BASICS OF WORKFORCE PLANNING

Topic Outline (Revised 9-5-06)

BASICS OF WORKFORCE PLANNING

SECTION 1: OVERVIEW

A. Workforce Planning & Succession Planning Defined
B. Why Is Workforce Planning So Urgent Now?
C. General Guidelines for Workforce Planning
D. Overview of Steps in Workforce Planning

A. Workforce Planning and Succession Planning Defined

Basically, workforce planning consists of answering the following question:

How do I get the right people, with the right skills, into the right jobs at the right time?

More specifically:

- Workforce Planning is a long-range view of staffing and training needs. More specifically, it is a systematic process for analyzing the current workforce, predicting future needs, identifying the gap between present and future, and implementing programs that bridge that gap and allow the organization to accomplish its mission. It involves predicting how jobs have changed or may change and planning how any new or different skills needed for those future jobs will be obtained. It includes predicting needs for staffing new programs or expansion of existing programs. Finally, it involves planning to ensure preservation of key knowledge and "corporate memory" and making it accessible before all the people in whose heads the knowledge resides leave the organization.

- Succession planning is creating a plan for replacement of incumbents in existing positions when they retire or otherwise vacate the position. Part of succession planning should always include re-evaluating the need for the position. Does it need to be filled at all? Does it need to be filled in the same way or have the requirements changed? Can the objectives of the organization be better achieved by redesigning the duties of the position and, if so, how?

Having a plan in your agency can help you ensure that you have **the right people, with the right skills, in the right jobs, and at the right time.**

B. Why Is Workforce Planning So Urgent Now?

Of course you have always had turnover, retirements and vacancies, and you have mechanisms in place to deal with them. ***What is different now?***

Here are some statistics from June 30, 2005 regarding classified state employees:

- ♦ 14% are eligible to retire within one year
- ♦ 21% are eligible to retire within three years
- ♦ 29% are eligible to retire within five years

C. General Guidelines for Workforce Planning

Tailor the process to your organization's unique needs.
- Build a plan of action based on your organization's unique situation.
- Assess what impact projected retirements and other factors will have on your workforce.
- Define what your agency wants to accomplish as well as what you can realistically attempt.

A workforce plan is not a static document or one-time activity.
- It is an ongoing activity
- The plan should be reviewed at least annually as actual conditions are compared to what was envisioned in the plan
- Make revisions as necessary at the end of each year's review.

Keep It Simple.
- Keep it simple!
- Avoid creating requirements for a complex bureaucracy with complicated forms and records.
- Remember: the only purpose of workforce planning is to help executives make decisions.
- The record keeping and the process is not an end in itself.

Avoid overreaching.
- It is not necessary to solve every organizational problem or make the scope too large.
- Identify a few most critical workforce issues first and take on those of the highest priority. Build on that success to expand.
- The initial effort at workforce planning should be something the agency can realistically handle.

Don't collect data until you know how you will use it.
- Decide what your objectives are before you start gathering data.
- Ask yourself what you really need to know to effectively plan for most critical requirements three to five years from now

- Make certain that the value of any data gathered justifies the additional workload of gathering it.
- Limit new or additional data to only those items that are truly essential to determining workforce needs.
- **AVOID**:
    - Spending time and resources generating reams of data that may never be used.
    - Gathering tremendous amounts of data on each current employee or position before you have determined your objectives. Remember that each piece of data gathered increases the administrative burden of time and cost since the data must be gathered, analyzed and possibly entered into a database by someone.

<u>Agency culture is a factor.</u>

- Scientific or engineering type organizations have a higher tolerance for rigorous quantitative and data-orientated procedures with lots of tables, numbers and data points.
- Human services agencies or small, specialized agencies may be less supportive of this.
- Adjust your approach to your agency's culture.

D. Overview of Steps in Workforce Planning

1. Clearly understand why you are doing workforce planning. Define a purpose for it.

2. Obtain the support of top executive management

3. Align Workforce Planning Goals with other planning processes such as strategic planning and budget.

4. Determine the scope of the planning effort, i.e., what jobs or parts of the organization will be included.

5. Form a workforce planning task force in your agency. Include: human resources, senior executive management, budget and strategic planning experts as well as specialists in particular job fields.

6. Predict future workforce needs

7. Analyze workforce supply (internal and external)

8. Determine the gap between expected supply and projected needs

9. Create action plan to address gaps

10. Create an evaluation process to assess progress, keep plan current with changing scene, and maintain workforce planning as an ongoing process

SECTION 2: GETTING STARTED

A. Define a Purpose for Workforce Planning
B. Obtain Top management and Leadership Support
C. Integrate and Align Workforce Plan with Strategic Plan

A. Define a Purpose for Workforce Planning.

Write down your agency's purpose and goal for workforce planning. It cannot be assumed that everyone has the same idea of why it is being done and what the goal is.

Defining the goal of workforce planning gets everyone on the same page and avoids wasting time gathering a lot of data that may not be used.

Your agency has always done some sort of workforce planning.   When vacancies occur, your agency has some system in place to determine which vacancies to fill, when to fill them, how to hire them, and how to train them.   So what is different now? Why make some special effort to do formal workforce planning and commit staff and resources to it?

Some reasons for doing workforce planning are:

- To create a pool of potential replacements for persons expected to retire soon
- To create a succession plan for top executive positions
- To develop a means of preserving critical knowledge and "corporate" or "organizational" memory from experienced employees and transferring it or making it easily accessible to less experienced employees
- To solve a recurring problem of turnover in technical jobs, such as those requiring knowledge in science, engineering, information technology or medicine
- To prepare for changes in technology or availability of needed knowledge and skills in the work force
- To prepare for expansion of existing programs or establishment of new programs or facilities
- To create training and development plans for employees to help them do their current jobs better or to prepare them for future advancement in the organization
- To develop the means of retaining or recruiting valuable employees, especially ones with scarce knowledge or skills that are in high demand

B. Obtain top management and leadership support.

Successful workforce planning requires commitment from top management and leadership. Senior-level managers must lead the planning process, and must enable subordinate managers to use the results of the planning process. This includes funding and staffing. Funding for ongoing staff development is critical. Top executives and management must commit to workforce planning including communicating their intentions to subordinates, providing dedicated resources and budget and ongoing personal involvement. **Follow these guidelines:**

- The Chief Executive of the organization (e.g., Department Secretary) should endorse the workforce planning effort and communicate this and its importance to all employees in the organization.

- Communicate the purpose of workforce planning to all employees so that they will perceive its value and their own role in the process and so they will not feel threatened by it.

- Create a multi-disciplinary team to staff workforce planning. Executives and top managers should be included and various work units or divisions represented. The Human Resources office should be involved but not necessarily in charge of the effort. Someone who is involved with the Department's budget and strategic planning should also be on the team.

- One person at the executive level should be designated as responsible for the workforce planning effort and the achievement of its objectives. This person would oversee the multi-disciplinary team, communicate with persons throughout the organization to make certain they are supporting and participating in the effort.

- This person or someone else at the executive level should be assigned responsibility for assessing the results of the workforce planning effort and maintaining it as an ongoing function.

C. Integrate and align workforce plan with strategic plan and budget.

Workforce planning provides information to support executive decisions. Top executives need to create the strategic vision, make judgments about workforce needs and sustain the will for change and support throughout the organization.

By beginning the workforce planning process with identified strategic objectives, you can help managers in your organization to develop workforce plans that will accomplish their objectives. Since there is a clear connection between objectives and the budget and human resources needed to accomplish them, workforce plans also provide a sound basis to justify budget and staffing requests. Include the necessary resources for workforce planning in the budget.

SECTION 3: PREDICTING FUTURE WORKFORCE NEEDS

A. What Positions Should Be Included?
B. What Positions Will Need To Be Filled And When?

A. What positions should be included within the scope of the workforce planning efforts?

The first step in carrying out workforce planning is to identify the positions and jobs that will be included. This puts boundaries on everything else. You probably do not want to include every position in the organization. The initial effort at workforce planning should be something the agency can realistically handle. Different criteria can be used for determining what positions to include. **These are questions to ask:**

- What level of organization is appropriate to start workforce planning (e.g., Department wide or by State Office, Region or Institution)?
- Do we want to pilot the program in some area before extending it to the entire Department?
- Do we want to consider all jobs in the organization or just some mission-critical jobs?
- If we only want to consider only critical jobs, what criteria do we use to determine criticality?

Here are some examples of ways to determine what jobs to include:

- Jobs traditionally hard to recruit for
- Jobs that require scarce or high-demand technical expertise
- Top executive and managerial positions
- Jobs most likely to be vacated soon due to retirements
- Jobs in particular mission-critical programs
- Jobs that historically have high turnover

B. What positions will need to be filled and when?

Workforce planning consists of looking at the future and estimating your staffing needs. Once you have identified the scope of positions to be considered (which you did in the previous section), you need to create a plan or model that projects expected vacancies and when they will occur.

Start by collecting data on the current workforce in terms of projected retirements:

- Choose time frames for projections (1 year, 3 years, 5 years into the future)
- Determine who is eligible to retire and use their dates of eligibility
- Collect data on who is in DROP and when they will complete their DROP period.

Civil Service may be able to assist you with some of this data from our Agency Workforce Profiles that are produced annually for each major Department. These reports provide information on all classified permanent and probational state employees. The data is organized by EEO-4 job categories. The reports show such information as number of employees in each category, average age of employees, number of employees currently eligible to retire but not in DROP, number of employees currently in DROP and number of employees eligible to retire within five years. (Note: Retirement data is only available for agencies and employees covered by LASERS). Questions about the workforce profiles should be submitted to Max Reichert at max.reichert@la.gov.

Create organization charts that show graphically where vacancies are expected to occur and when. In addition to showing potential vacancies, organization charts show the interrelationships among positions and allow you to determine the impact of workforce plan actions (for example, moving a person from within to fill a projected vacancy will create another vacancy that must be dealt with).

- Color-code the charts to separate projected vacancies into groups such as those expected to occur within the next year, the next three years, next five years, etc.
- You can choose to do this step only for those critical jobs you identified when defining the scope of your workforce planning in the previous section.
- You could use this step for all jobs in your agency to help you determine the number of expected retirements as part of the criteria for deciding whether to include a job within the scope of the initial workforce plan.
- Determine the likelihood that people eligible to retire will retire. Many people work beyond their retirement eligibility date. Interview potential retirees to find out what they plan to do (be sure to assure them that these interviews are part of strategic workforce planning and their answers are in no way binding, i.e., if they say they will probably retire by a certain date, they don't have to)
- Use the interviews to find out what could be done to retain the employees longer. Ask them what would change their mind? What would make them stay? Be creative.

Considering flexible hours, part-time work, working out of the home, etc., can be ways of retaining the knowledge and contribution of experienced workers that would otherwise be lost.

- In addition to estimating vacancies due to retirements, you may use whatever other information you have on historical turnover to project where vacancies may occur. Add this to your organization charts

Once you have determined the possible vacancies that may occur due to retirements and other sources, ask:

- Does this vacancy need to be filled at all in the future?
- Will the future duties of this position require a different set of knowledge or skills than the current duties?
- Can it be filled at a different level or with different requirements than in the past?
- Is it possible to reorganize or combine tasks with another job so as to eliminate the need to fill this position?
- Adjust your organization charts accordingly.

Finally, look at your strategic plan and environmental factors for potential impacts on workforce planning:

- What changes are on the horizon?
- Will new programs or projected expansion of existing programs require additional staff or new knowledge or skills?
- Will changing technology, regulations, or other factors require new knowledge or skills?
- Will economic factors, budget cuts, layoffs reorganizations impact your workforce?
- Does your strategic plan need to be revised as a result of these factors?
- The answers to these questions can help you determine whether new jobs need to be added into your forecast of future needs as well as help you determine the impact of negative factors such as budget cuts. Adjust your projections of future vacancies as needed based on these additional factors.

The final comprehensive organizational charts that show where vacancies are most likely to occur provide a visual map of your future workforce needs.

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SECTION 4: DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR EACH POTENTIAL VACANCY

Strategy #1: Filling the Position with Internal Employees Who Do Not Need Much Training or Development.

Strategy #2: External Recruitment

Strategy #3: Training and Developing Internal Staff to Succeed to Vacancies When They Occur

You should now examine each potential vacancy you have identified on your organization charts using priorities you establish as to their relative importance or criticality. You will want to decide on a general strategy for filling each vacancy. There are three basic options that may be used exclusively or in combination to fill each vacancy:

1. Transfer or promote internal employees, who will be ready to step into the position when it becomes vacant without needing any special development or training prior to entering it (e.g., employees in direct report or feeder jobs).

2. Recruit fully qualified applicants from outside the organization to fill the position

3. Train and develop internal staff to be ready to succeed to the vacancies when they become open.

Creating a pool of potential applicants is not the same as pre-selecting an individual for the position, and the creation of such a pool is perfectly acceptable.

Strategy # 1: Filling the position with internal employees who do not need much training or development.

Ask yourself these questions about each position:

When this position has become vacant in the past, how have we filled it?

- What are the minimum qualifications for the position?
- How frequently does this position become vacant? When was it last filled?

- How have we historically filled this vacancy (internal promotion or recruitment from outside the agency)?
- Has it been hard to fill?
- Is there any reason to believe these traditional sources won't work in the future?

Are there employees within the organization who will be ready to move into this position when it becomes vacant without requiring any special development or training?

- Do the organizational charts that you prepared earlier show that there are a sufficient number of employees in feeder jobs to provide a sufficient applicant pool for the vacant position?
- Discuss with supervisors or consult employee personnel records to get more details to determine which employees would realistically be ready to step into the position without much training or development. This does not require that you engage in complex and time-consuming work identifying and evaluating competencies needed in the position or assessing competencies possessed by current employees.
- Look at the organization chart and check the direct reports and feeder jobs to the vacancy, i.e., the normal internal sources of candidates. Can you rely on this "pipeline" to provide sufficient qualified candidates?
- If it appears that there will be sufficient candidates who will have necessary experience and skill without the need for any special development efforts, decide whether you need to take any further action. If your review of the data shows that you should have sufficient applicants "in the pipeline" when the vacancy occurs and you feel that existing selection procedures are adequate for determining who to promote or move into the position, then you may not need to do anything more except continue to monitor the situation.
- If it appears that there will not be sufficient numbers of employees within the organization, then you will have to explore alternative solutions such as developing and training internal employees or hiring fully qualified employees from outside the organization.

Strategy # 2: External Recruitment

Do we want to consider external recruitment and hiring as an option or alternative to developing internal employees? Answer these questions:

- What sources of recruitment were used in the past? Will they still be sufficient?

- What new sources of applicants might we use?

- What are the minimum qualifications for the position?

- Have we identified any skills, knowledge or abilities needed beyond the minimum qualification requirements?

- Can we reasonably expect the applicant population to possess these, and if not, what training/development is available?

- Do we need a special recruiting program?

- What are the existing selection procedures? (tests, interviews). Are existing selection procedures sufficient to assess required applicant competencies or do we need to develop new ones?

Strategy # 3: Training and developing internal staff to succeed to vacancies when they occur.

Below are some issues to decide regarding training and developing internal staff to succeed to vacancies:

Identifying Needs: What knowledge and experiences are critical for a person to gain before entering this job?

- Identify sources of information needed to determine this
- What does the incumbent in the position do? A detailed and comprehensive position description of the tasks performed by the position is the first step. This is not necessarily the formal SF-3 that Civil Service uses.
- You may also decide to do a detailed job profile to identify the competencies required. If you do, the competencies need to be tied to tasks and made as concrete as possible. It is very easy with “competencies” to get off into very abstract constructs that are difficult for anyone to understand or agree on what they mean.

Here are the basic steps to job profiling:

1. Identify important work behaviors and tasks
2. Identify the competencies required to successfully perform job tasks
3. Establish the connection between tasks and competencies
4. Choose which competencies to assess and how
5. Document the job profiling process

Using Existing Competency Lists: You may want to develop your own competency lists from scratch. However, there are many lists out there and an easier approach is to take one of these and use the competencies that apply to your position. You will definitely want to have experts on the position review the competency definitions and modify them as needed to suit your particular position. You may also need to add competencies. Appendix A contains a list of some existing competency inventories that are out there.

How do I select people to be in the pool or to participate in training and development? What basic criteria do I want to set for employees to qualify to enter the pool of persons to be developed? The criteria used should be objective and job-related. Avoid having top executives or any group simply "nominate" individuals whom they think have "potential." Also, be very cautious about using scored assessments or tests designed to measure "management potential." To be used at all, these must be professionally validated in your specific setting. This is usually expensive and often even technically not feasible. If you do choose to use such measures, be sure to explain them to employees and try to allay any negative perceptions. You might want to use some objective criteria such as minimum PPR ratings, educational or experience requirements, or completion of specific training courses. A strategy that has proven successful is to develop all persons who are direct reports to the position or all persons in designated job titles. Of course, it is desirable to consider only those persons actually interested in participating. So you may solicit applications from qualified employees and only consider those who express interest.

Should we select one person to be an understudy for the position or should we create a pool of potential applicants? In general, it is better to develop a pool of potential applicants rather than choosing one person as an understudy for a position. Developing only one person is risky because that person may leave, and then you've wasted your training investment and have no one ready to enter the position when it becomes vacant. However, there is also a cost / benefit consideration. Training and development is the most costly part of workforce planning. In order to create a pool, you will have to develop and train some people who will not actually get promoted when a vacancy occurs. You will also have to be careful not to create false expectations or disappointments in persons not actually selected when the job becomes vacant. Participation in the process of training and development does not guarantee anyone a promotion.

How many people should be in the pool? This really depends on the individual position. Obviously if you have multiple positions in the same job title with similar requirements, creating a fairly substantial pool is desirable and probably feasible. However, if it is a high-level position or one requiring very specialized knowledge, there may only be one or two persons in the organization that could feasibly be trained and developed to succeed to the position.

What about competition? Will Civil Service rules allow selecting one person to be developed as an understudy? How do we avoid being penalized for pre-selection or perceptions of pre-selection? Whether you decide to select and develop one person or a pool of potential applicants you must realize that whatever decision process you use to decide whom to select to be developed or to participate in training will be subject to the same legal standards as any test or interview or selection procedure used to hire or promote someone. Persons excluded or not chosen for participation in the training and development process will obviously be at a disadvantage when competing for the position when it becomes vacant and may even be barred from consideration if you make the training and development a mandatory requirement. Therefore you must set objective, job-related criteria for choosing who will participate in training and development for the position. A key decision you must make is whether participation in the training and development will be a mandatory requirement for succeeding to the position or whether it will be one alternative to be considered.

Identifying and filling the Gap: How do I identify the training and development needs of each participant in the pool?

The current knowledge and skills of each participant must be compared to the requirements of the projected vacancy to determine what the individual lacks and needs to be developed in order to create a training and development plan for each individual.
You can identify what the employee currently has by reviewing his or her personnel records, including training courses, education and work experience inside and outside the organization. You may also want to interview the employee and his supervisor. You may also want to administer some formal tests or assessments to the employee depending on the competencies identified. Once you have an idea of what the employee currently possesses, you should develop a plan for each employee. Here are the steps to follow in this process:

1. Staff the program- make someone responsible for keeping up with the development plans and recording progress

2. Identify what each employee already has in relation to the job

3. Identify particular experiences, or training each employee must have to complete the program.

4. Determine how employee's performance and progress in the program will be assessed.

5. Create a schedule for completion of training and development program

Some specific questions to be answered regarding training and development are:

What will training and development consist of and who will do it? Will training consist of formal coursework, job shadowing, coaching by experienced employees? Will professional trainers be used? What specific job experiences must the employee gain and when? How will progress in training and development be assessed? How will a participant know how he is doing? What expectations will participants have? How will the participant's performance in the training and development be used in making a final decision about who is promoted to a vacancy when it occurs?

When the vacancies occur, how do I select the person to fill the vacancy from among those in the pool? Selection procedures should be job-related. Many factors can be considered including scores on tests or other assessments, PPR's and performance in the training and development program. A major decision is to determine how performance in the training and development program will be incorporated in the final decision to fill the vacancy.

Two key decisions are:

1. Whether completion of this training and development will be a mandatory minimum requirement for all applicants or whether alternatives will be accepted.

2. Will a participant's performance during the training and development be evaluated as simply passing a minimum standard for the position by completing each step or will his training performance be somehow graded or compared to other candidates in an overall evaluation process?

<u>SECTION 5: CONTINUING THE PROCESS</u>

Once you have gotten your workforce planning started you need to make sure you have a way to assess progress and maintain it as an ongoing process. Below are some necessary steps:

1. Establish a schedule for updating data on retirement projections and other demographics.

2. Establish a method and schedule for evaluating how training and development is working.

3. Get feedback from managers over the potential vacancies? Do they think the process will provide a viable pool of applicants? Do they think it will provide data on applicants that will help them decide whom to select when a vacancy occurs?

4. How do participants regard it? Do they believe it is fair? Do they believe that going through the training and development will improve their chances of being selected or make a positive difference in their careers?

5. When vacancies occur, do managers select from the internal pool or do they fill from outside the organization? If they select from the internal pool, does there appear to be any relation between who was selected and the person's performance in the training and development?

6. Are employees who complete the training and development staying with your organization or are they leaving to go elsewhere after completing the training?

APPENDIX A

Sources of Competency Lists and Definitions

NOTE: These competency lists should not be adopted "as is." They were developed after extensive study and subject matter expert review for their particular organizations and jobs. However, they can serve as a starting point to generate core competency lists so you don't have to invent them from scratch. Taking competencies from these lists as a starting point, subject matter experts in your jobs can add, delete or edit them as appropriate to fit your jobs and organization.

Georgia's G-Comps Competency Dictionary for Workforce Planning: This is one of the best-organized and most comprehensive sources. It incorporates some material from other listed sources such as MOSAIC (the federal government OPM designed system) www.gms.state.ga.us/agencyservices/wfplanning/index.asp

MOSAIC (Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory-Closed Ended): This is the federal government's comprehensive inventory developed by OPM. It is subdivided into three groups of competencies: 1) Leadership Competencies, 2) Competencies for Professional and Administrative Occupations, and 3) Competencies for Clerical and Technical Occupations. www.opm.gov.

LMSS Competencies: These were developed by LSU Workforce Development specifically to create a competency model for managerial and supervisory positions in Louisiana State government to be used initially to identify training needs. There are several versions of definitions of these competencies. In the recent 2005 CPTP Needs Assessment report, the competency definitions listed were almost identical to the MOSAIC leadership competencies. Since these deal only with managerial and supervisory positions, they are less comprehensive than Georgia's G-Comps or the federal MOSAIC system.www.lsuworkforcedevelopment.com

Henrico County Virginia LDP Competencies: Henrico county's workforce planning includes a Leadership Development Program (LDP). Managerial competencies have been developed and grouped into three sub-categories; 1) Competencies for Upper Managers, 2) Competencies for Middle Managers, and 3) Competencies for First-Line Supervisors. These competencies are very well written. They are concise and more concrete than most. The language is action-oriented and objective, not as abstract as most competency definitions. www.co.henrico.va.us/hr

IPMA HR Competency Model: This is a set of twenty-two competencies developed specifically for Human Resources positions. They could be used as-is for workforce planning for Human Resources positions, but many of the competencies could be adapted to other jobs with slight modifications. www.ipma-hr.org

Civil Service Master Competency List for Professional Jobs: composite list of thirty-eight competencies developed internally by Civil Service as a potential job aid for agencies to use with delegated authority. It consists of modified competencies from several sources.

APPENDIX B

Workforce Planning Websites

There are a number of websites that are excellent sources of workforce planning information. Here is a list of my favorite workforce planning sites.

NASPE (National Association of State Personnel Executives): www.naspe.net.
If you type "workforce planning" into the search box this site will give you a menu that will allow you to link to several other state workforce planning websites and / or documents including California, New York state, and South Carolina.

Workforce Management magazine: www.workforce.com. This website has feature articles on-line and a great archive of past articles. It is the same organization that publishes the printed version of Workforce magazine.

Henrico County, Virginia: www.co.henrico.va.us/hr. This is the website for the Human Resources Department of Henrico County, Virginia. Under the "Programs" heading, they have lots of useful data on succession management and workforce planning. They have been doing this for eight years. They have a leadership development program (LDP) started in 1996 which identified competencies for each job and made them part of the county employment culture. Now they are moving on to creating individual development plans for each employee. The website has a detailed Leadership Development manual, defined competency lists, forms used for creating individual development plans, etc.

IPMA-HR: www.ipma-hr.org . This is the web site for the International Public Management Association for Human Resources. If you are a member, you can view or download recent back issues of their newsletter, IPMA-HR News. Often entire issues are devoted to workforce and succession planning.

Federal Office of Personnel Management: www.opm.gov. This is the website for the Federal Government's Office of Personnel Management. It has some good general material.

Georgia State Merit System site:
www.gms.state.ga.us/agencyservices/wfplanning/index.asp. This is the workforce planning site for the Georgia State Merit system. Of the states, they have one of the more comprehensive workforce plans. Governing magazine rated strategic workforce planning as an area of strength (highest rating) for the Georgia merit system.

Achieve Global:
www.corpserv.delta.edu/achieve_global/achieve_global_home.htm. This site is for the corporate training firm Achieve Global. They were used by the state of Florida for creating management training for succession planning.

APPENDIX C

The Basics of Job Profiling

What is Job Profiling?

Job Profiling is simply a systematic way to collect information about jobs. A Job Profile identifies the tasks that comprise a job and then defines the competencies an employee needs to successfully perform those tasks. Managers can use this information to design training programs and/or to improve hiring procedures.

How is Job Profiling done?

There are three basic steps to Job Profiling.
Step One: Make a list of job tasks and the competencies needed to perform them.
Step Two: Decide which tasks and competencies are the most important for success.
Step Three: Establish the link between the important tasks and the competencies.

Step One: Identifying Tasks and Competencies

Listing job tasks

Draft a list of the main job tasks. Start with the tasks listed in the Job Specification and/or Position Descriptions. Then amend and revise the list by talking with employees and supervisors. This can be done individually or in groups. When describing a task, it is helpful to consider these elements.

- Action: What is being done?
- Object: To whom or to what is it being done?
- Result: What is the outcome?
- Tools: How is it done?
- Instruction: Under what direction is it done?

Listing competencies

As employees and supervisors define the tasks that comprise the job, ask them to list the skills, knowledge, abilities or competencies needed to successfully perform those tasks. For each task they describe, also ask the question "What is required to perform this task?"

> ***What are competencies?*** Competencies are the combinations of knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors that an employee must possess to successfully perform a particular job or task.

To make the identification of competencies easier, you may wish to use an existing list of competencies as a starting point for your job experts. There are many sources for lists of competencies, no one source is definitive. See Appendix A for a list of some sources.

Step Two: Evaluate task and competency importance

Evaluating Task Importance

Once you've drafted the list of job tasks, determine which ones are MOST important or critical. One way to do this is to have employees and/or supervisors rate the list of tasks. You might have them pick their "top ten" or ask them to rate each task on importance and frequency. (See sample task rating scales below.)

Sample TASK IMPORTANCE Rating Scale

Rating	**Definition of Rating Level**
5	Satisfactory performance of this task is essential for acceptable job performance.
4	
3	Satisfactory performance of this task is important for acceptable job performance.
2	
1	This task is non-essential or trivial to acceptable job performance.

Sample TASK FREQUENCY Rating Scale

Rating	**Definition of Rating Level**
5	This task is performed frequently.
4	
3	This task is performed occasionally.
2	
1	This task is performed rarely.

A Note about Rating Scales: *Numerical rating systems such as the scales above are helpful tools for decision-making. But don't rely on them to the exclusion of your own professional judgment. For instance, there may be tasks that are rarely performed, but highly critical when they occur, or there may be tasks that are frequently performed, but not very important. There is no magical point on a rating scale that determines whether or not a task should be considered important. Numerical ratings should be used in combination with the knowledge and expertise of the employees and supervisors who know the job best to decide which tasks are truly critical to overall performance.*

The tasks identified as MOST important will be the focus of any training plans or hiring/promotion processes you develop. Generally, the tasks that are described as most important and those performed most often represent the most critical needs of the job.

Evaluating competencies

Once you have compiled a list of all the competencies that contribute to successful job performance, evaluate which ones are most important. You'll also want to evaluate how employees acquire the important competencies. That is, which competencies are employees expected to bring with them to the job and which are they expected to acquire through job training.

These are the two critical questions to ask regarding competencies.

1. **Is this competency *truly essential*, or merely helpful or desirable?**

2. **Do employees need to possess this competency *when they start the job*, or is this something they are typically expected to learn or acquire after they are hired?**

You may use the same method to evaluate competencies that you used to determine which tasks were most important. You may choose to simply have a group of employees and/or supervisors make this evaluation through discussion. Or you may choose to use some type of formal rating scale like the samples below.

Sample COMPETENCY IMPORTANCE Rating Scale

Rating **Definition of Rating Level**

5--------- Possession of this competency is essential for successful job performance.
4
3 --------- Possession of this competency is helpful or desirable for successful job performance.
2
1--------- Possession of this competency is unrelated to successful job performance.

Sample COMPETENCY ACQUISITION Rating Scale

Rating **Definition of Rating Level**

5--------- Possession of ALL of this competency is required upon entry to the job.
4
3 --------- Possession of SOME of this competency is required upon entry to the job.
2
1--------- Possession of this competency is NOT required upon entry to the job.

Just as was the case with task ratings, there is no “magic number” on a competency rating scale that serves as absolute demarcation points for decisions regarding the importance or the “trainability” of competencies.

Step Three: Linking Tasks and Competencies

Now that you've identified which tasks and which competencies are most important or valuable for successful performance of the job, you want to finalize your analysis by clearly defining the link between those important tasks and the specific competencies found to be critical. This critical step demonstrates the relationship between the competencies to be assessed and the tasks or work behaviors that comprise the job. The demonstration of such relationships simply involves looking at each task in light of each competency and indicating if the competency is related to the performance of that particular task. This step is best illustrated, and often performed, using a competency/task table such as the one below.

	Task Numbers								
Competencies	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**(Etc.)**	**Sum**
A. Customer Service									
B. Interpersonal Skills									
C. Oral Communication									
(etc.)									

Using a table such as the one above, the job experts consider each task (1 through 7 in this example) and place a check in the box if possession of the competency is required to perform the task. To summarize the results, simply add up the number of boxes checked for each competency. These totals, recorded in the final right-hand column in the sample above provide a straightforward basis for the comparison of the job relatedness of each of the competencies under consideration. Your final results show you which competencies are of greatest impact on the ability to perform the most important or critical job tasks.

Using Job Profiling results

Your completed Job Profile gives you a list of the most important or critical tasks of the job and a list of the competencies needed to successfully perform those tasks. It also identifies which of those necessary competencies employees are expected to bring with them to the job, and which ones they are expected to acquire after they are in the job through training. You can use this information in several ways.

Development of Employee Training Plans

Building a strong candidate pool

The competencies identified as those employees must bring with them to the job are your guide to the kind of training you may wish to provide to the group of employees who comprise the pool of potential candidates for the job. Communicate the competencies identified as needed for job success to this potential pool. Develop a plan for providing access to training in these areas to employees in this pool. Remember to ensure that access is provided equitably.

Strengthening Job Training

The competencies identified as those an employee is expected to acquire after appointment to the job should be the focus of your training plan for new appointees. By developing a plan for providing training in these areas to new appointees as soon as possible, you increase the probability of their long-term success on the job.

Assessing Candidate for Selection Purposes

The competencies you've identified as critical for job success can also be used to improve the process you use to select candidates for appointment. You may want to develop a structured interview or other method designed to assess these critical competencies to help you make selection decisions. When making selection decisions, you should include only those competencies that were identified as those an employee would be expected to bring to the job. Selection assessments should NOT include competencies identified as those an employee is expected to acquire after appointment to the job.

Evaluating Employee Performance

The critical task list and associated competencies can also be used to help define the performance expectations and evaluation standards for appointees to the job. The clear definition of critical tasks and competencies provide the framework in which the new appointee's performance can be evaluated.

Documenting Job Profile Results

It is important to document the results of your Job Profile. Such documentation is ***essential*** to legally support the use of your results as part of your method of preparing and selecting people for the job. Your documentation should include the following items.

- Job Being Profiled
- Dates of the study
- Names and Roles of individuals who participated (employees and supervisors)
- Description of the method used to gather information
- Task list with importance and frequency ratings
- Competency list with importance and "trainability" ratings
- Linkage of Tasks to Competencies
- Description of how the results will be used

WHERE TO GET HELP WITH THE PROCESS

If you would like assistance conducting a Job Profile, the Department of State Civil Service will be happy to provide you with the help you need. Contact Rainette Stephens, Staffing Division Administrator at rainette.stephens@la.gov or Max Reichert, Workforce Planning Assistant Division Administrator at max.reichert@la.gov.