



ENVISIONING PROGRESS THROUGH EFFECTIVE SUCCESSION:

Succession Strategies From Five Dynamic Pools





Introduction

Leadership changes (both planned and unexpected) can impact the trajectory of an organization. Astute organizations develop a succession plan, identify potential candidates for leadership roles, and provide the necessary training and opportunities to develop required skills before a transition is imminent.

Leadership shifts are an opportunity for growth and renewal. By planning and implementing a comprehensive transition strategy, you can ensure that your organization's operations remain stable and its success continues even during times of change.

This paper highlights diverse succession planning approaches, drawing on the expertise of authors who have decades of experience in collaborating with public sector pools in their respective geographic areas.



Incorporating Members Into Pool Staff Succession

Scott Tennant, RPA

“By hiring members and mindfully incorporating them onto our team, we've found we can manage periodic staff changes and successions with grace and practically zero disruption.”

RPA utilizes a masterstroke succession planning strategy that aligns with their client's needs by hiring individuals from within their pool membership.

Public entity pool administration thrives on deeply understanding members' cultures and operations. Hiring former school district or public entity employees guarantees new pool staff start with an innate grasp of member cultural norms already ingrained. These individuals also possess an instinctive grasp of statutes and regulations impacting pool and member operations. And, since they have already honed an extensive career, they instinctively exhibit masterful multitasking, transparent communication, and collaborative board engagement skills.

What sets these pool staff members apart is their experience as members themselves. This affinity helps to:

- Build robust connections with existing and potential members;
- Instill confidence in new member leaders and prospects; and
- Ease the transition during transformative initiatives.

To bolster the success of newly onboarded member hires, seasoned pool administrators provide guidance, ensuring a smooth transition for the hire, members, and the entire administrative team.

By incorporating members as part of the team, RPA minimizes disruption during staffing changes or successions. RPA showcases that member inclusion can enrich pool administration and nurture a resilient succession strategy.





Q&A

WHAT UNIQUE ADVANTAGE DO POOL EMPLOYEES WITH PRIOR PUBLIC ENTITY EXPERIENCE BRING TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM?

Former school district or public entity employees have an in-depth understanding of the statutes, regulations, and cultural norms of their entity's operations, along with the ability to manage multiple priorities and work effectively with a board.

HOW DOES RPA ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF NEWLY HIRED MEMBERS?

To help new member hires succeed, RPA provides support from seasoned pool administrators. Knowledgeable teammates are readily accessible to ensure a smooth transition for both the hire and the administrative team.

WHAT KEY BENEFITS HAVE RPA WITNESSED BY INCORPORATING FORMER MEMBERS INTO ITS ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM?

By hiring members and thoughtfully integrating them, RPA has managed staff changes and successions seamlessly, maintaining grace and practically zero disruption.

Staff Development

John Ashton, RPA

“Promoting a key employee to a division leader role led to expanded professional skills, a better customer experience for pool members, and a growth path to high-level leadership in the future.”

Recognizing the potential pitfalls of over-reliance on a single staff group, RPA initiated a program to diversify decision-making input and energize our organization. Initially designed to broaden strategic participation, this two-year development curriculum became a breeding ground for future leaders.

During the pilot phase, junior staff members participated in discussions on vital issues and long-term initiatives, and helped evaluate upcoming decisions. Rotating teams also took on impactful projects extending beyond their routine responsibilities. This hands-on approach encouraged idea presentation, refinement, and action planning, and fostered leadership qualities.

As time passed, it became evident these activities were instilling invaluable skills critical for career advancement. Two cohorts have yielded multiple promotions:

- Establishment of a director of operations role, creating room for one individual's career growth and paving the way for another's ascent to future administrative positions.
- Elevation of a key employee to a division leader, enhancing skills and customer experiences and mapping a trajectory towards high-level leadership.

Q&A

WHAT PROJECTS DID ROTATING TEAMS TAKE ON TO BROADEN THEIR EXPERIENCE?

Rotating teams undertook projects like enterprise risk assessment, business opportunities evaluation, and crisis management planning.

WHAT DID THE PROGRAM OFFER FOR INDIVIDUALIZED DEVELOPMENT?

An extensive two-year curriculum included monthly mentoring meetings, collaboration with senior management, and cross training for holistic insights.

WHAT IS THE KEY ELEMENT TO MAKE STAFF DEVELOPMENT SUCCESSFUL?

Time. Specifically, senior leadership's investment in mentoring and cross training. It's critical that your dedication to development outweigh the fear of staff leaving.

Let's Connect

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