooperation, support, and candid disclosures. This is the first team-building result.

The second step involves data gathering and analysis. The critical management staff is used to identify those areas that should be discussed, the questions that they would like to ask the incoming manager, and those items that the incoming manager needs to know.[74] The information gathered from the management staff is analyzed and used to develop the flow and design for the team building meeting.

The actual team building meeting is the third step. The purposes of this step are to share all the information outlined during the previous activities and to allow each entity to formulate individual and departmental short term plans of action. After the management staff shares and

discusses issues which will be important to the incoming
manager during the first months after turnover, the incoming
manager will share his/her philosophies, issues, concerns,
questions, visions, and styles. He/she will also respond to
questions that are presented by the management staff.[75]

With the information derived from the team building
meeting, the organization is now ready to proceed to the
fourth step. The incoming manager and the management staff
will reach an agreement on a series of actions and
incorporate them into a short term plan. The conditions of
leadership change that most frequently lend themselves to
this process occur when:

- the incoming manager is unknown or has a poor
  reputation;

- any breaks in organizational continuity are
  unacceptable for the organization's production;

- there is little time for the sorting or identifying
  of existing problems;

- the department's manager is leaving quickly because
  of unfavorable conditions or is particularly
  popular;

- there is a significant difference between management
  styles of the departing and incoming managers.[76]

This planned approach for the transitional period will
benefit the department by:

- Reduce organizational "downtime" by a specified
  length of time.

- Save resources by maintaining the continuity of the
  operations and organizational effectiveness.

- Save time by allowing the old manager the
  opportunity to ensure that his or her energies can

be dedicated to a smooth turnover.

- Save time by allowing the new manager to see how the staff/team functions together.

- Allow the staff/team to gain insight into the new manager's style, practices, and policies.

- Highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the organization as perceived by management.

- Clarify all roles.

- Outline goals and priorities for the next six to twelve months.[77]

By instituting this transitional process, police departments will be able to meet current and future managerial requirements with minimal disruption to the organization.

Since management succession occurs in all organizations, police departments are not immune from the adverse effects associated with management succession. These adverse effects can be considerably minimized if police departments can formulate a good succession plan which incorporates their individual needs and personnel resource limitations.

Police departments can not approach management succession as they have in the past. If they continue to ignore future managerial needs, individual and organizational development will be seriously curtailed. When funding from the decreasing tax dollar mandates greater efficiency, police departments must invest resources to properly prepare for management succession.

NOTES

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