SUCCESSION PLANNING A DEVELOPMENTAL TOOL FOR DEVELOPING MIDDLE MANAGERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

by

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WORK DECLARATION

I declare that **SUCCESSION PLANNING A DEVELOPMENTAL TOOL FOR DEVELOPING MIDDLE MANAGERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

_________________________________________  _________________________________________
Vuyokazi Kraai (Ms)                          Date:
ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to investigate how succession planning can be used as a developmental tool in developing middle managers in the Department of Science and Technology (DST).

The research shows that the DST has good strategies and policies in place for the development and retention of its employees, although there is no succession planning tool or system in place.

Proposed interventions to address identified gaps in terms of succession planning include a quota system of positions that should be filled by internal candidates to encourage employees’ buy-in to succession planning; inculcating it in the institutional culture and therefore, preserving and retaining institutional memory; creating a robust reward management programme based upon a pay-scheme that seeks to reward middle managers for developing their competencies in line with institutional requirements.
LIST OF KEY TERMS

Leadership
Mentoring
Institutional memory
Talent management
Succession planning
Strategic planning
Human resources development
Middle managers
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AsgiSA</td>
<td>Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative – South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIPD</td>
<td>Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>DST</td>
<td>Department of Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>DDs</td>
<td>Deputy Directors</td>
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<tr>
<td>HoD</td>
<td>Head of Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>NSI</td>
<td>National System of Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMDS</td>
<td>Performance Management and Development System</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCBC</td>
<td>Public Service Collective Bargaining Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>P&amp;G</td>
<td>Procter &amp; Gamble</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMART</td>
<td>Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound</td>
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<tr>
<td>S&amp;T</td>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>TQM</td>
<td>Total Quality Management</td>
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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION
Middle managers are a critical link between senior and junior managers. On the one hand, they ensure that junior managers execute the institution’s goals and objectives, as well as execute orders from senior managers. On the other hand, they keep senior managers informed regarding the achievement of institutional goals and objectives. In short, they need to keep both junior and senior managers happy and content. Middle managers are the next core in line to take over from senior managers, therefore, it is necessary to assess the role of succession planning in developing high performing middle managers in the Department of Science and Technology (DST or Department).

This chapter highlights the background and rationale of the research, the problem, research objectives and research questions. It also explores the literature review and methodology, demarcation and limitations, as well as the structure of the research.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH
The DST’s policy initiatives are guided mainly by the White Paper on Science and Technology 1996, the National Research and Development Strategy 2002, and the Ten Year Innovation Plan 2008-2018. All these policies are aimed at assisting South Africa to modernise its economy through the use of science, technology and innovation. In order to achieve this, the DST needs to enhance the capacity of South African institutions, to ensure adequate infrastructure and the provision of skilled science, engineering and technology human capital to generate and exploit knowledge.

The White Paper on Science and Technology (1996:70) describes human resources as a national asset. It defines human resource development as a process whereby people, either individually or collectively, acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for specific occupational tasks as well as for other social, cultural, intellectual or political roles associated with a vibrant democratic society. Also, the ability to access and utilise information resources, give expression to theoretical concepts and their innovative
application. Succession planning involves identifying and preparing suitable employees to assume core managerial and leadership positions through interventions such as mentoring, training and job rotation (Guidelines on Mentoring and Coaching, 2006a:3).

The reasons for the importance of this research is the observations made since 2005 in the DST, that succession planning does not exist at the DST to prepare or plan for the future in case the Department loses senior managers unexpectedly. Lack of succession planning in the DST leads to the problems listed in the statement below like cost and time involved when replacing an official who resigned, retired or passed on (such as advertisements and training), loss of institutional memory, demoralised high-performing middle managers and ultimately, turnover. This research will, therefore, explore how succession planning can be used as a tool in developing high-performing middle managers in the DST.

A few concepts have been identified in the problem review of this research which include succession planning, leadership, strategic planning, human resource development and talent management. In this chapter, these concepts will be further unravelled, academically. It is critical to identify pivotal managing positions that impact the institution. It’s equally important to assess and identify the players in terms of change response and versatility. In today’s highly competitive and volatile environment, talented staff can come and go with precedent-setting speed if the work environment is not conducive to support balanced personal and professional growth (Hunter, 2012:8).

Unexpected departures of key personnel can cripple the operations of an institution faster than anything, especially if there is no adequate backup. It’s important to anticipate the pivotal staff or leaders who might leave, and take steps to prevent it, or make sure that replacements are in place should this happen. According to Hunter (2012:8), other important sources for succession planning are the newcomers with talent. This is the staff grouping who demonstrate potential talent to become future leaders. They possess the knowledge, skills, abilities and talent to lead and influence change and innovation in a positive way. With an appropriate development or education, action plan and mentoring, these groups can often reveal startling insights or provide information that can assist supervisors and mentors to fine-tune a development plan and ensure its effectiveness.
1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The DST has a high staff turnover rate especially at senior management level because of the shortage of scientists in South Africa and also because of the low remunerations in the public service compared to the private sector. It usually takes a long time to fill a vacant senior position due to the scarcity of competent managerial skills and the readily available human resources to succeed the manager who has resigned his/her position.

When high performing individuals in middle management positions are not considered for promotion, they end up seeking better opportunities outside the DST or even outside the public service and leave. In the DST, it is not common practice to counter-offer an individual who has been offered a position elsewhere. The Department would rather appoint new people, from other government departments or the private sector, and this practice leads to loss of institutional memory, moreover, the new person must still get acquainted with the job, procedures and protocol. The new person should also receive on-the-job-training to understand the culture of the DST. Hiring a new employee from outside the Department can also lead to conflict and tension between the existing middle manager who was not considered for a senior management position, and the newly appointed manager.

Therefore, the problem statement is to investigate to what extent succession planning can be used as a tool to develop high performing middle managers that are competent to function on the next higher level of management in the DST. This would allow the DST to not only develop and nurture its own human resources but, to also build its capacity to enable the Department to deal with any unexpected human resources turnover such as resignations or death.

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research will be to:

- Explore the literature on succession planning.
- Investigate how succession planning can prepare the next generation of middle managers to be competent and able to function on the next higher level of management.
- Explore how succession planning can promote the preservation and transfer of institutional knowledge management.
- Investigate how succession planning can inculcate institutional cultural values and norms in middle managers.
• Explore how succession planning can be used as a developmental tool in developing high performing middle managers.
• Explore how succession planning can be used to retain talented middle managers.
• Determine how the DST institutes succession planning.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS
To achieve the above objectives, the following research questions will be answered:
• What does the literature express on succession planning?
• How can succession planning prepare the next generation of managers to be competent and able to function on the next higher level of management?
• How can succession planning promote the preservation and transfer of institutional knowledge management?
• How can succession planning inculcate institutional cultural values and norms in middle managers?
• How can succession planning be used as a developmental tool in developing high performing middle managers?
• How can succession planning retain talented middle managers?
• How the DST institutes succession planning?

1.6 METHODOLOGY
Relevant literature including published books, unpublished dissertations and theses, as well as articles in accredited journals, questionnaires, white papers, strategic plans, and guidelines were reviewed for this research.

1.6.1 Research approach
This part of the research explains the role, purpose and type of research design applicable to this research. The appropriate choice and research method is both a qualitative and quantitative approach. The research intends to mainly describe and explain how succession planning would impact on staff turnover. The research firstly explores the theories and concepts of successive planning and interprets the findings thereof. The nature of the research question is such that there are multiple possible realities to be constructed from the participants; hence the appropriateness of a qualitative research approach.
1.6.2 Research design

According to Welman and Kruger (2001:46), a research design is a plan utilised to obtain research participants or subjects, from which to collect information. It describes what will be done with the participants, with a view to reaching conclusions about the research problem.

This research is influenced by the context in which data is collected. Respondents’ views are the main ingredients of the data collected.

1.6.2.1 Unit of analysis

The population may be individuals, groups, institutions, human products and events or the conditions to which they are exposed. The population for this study is middle managers within the Department of Science and Technology.

In a simple random sampling, each member of the population has the same chance of being included in the sample and each sample of a particular size has the same probability of being chosen. The advantage of the simple random sample is that it is representative of the population in the sense that it does not favour one unit of analysis (Welman & Kruger, 2001:50).

For purposes of this research, a probability random sampling will be applied. A sample of middle managers within the DST will be selected for this research.

1.6.2.2 Data collection methods and data types

This research will focus on primary and secondary data gathering, to obtain first hand information of the attitudes, beliefs, values and experience from the DST middle management. The data will be collected directly from the selected people. Primary data can be qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, focus groups, projective techniques and observational methods. Qualitative techniques provide insight into the feelings of individuals in the sample group. Quantitative techniques are designed to generate information using statistical analysis which could be projected to represent the whole population e.g. surveys and experimentations (Nyalungu, 2012:33).
This research will take a qualitative and quantitative approach for primary and secondary data collection. A survey will be conducted using questionnaires. Questionnaires will be administrated to participants, dealing with a set of questions relating to leadership, strategic planning, human resource development and talent management.

1.6.2.3 Validity and reliability
According to Mkhize (2010:50), validity is concerned with the idea that the research design fully addresses the research questions and objectives that the researcher is trying to answer or achieve. Validity is divided into internal and external. Internal validity refers to the validity of the research findings; and external validity refers to the quality of being able to generalise the research findings to other similar situations and contexts; describing the ability of the research design to unambiguously test the research hypothesis.

Reliability is about consistency in research and whether another researcher can use the same design to obtain similar results. It refers to the extent in which the results are consistent and true. Reliability alone is not enough - for the test to be reliable, it needs to be valid (Mkhize, 2010:50).

1.6.2.4 Bias
Bias refers to a distortion in the collected data so that it does not represent the reality. It’s anything that produces systematic (but unexpected) variation in a research finding. In this dissertation, randomisation will be used to control unexpected sources of bias.

1.6.2.5 Data analysis and interpretation
Analysis and interpretation are frequently misused as interchangeable. Once data has been collected, it is then analysed and interpreted for the purpose of generating meaning from the collected raw data (Mkhize, 2010:52). In this study, data analysis will begin during data collection; thereafter data will be interpreted using the theme of this research to explain the findings.

1.6.2.6 Data collection instrument
Questionnaires are restricted to two basic questions i.e. close-ended questions; questions for which a researcher provides a suitable list of responses e.g. Yes/No, producing quantitative data. Open-ended questions are questions where the researcher doesn’t
provide the respondent with a set answer from which to choose; rather the respondent is asked to answer in their own words, which produces mainly qualitative data (Mkhize, 2010:54).

A combination of the two (close-ended and open-ended) questions will be used for purposes of this research.

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW
A number of concepts have been identified in the problem review of this research. Those concepts include leadership, strategic planning, human resource development and talent management. In this section, these concepts will be further unravelled academically.

1.7.1 Strategic planning and succession planning
According to Eckel and Witmer (2010:33), a strategic plan is like a budget in that it constantly needs tweaking as your institutional environment changes. Frequent reviews will mark progress, identify areas of concern, and highlight necessary changes to the plan. Key personnel like board and staff members should be thinking strategically all the time; the plan is a framework for their thinking.

Succession planning generally involves three major steps, understanding the institution’s long term goals and objectives, identifying the workforce’s developmental needs in the institution, and determining workforce trends and predictions in direct relation to the type of institution (Luna, 2010:70).

Rothwell (2011:96) states that managers should avoid the temptation to neglect their responsibility; take more action and play a critical role in succession planning as (Fegley, 2006) quoted by Rothwell (2011:96) is in agreement that neglecting this responsibility is a well-known failure factor for succession planning. He further suggests that for succession planning to succeed; it will take more than just establishing a strategic framework; that strategy must be executed on a daily basis. The same goes for succession planning with managers playing a key role in developing people on a daily basis.

Butler and Roche-Tarry (2002) quoted by Kowalewski, Moretti and McGee (2011:99), define succession planning as an ongoing dynamic process that assists a business or institution in aligning its goals and its human capital needs. Succession planning can prepare institutions for future critical vacancies in middle management positions.
Forecasting the talent necessary for these roles can provide the groundwork and understanding of the characteristics needed to maintain an institution’s strategic plan. Kowalewski, Moretti and McGee (2011:99), further quotes Bower (2007) and Davis (2008) when pointing out that both insiders and outsiders have strengths and weaknesses in entering new positions - employees know the institution and its inner workings, but may not recognise the need for change. New ideas can come from the outside, but many times these newcomers do not know the institution well enough to foster the changes needed.

According to Anderson (2010:13), failure to build succession plans can leave institutions extremely vulnerable, especially events like sudden changes due to related retirements, partner defections, health issues among their leaders, loss of interest in management among some key partners, or a developing age gap affecting important positions. He continues by stating that many are fearful of how a new strategy will affect their compensation, career path, or even job security. Failure to communicate and dispel these concerns will breed suspicion, sniping and resistance, minimising the potential for buy-in and successful implementation; therefore succession planning should become an integral part of the institution’s overall strategy. Everyone should be aware of what is being attempted, how it will be implemented, and the rewards and penalties for compliance/ non-compliance.

Lafley and Tichy (2011:68) also agree that the selection of a CEO has a profound impact on an institution’s strategy, its execution, and ultimately, its business and financial performance. All institutions should have a plan for handling the normal transfer of power as well as for dealing with emergencies like health incidents, untimely death, and other unanticipated events. Succession planning demands the same coherence, discipline and thoroughness provided by governance, enterprise risk and strategic oversight.

1.7.2 Human resource development and succession planning

Eskenazi and Henson (2005), cited by Kowalewski et al. (2011:104), explains that, traditionally, when there was a vacant post, human resources would seek to fill the position as soon as possible by finding someone internally, or through staffing and personnel agencies or recruiters. With the implementation of succession planning, many employers now have well-conceived training and development programmes, in order to ensure that they have qualified employees to fill key positions. This planning also allows managers to anticipate changes and be proactive, rather than be reactive.
Flander (2008), quoted by Kowalewski, Moretti and McGee (2011:99), agrees that institutions that manage succession well, understand that the process starts years before the event and know how to think outside the box. Resources must be dedicated early in an employee’s tenure, although there is no guarantee that the employee will stay with the institution after time and money have been invested in vain. Instead of hiring someone from outside that would take a full year to grasp the inner workings of the institution, institutions are growing their own human resources. They realise that to be effective, individuals have to know the inner workings and know the players in a fast changing competitive world, time cannot be sacrificed. An essential element of the mentoring process is anticipating situations and providing the successor with tools she or he will need to be successful in their position.

According to Altman (2009:72), there are advantages in bringing in a successor designate with wide relevant experience, but a home grown candidate who understands the culture and dynamics of the business and shows a strong degree of loyalty should never be underestimated. He or she should have been tested in running part or all of the institution with success. Altman (2009:72), quoted Maclaurin (2005), when he stated that “key people from outside should be brought in when a business is failing, but if it is doing well you promote from the inside, unless the business is very young and fast growing”.

Succession planning can range from fairly simple systems to highly sophisticated and comprehensive systems of collating and maintaining documented data on management hierarchy and tracking the implementation of succession plans (Meyer, 2002:288).

1.7.3 Talent management and succession and planning
According to Kowalewski et al. (2011:100), talent forecasting includes accounting for not only the current workforce, but also the anticipated workforce, while factoring in the supply and demand dynamics of the industry. It is also imperative to consider the internal and external forces that may influence the availability of qualified individuals to not just fill, but also to have the potential to exceed the expectations of the position.

Management succession planning means there is a new generation of key talent and precise plans (Altman, 2009:75). It is about a systematic approach to identify, develop and plan talented people for key positions in the institution. Talent management and, by association, succession planning, becomes more important in an economic downturn and Altman (2009:75) emphasises that during uncertain times, it is more important than ever to know
where key talent is situated within an institution and how to develop people to meet short and long term institutional goals and objectives.

Altman (2009:77) continues to narrate that, according to a survey conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), “the old succession planning was purely about institutional needs. The modern version takes into account the growing recognition that people increasingly need to make their own career decisions and to balance career decisions and family responsibilities where possible, customising moves to meet the needs of employees, their families and the changing skill requirements of the institution”.

Career development and succession planning go hand in hand. When they are linked to the institution’s vision, employees can align their personal aspirations to the institution’s current and future needs, creating a mutually beneficial environment. Internal career development programmes are proving critical in keeping valued employees while concurrently, ensuring greater control over the succession planning process. Retention research indicates that individuals tend to stay longer where they are experiencing personal and professional growth. Employers who actively partner with their employees to align career direction with institutional goals, are realising better retention rates (Gaffney, 2005:7).

1.7.4 Leadership and Succession Planning

According to Altman (2009:75), leadership is a process of developing and communicating a vision for the future, motivating people and gaining their commitment and engagement; whereas management is concerned with achieving results by effectively identifying, deploying, utilising and controlling all the resources required, namely: people, money, information, facilities, plant and equipment.

Rapid institutional restructuring can also dramatically change the leadership needs at the middle and lower levels of an institution. Unfortunately, traditional succession plans usually neglect to address leadership gaps at these levels. A more rigorous and structured approach to succession planning (one that focuses on preparing all employees for leadership roles (not just those on the CEO track) could improve the speed at which institutions transition to new institutional structures (Kleinsorge, 2010:67).
Succession planning is a proactive attempt to ensure that leadership in an institution will be continuous by identifying how these positions will be filled as both planned and unplanned departures occur. Succession planning can include cultivating and preparing talent from within an institution, or planning recruitment activities for talent from outside an agency (Schmalzried and Fleming 2007:169). Rothwell (2010:51) agrees that succession planning is traditionally a strategic change effort designed to prepare for promotion within an institution by emphasising internal talent development.

High-performing institutions plan for leadership transition and succession by linking their strategic plan and performance management systems to leader development, aimed at the results they seek. The high performing institution sustains success by developing a pool of diverse, creative leaders who are attentive to the shifting needs of their constituents (Adams, 2011:98).

Most of the literature indicated that previous studies were conducted mainly in the private sector and from an international perspective. Therefore, this research will focus on the public sector, particularly the middle managers of the Department of Science and Technology, as well as documentation such as reports, guidelines and strategy.

1.8 TERMINOLOGY
Terminology is a common understanding of the terms used in this research which will clarify some key concepts.

Brain drain is defined as the loss of experienced personnel and retirees’ knowledge that is not or cannot be passed down to those who follow. This lost knowledge includes competencies, field of specialty and agency specific information. What a department or agency does and more importantly, why and how it does it, disappears with the retirement Kochanowski (2011:91).

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the institution in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills Bass (1990) cited by (Advanced Management Development Programme, 2010:15).
Mentoring. In a study of high-performing institutions it is described as the ability to attract the right talent, encourage them to develop their natural skills as well as new ones and reward excellence. The vehicle to execute this is leadership that nurtures workers’ self-confidence and allows them to make both decisions and mistakes as part of their learning process (Seymour, 2008:79).

Institutional memory. The term institutional memory is used to describe a collection of institutional learning that entails information stored for future individual and corporate use. The author adds that individuals, with technical knowledge, and able to apply it to a variety of complex and novel situations, possess institutional memories (Rusaw, 1994:140).

Succession planning. Aligning mission and goals with human capital required to meet those goals is the core of succession planning. Past this, it is a system for deliberate identification of the needs of the institution with the talent that is coming up through the ranks. It is being prepared for contingencies, such as a sudden vacancy in a key position, through the planning process itself (Schmalzried and Fleming, 2007:16).

Talent management. The concept of talent management encompasses many of other workforce terms noted here, including succession planning, workforce planning and mentoring. It is further defined as building culture, engagement, capability and capacity through integrated talent acquisition, development and deployment processes that align with business goals (Bercherlmann, 2005:12).

Human resource planning is defined as the process of evaluating the institution’s current and future human resource needs in terms of institutional objectives, and taking active steps to ensure that a competent, stable personnel corps is employed in the institution (French, 1994:146).

1.9 Limitations and Delimitations of the Research
The limitations of this research are that the Department of Science and Technology is not a very large Department and the concept of succession planning is still new within the DST. Also, the fact that the Department operates in the public sector where policies apply and should be implemented equally across the board, unlike in the private sector where two middle managers for instance, can earn different salaries depending on the scope of their jobs. Currently, the human resource officials/practitioners do not see succession planning as
a function that should be facilitated and managed by the Unit: Human Resources (HR). They encourage that it should be something that’s done between a manager and the subordinate in certain areas of work, which have been identified as key positions within the whole Department. Therefore, the implementation of succession planning as a tool is dependent on a number of factors such as the willingness of the supervisor to mentor or coach his/her subordinate; whether that subordinate is a high performer and has the skills available. This means the number of middle managers for the purposes of this research could be minimal as the research is limited to the DST National office in Pretoria only because the DST does not have regional offices.

1.10 ETHICAL CLEARANCE
Permission to conduct this research within the DST was granted. A copy of the signed memo by the DST Human Resources Senior Management is attached herewith as Annexure B. Participation is voluntarily and participants may withdraw from the process at any time without negative consequences.

1.11 STRUCTURE OF CHAPTERS
Chapter one is the introductory chapter to the entire research. It includes the background and rationale on the importance of investigating succession planning in DST. The problem statement, research objectives and research questions, literature review and methodology, demarcation and limitations of the research are also discussed.

Chapter two focuses exclusively on succession planning, concepts such as leadership, strategic planning, human resource development and retention, as well as other stated theories, advantages and disadvantages on succession planning.

Chapter three deals with the research methods used to collect data, research processes, development of research instruments and piloting.

Chapter four will focus on data research and data analysis. In this chapter the data collected will be reviewed, categorised, and presented in an interpretable manner. This chapter will also provide an overview of the DST.

Chapter five of the dissertation will be the concluding chapter of the research, consolidating the preceding chapters and reflecting on the research objectives. The research findings, recommendations and conclusion will be discussed in this chapter.
1.12 CONCLUSION
This research investigates how succession planning can be used as a tool in developing high performing middle managers in the Department of Science and Technology. This chapter focuses on the background and rationale of the research, the problem statement, research objectives, methodology, literature review, as well as limitations and restrictions of the research. The next chapter will focus on the literature review.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter one introduced the dissertation by presenting a general overview of the research. Chapter two of this research will exclusively be based on succession planning; with a focus on exploring theories and concepts of succession planning. This chapter will focus on the nature and scope of succession planning; leadership and succession planning; strategic planning and succession planning; human resources development and succession planning, as well as talent management and succession planning.

2.2 NATURE AND SCOPE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING
According to Taylor (2013:17), “the best way to pass the baton smoothly, is to choose successors carefully and groom them thoroughly over an extended period of time, meaning years”. He continues to state that the key to a successful transition is adequate time and commitment, gradually and continuously. For instance, in the public service, succession planning could be implemented by identifying employees who are high achievers from a pool of employees who have outperformed the rest, because passing the baton is easier and more effective when done over time as opposed to forcing it over a restricted period of time.

Hampel, Procter and Deuter, (2010:278) define succession planning as a process of managing the present and the future while simultaneously addressing individual and institutional learning and development needs. They argue that collegial support, career planning and development, information exchange, capacity building and mentoring, prepare employees to step up and embrace new challenges and generate considerable career planning. According to Hampel, Procter and Deuter (2010:278), succession planning is therefore a means through which institutions can express their strategic intent in the form of leadership development and transitions. They further argue that implications of effective and strategic succession planning for instance for the profession of nursing are vast in a current environment experiencing an inadequate supply of nurses and the impending retirement of experienced clinical leaders; and that the exiting succession planning within health care tends towards executive management and does not take into account the clinical
leadership level. Thus, the growing demand for nursing leaders at all levels would be well served by a leadership succession plan and process.

Hampel, Procter and Deuter, (2010:279), further argue that succession planning is more than just the concept of filling a position in the future, it involves a structured process of identifying key positions and their requisite qualifications and competencies; selecting potential internal candidates; targeting development and tracking those candidates; selecting a successor and ensuring a commitment of resources. Furthermore, succession planning provides a reasonable return on investment as a risk management strategy for orderly transition, it indicates effective stewardship of scarce resources and enhances recruitment and retention, reinforcing the idea that people are assets and critical to the success of an institution. Hampel, Procter and Deuter, (2010:278), argues that the goal of succession planning is institutional continuity to ensure strategic and operational effectiveness and identifies the need for creating a new culture, one which incorporates professional growth and advancement. However, threats to continuity cannot always be anticipated and it is ‘demand forecasting’ that is essential to prepare the institution for the future. Furthermore, the authors recognise that succession planning may encompass the unpredictability of departure (illness, death and alternative opportunities) and, therefore, there is no universal time frame for succession to occur. Hence, succession planning needs to be embedded within the institutional culture, making it a continuous institutional process with varying time periods and pathways toward a time of succession.

Haworth (2005:13), reports that institutions that are best at succession planning have leaders who have adopted certain practices. He proposes following guidelines to create an environment that fosters individual growth, channels career development and creates opportunities for employees to try out new skills in real-life situations:

- **Understand your institution** – Get to the bottom of your business’s future requirements by having a vision, business plan and SMART (specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and time-framed) goals.
- **Know your people** – Talk regularly to know your people, getting to know them inside out – not just knowing their skills but knowing them as people. Build real relationships through listening actively and creating rapport with your subordinates. Additionally, through the natural interactions that you have with your people, notice things, even little things and skills that are worth nurturing for the future.
• *Create trust* – Keep promises, delivering what you say you will, be confidential when necessary, deal with people fairly and consistently, and have no favourites.

• *Take time to think* – Institutions that are most successful at succession planning consider thinking an essential action. Consciously think through the needs of your business for the future and start pencilling in people plans through delegation, trials and simply stretching people’s duties in small ways.

• *Spot potential* – Become great at hearing and seeing hidden skills. Foster great relationships with subordinates, maintain an open door for conversation and ask questions to find out how people think and what drives their behaviours.

• *Seek win-win approaches* – Realise that success comes from natural benefit and that both parties have to attain something worthwhile from the growth process.

• *Let go* – Succession planning is not an inert activity done on the desktop. Used properly, the succession planning process enhances your own actions in other areas. It takes a little of the burden off you by delegating appropriate tasks to subordinates as part of their development process.

• *Create opportunities* – Challenge your people in small ways. Ask for help on a project. Build confidence through showing someone how something is done and then let them have the responsibility. Finding safe opportunities where people can try something new is really useful.

• *Allow mistakes* – In an environment that encourages employees to undertake challenging assignments, a supportive, blame-free culture is needed. Managers who are best at succession planning provide a very safe place for subordinates to try out their new skills.

• *Invest in the future* – The work of succession planning is an investment for the future good of the business. The process may cost a little money, involve more training, and take a little time, but it is certainly worthwhile.

• *Use creativity* – Institutions that use succession planning to nurture people for bigger roles often “shuffle” people – sometimes out of context – to broaden their skills.

• *Take risks* – While taking great care to protect your subordinates from feelings of failure, poor performance and exposure, take calculated risks that enable employees, and the institution, to learn together.

• *Encourage them* – Praise, thanks and reinforcement go a long, long way toward getting people to want to come back for more. Use encouragement in context and sincerely.
• *Establish a coaching culture* – Succession planning is a generative experience. When people take on new challenges, you must give them criteria for success (Haworth, 2005:14).

Hopen (2005:3), further explains why succession planning is the only concrete strategy to ensure an institution won’t be crippled when vacancies occur.

According to Kochanowski (2011:85), the public service workforce at all levels is expected to shrink substantially over the next 10 years; this is mainly due to the retirement of the Baby Boomers. He argues that a reduction in salary will cause employees to look for employment elsewhere and relocate to those provinces. Kleeman (2008) cited in Kochanowski (2011:85), label this as the brain drain or in a more alarmist fashion a tsunami. The outflow of public employees is complicated by previous efforts of government agencies and departments to reduce the size of the public service. Several factors have exacerbated the drain of knowledge: middle management positions left vacant, jobs cut due to privatisation or outsourcing functions and processes and less spent on training and development of those who remain. Institutional memory is being lost on how processes have evolved and where best to allocate scarce resources. Kochanowski (2011:86) states that the government leaders of the future are not receiving preparation on how to lead in the scope of their current duties.

Kochanowski (2011:88) compares the succession planning processes between the public and the private sector. One proven method of human capital management from the private sector is a system of succession planning and talent management. The practices of succession planning or planning to fill vacant positions by preparing those who are promotable in talent management or recognising and nurturing employees for upward mobility differ when applied in the public service. Public servants are often qualified for their positions through competency tests and it is not unusual for a manager to move across departmental boundaries and into a new agency or discipline because that is the next available opening. Collective bargaining agreements require postings and testing for promotion and strictly prohibit displaying favouritism to any individual for a position, even through cultivation of their skills and competencies. The system of appointment of senior management in public institutions leaves little incentive for those individuals to spend time cultivating talent. Finally, senior managers who could fill this void are under the direction and workload allocation of those who lack the inclination to manage human
capital. Private sector models of succession planning and talent management, therefore, lack direct applicability in public sector institutions.

Research conducted by Kochanowski (2011:89) shows that succession planning models in the public service are sparse and focused on work plans for the workforce of eight to ten years ago. The financial crisis and blooming budget shortfalls have torn attention away from this issue, so even the small percentage of institutions that were attempting to plan have had to focus instead on furloughs, reductions in force through attrition and hiring freezes and reallocation of employees to fill critical slots in institutions (Kochanowski, 2011:89). The next section focuses on leadership and succession planning.

2.3 LEADERSHIP AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

Hampel, Procter and Deuter, (2010:280), define leadership as the activities of an individual that are visionary and critical in directing and sculpting clinical practice. Also incumbent on the leadership team should be to create systems and processes to maximise promotional pathways as key enablers for skill acquisition and increased expertise. This will require mentorship, coaching and practical experience in the creation of new roles and opportunities through succession planning. Leadership should be provided to existing service managers to ensure that systems and processes are in place, while physical and financial resources should be managed effectively in support of smooth succession. Leading and managing a team based on commitment are key to developing people and building succession capability. Employers and employees may hesitate at the possibility of grooming an existing employee, and opt for externally advertising a position. While internal recruitment processes tend to be applied in larger, more stable and developed institutions, external recruitment strategies may emerge when a shortage of suitable internal candidates exist or where a new institutional direction or vision has been developed. In choosing an approach, institutions must examine market conditions; the availability of candidates; the impact of internal/external strategies on current employees; the necessity for objectivity, and the overall cost benefit (Hampel et al. 2010:284).

According to Feeg (2008:277), future projections and statistics suggest that the number of vacant positions at top management levels in administrative, academic and clinical settings, will increase in the future. He further states that, institutions surprisingly do not have a systematic process for anticipating leadership needs and ensuring that well- prepared
leaders would be available when the need arises. There should be a “constant effort to
find and develop leaders with a shift from rhetoric to performance”.

Mentoring leaders for the future is part of leadership development and succession planning
and must be put in practice in institutions. Several programmes have emerged that focus
on leadership development, including those from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation,
Sigma Theta Tau International, and nursing education institutions, such as the American
Association of Colleges of Nurses, to name but a few (Feeg, 2008:277).

For health care institutions, succession planning requires vision, anticipating change
and utilising strategies of coaching and mentoring on all levels within the institution.
To engage in the process, the mentor provides support, direction and personal career
counselling assistance. Hands-on learning activities and stretch assignments set the stage
for socialising the new leader into the day-to-day activities of the institution. The mentor
professionally provides exposure to opportunities that include challenging assignments
while explaining the formal and informal systems and personally offers encouragement,
role modelling, and advertisement (Feeg, 2008:277).

According to Poole and Carr (2005:36), Ashridge Business School has over the years
been heavily involved in helping institutions identify their future leaders but, recently,
the emphasis on talent management and succession planning has intensified in the face of
increasing career mix and the competition for talent. They argue that leadership should
be expanded to cover and include the quality of “leadership-in-waiting”. While it is
already a persistent assumption that experience brings wisdom, Poole and Carr’s research
showed that the crucial factor in determining how well a leader will cope with unforeseen
critical incident, is whether or not they have the confidence and coping mechanism from
having weathered previous critical incidents.

While much of leadership may be personal and innate, skills-based training remains
crucial, particularly early on in a leader’s career. The research shows that the very skills
that get one a certain position within an institution, may be the ones that prevent you from
reaching the next. The ability to complete tasks effectively may not be the skills that take
you to the next level. Self awareness and the ability to reflect ‘in the moment’ help people
avoid these pitfalls (Poole & Carr, 2006:39).
According to Dainty, Cheng and Moore (2005:3), over the last decade there has been a growing emphasis on the identification of the behaviours and traits necessary for effective job performance, particularly in terms of informed employee selection decisions. A competencies approach helps to identify which selection techniques or psychometrics are likely to result in useful evidence for the job role under consideration (Dainty et al. 2005:3). Wood and Payne (1998) suggest that competency-based selection approaches circumvent many of the problems of traditional techniques, including the facilitation of person/job matching, and provide more accurate predictions about sustainability. This minimises the risk of making ‘snap’ judgments by interview panels. This research set out to identify the core behavioural competencies of the construction project management function and further to refine a model in order to predict the likely managerial effectiveness of prospective incumbents to the job role. Refining the more limited range of core competencies that can be used to predict the in-job performance of individual candidates against each other, could inform and streamline the selection process.

This research is based on the notion that a distinction can be drawn between a superior and an average performer through the identification of behaviours unique to the superior performing managers. By exploring the influence of these behaviours in defining effectiveness within the project management role, the key behaviours with respect to predicting superior performance can be identified. Other potential applications for the predictive model are career management/succession planning and performance management. In terms of succession planning, the competencies can be used to assess the managerial potential of young and inexperienced managers, as well as to identify deficiencies in experienced managers who, with further development, could be groomed for senior management positions. Identifying candidates for future senior management position allows training and development activities to be tailored to their needs in order to improve institutional preparedness. This demands the creation of a robust reward management programme around a competency-based pay scheme that seeks to reward managers for developing their competencies in line with institutional requirements. Thus, appraising managers against the competencies identified in this research and setting development goals against the achievement of higher levels of each competency, offers a transparent and practicable performance management development tool (Dainty et al. 2005:8).
The literature indicates that succession planning is a process of identifying and developing potential successors for key positions in an institution, through a systematic evaluation process and training. Employees would grow within the department and they would be motivated knowing that there might be prospects for promotion in future. The next section will focus on strategic planning and succession planning.

2.4 STRATEGIC PLANNING AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

According to Hampel et al. (2010), the strategy can be described as maximising the opportunities through the health reform agenda to promote new ways of practice. It endorses partnership with health care institutions to identify and support key leadership positions ensuring that succession plans are in place and recommends the development of capacity and capability building at all levels through access to leadership, management and professional development opportunities. Sherrod (2006:64), agree, stating that while an emergency plan is usually developed by the board, institutions are realising the need for succession management of the leadership team, which includes strategic planning for replacing all leaders critical to institutional success.

The workforce plan is the point where data is matched in the human capital management system. The public sector institution is aware of the type of employees it will need from the strategic and tactical plan assessment. It knows what inventory it has ‘in stock’ to fill “orders”. Matching this part should be relatively easy, as long as the skills of the individuals are part of the personnel inventory. Once matching has occurred, the gaps become clearer. Institutions should pay particular attention to the retirement gaps that are looming. Setting this gap analysis against the backdrop of a timeline will identify crises and emergency requirements to fill positions quickly. The workforce plan then becomes a matter of filling the gaps that have been identified in time for some transition to occur (Kochanowski, 2011:101). Having a succession planning system as part of the DST’s strategic plans would have the following advantages:

South Africa has a shortage of Scientists, therefore, for the DST, grooming internally, would be an investment. They could:

- save a lot of money by avoiding costly job advertisements in newspapers;
- also save money on costs of training new employees and save time on coaching and mentoring;
- retain its most valuable assets, its human resources and become the employer of
choice.

- Succession planning would prepare the DST for expansion and even the loss of a key employee; and
- Preserve the DST’s institutional memory.

The next section will focus on the human resources development and succession planning.

### 2.5 HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

According to Seymour (2008:78), every institution evolves and grows around vision, skill and enthusiasm of its leaders and managers. The institution gradually becomes an embodiment of their judgement, values and decisions. If they retire or exit for other reasons, the ethos and dynamics of the institution will inevitably change. If the value of the institution is to be maintained or enhanced, it is imperative that these changes are carefully controlled. The first step is to formally decide precisely what difference the leaders’ departure will make. For example, if the retiring directors/managers were responsible for sales dynamism, strict financial control, and key account customer loyalty or engineering innovation. These are critical skills gaps which will need to be filled seamlessly.

There is more to succession planning than just being a way of averting the dangers of a foreseeable motivational and management vacuum. It can be an opportunity to refresh, revitalise or reposition a staid institution in a rapidly changing world. Institutions can move forward by optimising the contribution of their existing management, staff and workforce. Uncovering unsung talent in existing staff is less costly than recruiting and introducing new personnel. Job rotations can sometimes reveal this hidden, large back-up supply of ability (Seymour, 2008:78).

In some instances, the skills shortfalls can be filled by job rotation. Skills shortfalls in one department can be overcome by transferring employees with the necessary competencies to that department, particularly where a competent individual’s ability is under-utilised. There are huge savings to be made by offering coaching, mentoring or furthering job training to staff. Positive and structured training can expand the skills set of employees and identify and improve areas which require development - all as an alternative to launch yet another recruitment drive (Seymour, 2008:78).
Seymour (2008:79) defines coaching as not just structured learning but more to do with supporting individuals and teams on their developmental journey – helping them to become the people they want to be and achieve the success they aspire to. It’s a matter of focusing on their true future potential and how it can be realised. Similarly, mentoring is the imparting of knowledge by a more experienced person to the less experienced. Again it’s not so much about structured learning, more about enabling through providing guidance, support and understanding.

The rewards reaped from investing in existing employees, apart from improving their skills, is that employees will obviously be prepared to commit more deeply to an institution that invests in them and their route to achieving their personal ambitions, perhaps through promotion. It also instills the wider perception that, as others advance, the gaps they leave will create promotion opportunities for their immediate subordinates, rather than outside recruits. This creates a sense of career scope and momentum among the whole workforce (Seymour, 2008:78).

Trainers, coaches and mentors need to do more than recite prescribed catch-all programmes. They should take time to get to know the institution and absorb its culture as a prerequisite of cultivating teamwork and enhancing productivity. It is about identifying people who have the capability to fulfil key roles both now and in the future; knowing who could step in immediately, who could be an asset to the institution in a few years’ time and who is likely to be leading the institution forward in the longer term (Seymour, 2008:78).

Internal recruitment for senior or critical positions is vital for the future of the institution and needs to start some considerable time before the expected succession occurs so that the transfer of responsibility can be a gradual process rather than a sudden dramatic event. After establishing what competencies a particular institution needs to achieve its goals, HR advisors can devise exercises to identify and develop strengths and remedial programmes to overcome shortcomings where there is need for improvement (Seymour, 2008:79).

The key to future success lies in assessing and understanding the value of the human resources that an institution has and the resources it will need in the future. The future performance of any institution is reliant on the thoroughness and vigour of today’s succession planning. Having competent and consistent management and able workforce in
place from day one will be a decisive factor in negotiations. Careful planning also means that the workforce would be less unsettled and disrupted. In short, if an institution wants to boost its value and effectiveness, it should start planning for and building the next generation of human resources now (Seymour, 2008:79).

Recruiting internally would encourage employees in the public service to work even harder for a promotion. Also, developing and recruiting internally would make the recruitment and selection process shorter and simpler because selection would be made from the already available and known high performing employees with experience and potential. This would aid in planning for the next generation of human resources, which would also improve transparency, the structure of the institution and career opportunities; whereas external recruitment, although it might have advantages in terms of bringing new skills in the institution, might be costly and time consuming. The next section will focus on talent management and succession planning.

2.6 TALENT MANAGEMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

According to Berchelmann (2005:11), lack of executive talent can have a catastrophic impact on an institution. In addition, succession planning is not merely for the senior management positions. In reality, good succession management develops a pool of talent with skills, attributes, and experiences to fill specific, often high-level positions. Inaccurate assessments of where talent is lacking can blindside an institution. Human resources need to know which posts will become vacant and which new positions would be created as the institution grows. Only then would early identification of key talent allow the institution to proactively develop leaders for the future.

A good starting point is the current and projected institution chart, including key staff and their expected retirement dates. Identifying “high potentials” is not easy. Senior leaders should openly discuss people with the potential to become top leaders. They need to identify future institution challenges and the necessary skill sets to establish competencies by which they can develop successors. A healthy debate and discussion is needed at this step (Berchelmann, 2005:11).

Berchelmann (2005:11) further states that employees identified as “high potentials” or “top talent” should go through a series of formal assessments and performance feedback sessions. Everyone involved in the process then knows what skills need improvement, and
can match those skills to the success factors identified as crucial to the continued growth of the institution. A development plan is prepared and initiated, which could include training, coaching and developmental assignments.

Key vacant positions are occurring at the same time when there are statistically fewer people to fill those vacancies. This means fewer people available for top management positions, and high-performance senior management talent will be in demand. Junior managers who are available and eager for responsibility are frequently not prepared to take on that responsibility. Downsizing caused many institutions to eliminate middle managers, traditionally the source of senior management talent and development, leaving these junior managers without mentors and role models. External appointments are not only costly, but studies conducted by the Centre for Creative Leadership reveal that 65% of senior managers recruited externally fail within the first two years (Bercherlmann, 2005:12).

According to Berchelmann (2005:12), successful succession plans have certain key elements in common, such as:

- Visible support from the CEO and all members of top management;
- Clearly identified leadership criteria;
- A defined plan to find, retain, and motivate future leaders;
- Simple, easy to follow, measurable processes;
- The use of succession planning to reinforce the corporate culture;
- A process that focuses primarily on leadership development;
- A process that is a real institutional priority.

Gaffney (2005:7), states that retention research indicates that individuals tend to stay longer where they are experiencing personal and professional growth. Employers who actively partner with their employees to align career direction with institutional goals are realising better retention rates. Employees actively involved in their personal development report more satisfaction with their work and tend to stay longer with the institution.

Career development and succession planning synergy creates happier and more productive employees in a growth-oriented institution. The institution experiences positive bottom-line results while preparing for future institution needs based on mutual corporate and individual growth. The ongoing institution strategy incorporates retention and succession planning in a systematic structure. Internal career development, training initiatives,
mentoring, coaching, evaluations, annual reviews and orientation programmes are meaningfully connected to institutional goals. The result is a workable workforce that consistently addresses the corporate requirements for finding, keeping, and placing talent in key positions, where needed (Gaffney, 2005:7).

Gaffney (2005:8) is of the view that the traditional career path is a point-to-point progression that targets a select few for specific leadership positions. Career-management-pathing programmes generally worked because the environment was more static, jobs more stable and employees were loyal and more connected to their institution. Job hopping, career changing, volatile industries and shifting work industries are now a way of institutional life. The contrasts between employer and employee have significantly changed. When employees understand what the institution needs and how their personal career aspirations fit into the overall plan, a new contract develops. When institutions share the corporate vision with their employees beyond plaques on the wall, internal institutional stakeholders are generated who have a vested interest in the success of the institution. The two-way flow of information allows employer and employee awareness of what is wanted and needed from each other. Mutual expectations are clear. Institutions know where they need strong employees, and employees are realistically aware of how they fit into the institution’s bench strength requirements (Gaffney, 2005:8).

The tight job market requires creative solutions to succession challenges that normally exist in an institution but are now evolving into gigantic proportions. Succession planning is becoming a major casualty in the retention drama (Gaffney, 2005:7). Institutions need to plan even more than before for their future brainpower needs. Gaffney (2005:7)) continues that a place to start this strategy is for the institution to define its succession planning process more broadly to include all the critical roles existing now, needed before long and necessary for the future. Each role, in every department, throughout the institution, is analysed for its purpose and importance in the institution. Each individual is appraised for his or her unique retention risk. An institution has to know if the risk is high or low for losing someone who is critical to the institution. Once critical roles and availability of indispensable people are assessed, a corporate-wide plan of action is developed. The questions for these critical roles include:

- What positions are needed now and as we plan for the future?
- Who to retain and develop for current and projected needs?
- What is the plan for unnecessary roles?
• What is the approach for individuals who aren’t doing well but can be trained to improve?
• What to do with individuals who are in a critical role, are at low risk of leaving, but for performance reasons, need to be replaced by the institution?

A comprehensive process needs the total buy-in of the executive team to lead the institution. The concept is simple but involves a commitment to corporate and individual growth by employer and employee.

According to Gaffney (2005:8), traditionally, the corporate business plan is carefully crafted and rarely discussed with anyone beyond management. Only top-level management and department heads probably had substantial input. Since considerable time, thought, planning and energy went into the creation of these plans, it makes sense to expand their use to address the ever-growing need for talent in an institution.

The idea is to use the corporate business plan as the guiding instrument and encourage employees to understand themselves enough to know where they fit in and when. Institutional leaders can leverage the investment they made in business plan creation through the synergy of connecting it to succession planning and internal career development (Gaffney, 2005:9).

Stevens (2008:15), focuses on research for Total Quality Management (TQM) where the initial requirement for the talent management process to attain Six Sigma capability, would be an accurate measure of individual’s skills, competencies, motivational drivers, work habits and potential for developing future competencies. One would need to validate the assessment instrument to be predictively accurate of measured productivity improvements and or reduction in “unwanted” turnover, well beyond the accuracy levels most commonly reported. Stevens (2008:15), suggests that only a Six Sigma or TQM approach can accomplish the level of quality improvement necessary for the management of intellectual capital. Using a TQM approach requires focusing primarily on identifying the “cause of failure” of otherwise qualified individuals. This approach is counter to the more common identification of the causes of success as typically seen in job analyses and competency studies. A TQM approach is capable of establishing a single instrument that can measure all relevant competencies with an accuracy level robust enough to support
substantial quality gains in the management of an institution’s most valuable “human” assets (Stevens, 2008:15).

The result is a talent audit system – an information repository where institutions have a complete inventory of strengths and weaknesses for all key positions. This relational database can distinguish the job performance makeup of key talent located in a particular division anywhere in the institution, helping to place the right people in the right job. Stevens (2008:16) highlights the causes of ineffective talent management and how a Six Sigma/TQM approach can help to minimise the following five common “pain points”:

- Reducing unwanted turnover;
- Improving weak succession planning;
- Losing top talent;
- Matching the right people to the wrong jobs; and
- Training the wrong personnel (Stevens, 2008:16).

The use of a talent audit system that accurately and systematically predicts the effectiveness of appointing the right talent – while avoiding the wrong talent – is essential to addressing this problem. Stevens (2008:16) states that one of the primary causes of top-performer turnover is poor job fit. Employees become frustrated when they can’t do the job they want to do. Talent audits demonstrate that a large proportion of job dissatisfaction (which leads to unwanted turnover) is a result of these job mismatches. A systematic approach is needed to address the causes of poor job fit, including the actions below:

- Identify sources and causes of failure for each position and identify the key skills to overcome those failure points;
- Assess incumbents’ capabilities against the skills that ensure success;
- Continually conduct exit interviews to document turnover causes;
- Analyse results periodically to determine the commonalities;
- Establish a plan to reduce the defects (Stevens, 2008:16).

Succession planning, minimising the risk through appropriate compensation, recognition and readiness of successors by identifying and training high-potential employees – is an ongoing challenge for institutions of all sizes. Unfortunately, succession planning is usually geared toward a small number of key executive positions; however, succession planning need not apply only to executives. It can be expanded to all levels in the institution with the help of a talent audit system. This type of skills detection is made
possible because a talent audit system reveals data that are definable, measurable and actionable (Stevens 2008:16).

Training can improve individuals’ skills by only a small margin. This means that people in the wrong positions cannot be trained to become top performers, only that their weaker skills can improve to levels not as weak as before. Clearly, training is too expensive to waste on the wrong people. To get the most out training, four common challenges should be overcome:

• Maximising people strengths rather than overcoming weaknesses;
• Training the right personnel for the right jobs;
• Training the “most trainable” personnel;
• Focusing on the highest potential personnel Stevens (2008:17).

When addressing these challenges, institutions frequently come to the same conclusion: Training needs to be flexible and tailored to each individual job function. The use of a complete inventory of strengths and weaknesses for all employees, such as those found in a talent audit database, can help institutions tailor their training to the individuals that need it most (Stevens, 2008:16).

2.7 CONCLUSION

The nature and scope of succession planning shows that there is no single best format or checklist of activities for good career development and succession plan because each plan is unique to the individual, their attitudes and learning style, their mentor/coach and the skills and position they are preparing for. In some cases, there may not be a specific position in mind but the plan instead will help them to achieve a level of skills that readies them for a range of positions or a rank within the pipeline filled with people prepared to advance within the government institution.

From the discussions on leadership and succession planning it was clear that without succession planning, positions will be left vacant and government services will be lacking. It is therefore crucial to develop employees in order to prepare them for the vacancies which might occur and that investing in employees is the best thing an institution can do for its human resources. Talent management is also very valuable and the use of a complete inventory of strengths and weaknesses for all employees, such as those found in a talent audit database, can help institutions tailor their training to the individuals that need it most.
and finally to avoid job mismatches. It is vital for an institution to identify sources and causes of failure for each position and identify the key skills to overcome those failure points; assess incumbents’ capabilities against the skills that ensure success; continually conduct exit interviews to document turnover causes; analyse results periodically to determine the commonalities; and to establish a plan to reduce the defects.

The next chapter will focus on research methodology.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter two focused on succession planning and discovered there may not be a specific position in mind but the succession plan instead will help them to achieve a level of skills that readies them for a range of positions or a rank within the pipeline, filled with people prepared to advance in the government institution. This is vital for an institution to identify sources and causes of failure for each position and identify the key skills to overcome those failure points. It assesses incumbents’ capabilities against the skills that ensure success; continually conduct exit interviews to document turnover causes; analyse results periodically to determine the commonalities; and to establish a plan to reduce the defects. This chapter explains the research methodology, the approach used to collect data, the research processes, the development of research instruments and piloting, as well as to describe the target population, sampling method, reliability, validity, ethical issues, and limitations of the research.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH
This section will explain the role, purpose, and type of research design applicable to this research. The appropriate choice and research method for this research is both a qualitative and quantitative approach. The research intends to mainly describe and explain how succession planning would impact on staff turnover. The research will firstly be used to explore these abstract concepts and interpret the findings. The nature of the research question is such that there are multiple possible realities that can be constructed from the participants, hence the appropriateness of a qualitative research approach.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN
According to Welman and Kruger (2001:46) a research design is a plan utilised to identify research participants or subjects, from which to collect information. It describes what will be done with the participants, with the view to reaching conclusions about the research problem. The research design for this research was in a form of a case study, whereby a
particular group of employees was studied by collecting data using a survey questionnaire to middle managers/Deputy Directors (DDs) of the Department of Science and Technology (DST). The survey endeavoured to obtain opinions, understanding and perceptions of the targeted DDs in regard to succession planning, leadership and strategic planning, human resource development as well as talent and retention management.

3.4 UNIT OF ANALYSIS

Sekaran (2003:265) in Mkhize (2011:51) define a population as a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement. It refers to the entire group of people, events or items of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. The population for this research is middle managers within the DST.

White (2000:60) describes two methods or designs of sampling i.e. random sampling based on probability and non-random sampling, which is a non-probability approach. This research applied probability random sampling, in other words, the sampling units were middle managers within the DST.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND DATA TYPES

According to Nyalungu (2012:33), primary data can be qualitative or quantitative. Qualitative data collection techniques include in-depth interviews, focus groups, projective techniques and observational methods. Qualitative techniques provide insight into the feelings of individuals in the sample group. Quantitative techniques are designed to generate information using statistical analysis which could be projected to represent the whole population for example surveys and experimentations.

This research has focused on primary data gathering, to obtain first hand information of the attitudes, beliefs, values and experience from the DST middle managers. A questionnaire was used to collect data from research participants. Data collection is considered to be a cornerstone of the research process and determines the success of the research project as all research and planning effort is of little use if data is gathered incorrectly or respondents fail to cooperate. There are two types of sources, i.e. primary and secondary sources from which data can be collected. According to Sekaran (2003:219) in Mkhize (2011:52), primary data refers to information obtained first hand by the researcher on the variables of
interest for the specific purpose of the research; while the secondary data refers to the existing information such as information obtained from reports, policies and strategies of the institution.

Questionnaires are restricted to two basic types of questions i.e. closed ended questions, which are questions for which a researcher provides a suitable list of responses from which the respondent selects the most appropriate response e.g. Yes/No; and this produces quantitative data. Open-ended questions where the researcher doesn’t provide the respondent with a set answer from which to choose, but rather the respondent is asked to answer in their own words and this produces mainly qualitative data (Mkhize, 2010:54).

A combination of close-ended and open-ended questions has been used for this research. The design of the questionnaire consisted of a list of both open and closed-ended questions in order to enlarge the input provided by the respondents. The questionnaire was based on the themes investigated in the literature review namely: succession planning, leadership, strategic planning, human resources development and talent and retention management.

Section A deals with the biographical information of the respondents; Section B focuses on the respondents’ understanding of succession planning by choosing one statement which best fits their understanding; Section C requires respondents to indicate their opinions on the methods of identifying potential successors and developing employees by indicating whether they agree or disagree with the methods/statements provided; and Section D consists of general questions seeking to assess the respondents’ general understanding of employee development and succession planning (See Annexure A for the sample questionnaire).

A pilot survey was conducted in May 2014 to test the design, comprehension and interpretation of the questionnaire. The instrument was sent for review to nine Directors from different units within the DST. Valuable comments and suggestions were obtained which were used to refine the instrument. To test the creditability of the instrument used for collecting data, a pilot study was conducted whereby the questionnaire was administered to a small group of people before it was distributed to the rest of sample units of the target population. This was done as a means of enhancing validity and reliability of data and to
test whether respondents understood the questions and whether the questionnaire was not too laborious.

3.6 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

According to Sekaran (2003:203), validity is concerned with the idea that the research design fully addresses the research questions and objectives that the researcher is trying to answer or achieve. Validity testing can be carried out in three ways, i.e. content validity, criterion validity and construct validity. Validity is divided into internal and external validity. Internal validity refers to the validity of research findings and external validity refers to the quality of being able to generalise the research findings to other similar situations and contexts. It describes the ability of the research design to unambiguously test the research hypotheses.

According to Welman & Kruger (2001:139), “Reliability referring to the extent to which they obtained scores may be generalised to different measuring occasions, measurements/tests forms and measurement/test administrators”. The questionnaire covered the content of the problem statement and research objectives and the construction of questions was formed through available literature on the subject under investigation.

3.7 BIAS

According to Mkhize (2010:51), bias refers to a distortion in the collected data where it does not represent the reality; anything that produces systematic (but unexpected) variation in a research finding. In this research, randomisation will be used to control unknown or unexpected sources of bias.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Analysis and interpretation are frequently misused as interchangeable but they have distinctive meanings and roles (Mkhize, 2010:52). Once data has been collected, it is then analysed and interpreted for the purpose of generating meaning from the collected raw data. In this research, data analysis will begin during data collection; thereafter data will be interpreted in relation to the different themes of this research.
3.9 ETHICAL ISSUES
The researcher ensured that participants understood that their participation in this research is voluntary and that they could withdraw from the research at any time. Permission has been granted by the Department of Science and Technology to conduct the research (See Annexure B for a copy of the permission letter).

3.10 LIMITATIONS
This research is only restricted to the DST in Pretoria. This will have a bearing on the generalisation of the research findings.

3.11 CONCLUSION
This chapter focused on primary data gathering, to obtain first hand information of the attitudes, beliefs, values and experience from the DST middle managers. A questionnaire was used to collect data from research participants in which open ended and closed-ended questions were asked. Randomisation was used to control unknown or unexpected sources of bias. The next chapter will focus on the research analysis and interpretation.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter 3 of this research was based on the research methodology and focused on the explanation of the research methods, the approach used to collect data, the research processes, the development of research instruments and piloting; as well as to describe the target population, sampling method, reliability, validity, ethical issues, and limitations of the research. This chapter will focus on the research analysis and the interpretation of the research results.

4.2 PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS
Questionnaires were administered to Deputy Directors (middle managers) within the DST for this research. The sample included both male and female middle managers of all races employed in the DST. A sample of middle managers within the DST was selected for this research, and questionnaires were sent to all middle managers within the DST and only 37 out of 50 complete responses were received. Therefore, the analysis of the results will focus only on the 37 (74%) complete responses. The institutional structure of the DST, for ease of reference, in regard to where the respondents of this research are employed, is discussed below.

4.3 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
The DST was established in 2004, when it was separated from the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. Cabinet approved a new management framework for Science and Technology. It comprises the following organogram:
The DST is responsible for the five broad programmes which are explained below. Programme 1 is responsible for the overall management of the Department and for providing centralised support services to ensure that funded institutions comply with good corporate governance practices and are aligned with the strategic focus of the National System of Innovation (NSI), as well as monitoring and evaluating the science councils. Programme 2 portrays a South African society that are prospering through enhanced employment prospects, the creation and retention of local wealth, and an enriched cultural and social environment. This Programme strives to foster and promote South African innovation and high-technology development in a manner that will enhance and add value to the country’s technology products and services, including exports. Programme 3 aims to develop, promote and manage strategic international relationships, opportunities and Science and Technology (S&T) agreements that strengthen the National System of Innovation (NSI), and enable an exchange of knowledge, capacity and resources between South Africa and its regional and international partners. Programme 4 aims to
develop and implement national programmes to produce knowledge, human capital and the associated infrastructure, equipment and public research services to sustain the country’s system of innovation. Programme 5 aims to provide policy, strategy and direction-setting support for R&D-led growth. Its strategic focus is informed by government’s Micro-Economic Reform Strategy, the National Industrial Policy Framework, the Ten Year Innovation Plan, and the National Framework for Sustainable Development, and Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative-South Africa (AsgiSA), (DST Strategic Plan, 2011-2016:10).

4.4 RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This study focuses on primary, collected data, gathering the attitudes, beliefs, values and experience of middle management. Section A of the research provides a biographical outline of the respondents, whereby they were requested to provide information regarding their gender, marital status, age, programme and length of service.

4.4.1 Biographical information

This section deals with the biographical information of the respondents. Figure 4.2 shows that 59% of the middle managers are female, while 41% are male – a very pleasing phenomenon. The process of selecting employees for senior positions should not discriminate against any applicant on the grounds of race, colour, gender, disability, age, religion, belief, culture, marital status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, domestic circumstances or any arbitrary criteria. All candidates should be measured against the same objective criteria with due regard to the need for diversity and the representativeness of the Public Service (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997:22).
Figure 4.2: Gender

Figure 4.3 illustrates that 46% of the respondents are married, 42% are single and 12% are divorced. The graph indicates that the majority of the middle managers are responsible home makers who do not only have duties to fulfil at work but also at home; and that these middle managers could be in need of higher salaries as they have more commitment with responsibilities. 42% of the middle managers are single, which could mean less commitment and responsibilities to move around freely, job hopping, in search of better opportunities and development elsewhere. The 12% of the respondents who are divorced could be loyal and seeking stability in their careers and, therefore, easy to develop and retain. This is in line with what Schein (1978) cited by (Advanced Management and Development Programme, 2010:53), wrote who states that career is a very useful concept for connecting people and institutions. He views career success as positive physical and psychological outcomes of job related experiences and activities. Objective career success is one dimension that includes achievements visible to the others, for example, income and promotion.

Figure 4.3: Marital status
Figure 4.4 reveals that 57% of the respondents are between the ages of 30 – 39, 32% are between the ages of 40 – 49, 8% between 50 and over; and only 3% are between the ages of 20 – 29. This graph clearly shows that most of the middle managers at the DST are relatively young. 60% of the middle managers fall into the Generation Y and X age group, who are passionate about their work and at the time of their lives when they want to facilitate change and reach their potential. The 32% are mature middle managers, fall into the Generation X age group, who are at the peak of their careers and are in a position to transfer their knowledge and skills to the younger upcoming Generation Y. These middle managers have accumulated so much working experience and know more about the culture of the Department, what works and what doesn’t.

8% of the respondents are 50 years and over, they fall into the Baby Boomer age group, who would be retiring in the next 10-15 years. These Baby Boomers have vast knowledge and are good candidates for coaching and mentoring young leaders and managers. The 35% are at the entry level, they fall into the Generation Y age group, who are keen to learn, arriving with new ideas and ways of doing things but still lack experience and patience. This group is also still exploring, trying to learn and develop so that they can grow, but, they are easy to train but difficult to retain (Salkowitz, 2008:03).

Figure 4.4: Age group

Figure 4.5 shows that 27% of the respondents are from Programme 1, 11% from Programme 2, 14% from Programme 3, 5% from Programme 4, and 43% from Programme 5. The graph shows that all the DST Programmes were represented in this research and that middle managers, who responded, represented all the different units of the DST. Therefore, their views and opinions were very diverse and critical as these officials, on different levels of the DST hierarchy, are involved with policy functions in accordance with their various competencies. The White Paper on Human Resource Management
(1997:15) states that diversity in management accounts for more than just paying lip service to cultural or gender differences; it should involve a strategy based on consensual and collective decision making. Diversity increases innovation and performance within groups and reduces turnover and absenteeism DiTomaso (2001) underscored by (Advanced Management and Development Programme, 2010:53).

Figure 4.5: Department of Science and Technology Programmes

Employment in the public service is open to anyone between the ages of 16 and 60. Figure 4.6 illustrates that 46% of the respondents have between 6 – 10 years’ service with the DST, 38% between 0 – 5 years, 11% between 11 – 15 years and 5% have been employed at the DST, for 21 years and longer. This means that the majority of the middle managers have accumulated vast knowledge and continue to grow in their respective fields. These middle managers can step into an acting capacity when senior managers are absent for whatever reason. The 38% of the middle managers (Generation Y) are still at entry level and learning the operations with regards to the job and processes. The 11% are those middle managers (Generation X) with more experience, who have the knowledge and skills that are beneficial to DST. These managers, if not valued or promoted, could leave DST for better opportunities elsewhere as Taylor (2013:17) sated. The 5% of these middle managers would be going on retirement in the near future with some being specialists whose talent cannot be lost by the DST.

From the above discussion it is clear that the majority of middle managers are women. This workforce seems to be Generation X, in line to take over from the Baby Boomers. The Baby Boomers should impart their knowledge to Generation Y and coach Generation X to take over senior management duties and responsibilities.
4.4.2 Understanding of succession planning

This section deals with the respondents’ understanding of succession planning. Figure 4.7 shows that 49% of the respondents define succession planning as a means of empowering internal people with potential to fill management and leadership positions in the institution, recognising and managing talent; 35% understand it to be a process of preparing potential successors for key positions in an institution, through a systematic evaluation process and training; 16% chose the identification of high performing talented employees for challenging tasks, further development and increased incentives aimed at retaining them within the institution. This research indicates that respondents have a good understanding of succession planning.
Figure 4.7: Definition of succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of succession planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The identification of high performing, talented employees for challenging tasks, further development and increased incentives aimed at retaining them within the institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Developing internal people with the potential to fill management and leadership positions in the institution, recognising and managing talent within the institution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- A process of preparing potential successors for key positions in an institution, through a systematic evaluation process and training.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.8 illustrates that 38% of the respondents agree that the main purpose of succession planning was to develop employees; 30% agree it was to retain institutional talent; 21% agree it was to easily identify replacements to fill key positions; and 11% agree that it was to achieve strategic goals. The feedback from the respondents is in line with the conclusions by Hampel, et al.(2010:278), on succession planning.

Figure 4.8: Main purpose of succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main purpose of succession planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- To easily identify replacements to fill key positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To develop employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- To achieve strategic goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>- To retain organisational talent</td>
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Figure 4.9 illustrates that the overwhelming majority (100%) of the respondents agree that succession planning is important because 62% said it was very important and 38% said it was important; and that the DST should implement a formal succession planning system. Particular attention should be paid to the need to plan for the filling of positions which, by virtue of their specialist nature or their importance within the institution, are key to the institution’s effectiveness. These positions should be identified separately, and measures should be taken to ascertain likely future vacancy patterns and potential sources of labour supply.

Figure 4.9: Importance of succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance of succession planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very important (Positive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important (Positive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important (Negative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important (Negative)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

62% 38% 0% 0%

Figure 4.10 indicates that 41% of the respondents agree that a formal succession system would benefit the DST by reducing turnover of managers with scarce skills; 27% agree that it would improve employee commitment and retention; 19% indicates that the benefits would be preserving knowledge transfer and institutional memory; and 13% said the benefits would be facilitating employee development. However, the research revealed that the public service is career orientated and most positions are filled by career employees. It is, however, essential to make the public service accessible to external applicants in order to include all sections of society. This will inject fresh ideas and skills to assist the public service to achieve its transformation goals. Succession planning provides a reasonable return in investment as a risk management strategy for orderly transition (Hampel et al. 2010:279). This is further underscored by Seymour, (2008:79) who stated that employees would be prepared to commit more deeply to an institution that invests in them.
The research revealed that succession planning in the public service is a challenge, because it contradicts some legislation as well as the Public Service Collective Bargaining Council (PSCBC) resolutions which state that posts in the public service need to be advertised both internally and externally, to promote fair competition. Such processes exist and are implemented in order to stop some forms of corruption, which might result into nepotism or favouritism.

Figure 4.10: Benefits of succession planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of succession planning</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By improving employee commitment and retention</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By facilitating employee development</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By preserving knowledge transfer and institutional memory</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By reducing turnover of managers with scarce skills</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.11 shows that 59% of the respondents agree that the reason for high staff turnover are due to managers being offered better salaries elsewhere; 16% agree it is because of better opportunities for development or poor job fit in their current institutions; 19% agree that it was due to poor interpersonal relations with their managers; and 5% agree that the reasons could be due to retirement. This could be motivated by the need for survival, for instance. Managers could be leaving the public service and moving to the private sector being offered bigger salaries and perks compared to the public sector. The research also highlighted that institutional memory is being lost when employees resign and their positions are left vacant. The research revealed that factors such as lack of recognition, lack of growth opportunities, poor job fit and an unhealthy working environment lead to dissatisfaction, low staff morale and employees leaving the institution. This is cited by Stevens, (2008:16) who claims that a systematic approach is needed to address the causes of poor job fit, including identifying sources and causes of failure for each position and identifying the key skills to overcome those failure points by assessing incumbents’ capabilities against the skills that ensure success.
Figure 4.11: Reasons for high staff turnover

Figure 4.12 shows that 32% of the respondents agree that a successful succession planning system is to highlight current skills and accomplishments; 30% expected it to prepare staff for advancement or promotion into more challenging roles; 22% expected the system to develop employees to reach their potential; and 16% expected the system to map out the development of further knowledge, skills and abilities. This is in line with what Kochanowski (2011:85) stated, who is of the view that the public service workforce, at all levels, is expected to shrink substantially over the next 10 years. This is ascribed to the retirement of Baby Boomers within the next 10-15 years.

Figure 4.12: Expectations of a successful succession planning system
From the discussion above it is clear that the results of the survey indicate that the majority of the respondents saw the need for the DST to have succession planning in place as they all perceive it as an important tool. The DST employees are also in support of the succession planning practice. This research has revealed that the majority of the middle managers indicate that they would rather advance inside their present institution than leave. This research also revealed that the ultimate reason that made employees leave an institution is that they are not being developed and/or their skills are not being utilised to the fullest. Therefore, it is evident that effective succession planning improves the institution’s chances of retaining key personnel. Furthermore, succession planning improves return on investment, processes and institutional behaviour variables.

4.4.3 Methods of identifying potential successors

This section deals with the methods of identifying potential successors to be groomed by senior managers before they reach retiring age. Figure 4.13 illustrates that 19% of the respondents agree with self-nominations; 11% remained neutral; and 70% of the respondents disagree with this method. While internal recruitment processes tend to be applied in larger, more stable and developed institutions, external recruitment strategies may emerge when a shortage of suitable internal candidates exist or where a new institutional direction or vision has been developed. Applicants for employment should be of good character, law abiding and prepared to conform to the high standards of conduct required by the Code of Conduct for Public Servants, 2002. Potential employees may therefore be required to provide information about past convictions or misdemeanours which could have a bearing on their suitability for employment in the Public Service. In choosing an approach, institutions should examine market conditions, the availability of candidates, the impact of internal/external strategies on current employees, the necessity for objectivity, and the overall cost benefit (Croteau 2009) cited by Hampel et al. (2010:284).

Figure 4.13: Self-nomination
Based on figure 4.14, 73% of the respondents agree that the performance management system could be used as a method in identifying potential successors; 5% remain neutral; and 22% disagree. The majority of middle managers perceived it as a top-down process where the seniors do not bother to provide feedback to the juniors. There is also a widespread perception that performance management is owned by the HR Unit, whereas the philosophy of performance management and development is to from a common bond of ownership among all employees (Performance Management and Development Policy, 2006:2).

The research also shows that the DST might favour the PMDS compared to other existing performance management systems. Although it has certain weaknesses such as little indication of a real sense of ownership of performance management among line managers, as there is no commitment to the system.

The success of the Public Service, in delivering its operational and developmental goals, depends primarily on the efficiency and effectiveness with which employees carry out their duties. Managing performance is, therefore, a key human resource management tool to ensure that employees know what is expected of them; managers know whether the employee’s performance is delivering the required outputs; poor performance is identified and improved; and good performance is recognised and rewarded.

This is in line with what Berchelmann (2005:11) wrote, who is of the view that employees identified as ‘high potentials’ or ‘top talent’ should go through a series of formal assessments and performance feedback sessions.

Figure 4.14: Performance management and development system
According to figure 4.15, 24% of the respondents agree with colleagues or members of the same team identifying potential successors; 8% remain neutral; 68% disagree with this method in identifying potential successors. Team members would be biased because people are by nature selfish and would look after their own interest rather than that of others.

Figure 4.15: Team members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team members</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4.16 illustrates that 35% of the respondents agree with the supervisor identifying potential successors; 6% remain neutral; and 59% of the respondents disagree with this method. This could be due to poor interpersonal relations between the managers and the subordinates. Managers may show favouritism to their own race and gender, which may exclude candidates with great potential from other race groups or gender as identified by Personen, Tienceria and Vanhala (2009:3-4).

Figure 4.16: Supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Based on figure 4.17, 21% of the respondents agree that that Head of Department (HoD) should be the one who identifies potential successors; 30% remain neutral and 49% disagree with this method. HoDs may show favouritism to their own race and gender, which may exclude candidates with great potential from other race groups or gender (Personen, Tienceria and Vanhala 2009:3-4).

Figure 4.17: Head of department

Based on figure 4.18, 51% of the respondents agree with the human resources manager identifying potential successors; 14% remain neutral; and 35% of the respondents disagree with this method. Selection on merit is fundamental to ensuring that the Public Service recruits and promotes people of the highest calibre. The aim is to ensure that the person selected is of the available applicants, the person is best suited for the position on the basis of his or her skills, experience, abilities, personal attributes, future potential as well as the need to achieve a representative and diverse workforce in the public service. This is underscored by Berchelmann (2005:11) and Seymour (2008:79), who are of the view that HR should develop a pool of talent with skills, attributes and experiences to fill specific, often high-level, positions.

Figure 4.18: Human resource manager
From the discussion above, it is clear that identifying and attracting suitable applicants depends on the effectiveness of departmental advertising, both in terms of the substance of the advertisement and the extent to which it reaches the target audience. Job advertisements should include an accurate description of the duties to be undertaken and the criteria which will be applied in selection; qualifications should not be defined primarily or solely in terms of educational attainment, but should include skills and relevant experience. If educational requirements are essential, these should be set at levels which balance the need for competence with the goal of accessibility. However, the prescribed qualifications should be stated in the advertisement.

Skills search or “head hunting” may be used to identify candidates, for example, for senior posts or where skills are scarce, provided it can be demonstrated that the special requirements of the position in question are likely to render more traditional advertising methods, ineffective. Once candidates have been identified, the principles of selection on merit should be applied as for any other method of recruitment (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997:23).

4.4.4 Methods of assessing development needs
This section focuses on the rate the effectiveness of the methods of assessing development needs. Figure 4.19 shows that 82% of the respondents agree that self-assessments are an effective method of assessing development needs; 3% remained neutral; and 19% of the respondents disagree that self-assessments are not effective. There are programmes which can help people identify their own potential, because people need different competencies at different management levels and for different positions as stated by Poole & Carr, (2005:39).

Figure 4.19: Self-assessments
Based on figure 4.20, 68% of the respondents agree that performance evaluation ratings are effective as assessors of development needs; 3% remain neutral; and 29% disagree that this method was effective. Identifying candidates for future senior management positions allows training and development activities to be tailored to their needs (Dainty et al. 2005:8).

Figure 4.20: Performance evaluation ratings

Figure 4.21 illustrates that the overwhelming majority, 95% of the respondents agree that the 360 Degree Feedback (whereby senior managers are also evaluated by their subordinates) is effective in assessing development needs; and only 5% of the respondents remain neutral. Middle managers believe that this process will help to identify strengths and weaknesses and the interventions which are needed to deal with these, including the employees’ future training needs and other developmental interventions such as career counselling, coaching and mentoring.

Where performance has not matched the requirements in the work plan, the assessment, both written and verbal, should be focused on identifying the reasons for development and on reaching mutual agreement on the steps which need to be taken to effect improvement. This is underscored by Gaffney (2005:8), who claims that the number of assessors, provide different views of the assesseees, which allows for a more overall feedback.
Figure 4.21: 360 degree feedback

![360 degree feedback](image)

Figure 4.22 shows that interviews are rated as the least effective method in assessing development needs by a majority (84%) of the respondents; 5% disagree that they were effective; and 8% remain neutral. Interviews are the most common tool used in the selection of candidates. Interviews are most successful when they are structured in order to produce useful results Louw (1999) cited by Gaffney (2005:9).

Figure 4.22: Interviews

![Interviews](image)

Human resources development is a process of personal growth in which to achieve both individual satisfaction as well as performance improvement. From the above discussion, it is clear that the majority of the DST middle management is in support of both the Self-assessments and the 360 degree feedback as effective methods of assessing development needs. Human resource development can be linked to many human resource sub-functions in an institution, including training, recruitment and selection. The need for formal training depends on the level of the job in the institution. Performance assessments
can also help development in the sense that through assessing employees, possible future training requirements and career opportunities can be identified.

### 4.4.5 Effectiveness of methods of developing employees

This section focuses on the effectiveness of the methods of developing employees. Figure 4.23 illustrates that 76% of the respondents agree that job rotation is a good method of developing employees at the DST; and 24% remain neutral. Job rotation is related to the systematic movement of employees from one job to another in an attempt to minimise monotony and boredom (Advanced Management and Development Programme, 2010:53). This is underscored by Seymour (2008:78), who is of the view that skills shortfalls can be filled by job rotation. Skills shortfalls in one department can be overcome by transferring employees from a department that has an over-supply of competent employees.

![Figure 4.23: Job rotation](image)

Figure 4.23 shows that the majority (72%) of the respondents is in agreement that job enrichment is a good method of developing employees, 27% disagree and 1% remains neutral. Middle managers confirmed that job enrichment adds additional motivators; that it adds depth to the job, more control, responsibility and discretion to how the job is performed.

![Figure 4.24: Job enrichment](image)

This is in support of Anthony, Perrewe and Kacmar (1996:289), who suggest that using the job characteristics model will indicate that certain aspects of a job are innately motivating to most employees and that, individuals will respond to the same stimuli with different reactions.
Based on figure 4.25, 60% of the respondents are in agreement that coaching is a good method of developing employees; 7% remain neutral; and 33% disagree. The research revealed that coaching is performed on the job; it is about increasing an individual’s knowledge and thought processes with a particular task or process. Coaching is a process designed to help the employee gain greater competence and to overcome barriers in order to improve job performance; and coaching would support employees in developing their potential (Seymour 2008:79).

Figure 4.26 illustrates that 48% of the respondents agree that mentoring was good; 52% disagree. This leans more to the negative as the DST does not have a formal mentoring programme. Mentoring is the imparting of knowledge by a more experienced employee to a less experienced employee. It allows employees to master their discipline much faster, rather than struggling on their own (Seymour 2008:79).
Figure 4.26: Mentoring

![Mentoring graph]

Figure 4.27 shows that the majority (100%) agrees that training is a good method of developing subordinates. Training is a structured lesson designed to provide the employee with the knowledge and skills to perform a task. The research revealed that middle managers indicated that there was a need for managers to become aware of the variety of methods available for the transfer of knowledge and also to understand the contextual issues related to the specific workplace training and development. This is underscored by Poole & Carr (2005:39) who claim that training enables employees to acquire competencies and skills.

Figure 4.27: Training

![Training graph]

Figure 4.28 shows that 56% of the respondents rated stretch assignments as a good method of developing employees; 9% remain neutral; and 35% disagree. Hands-on learning activities and stretch assignments not only set the stage for socialising the new leader into the day-to-day activities of the institution, but also personally offers encouragement and role modelling (Feeg 2008:277).
Figure 4.28: Stretch assignments

From the above discussion it is clear that a combination of mentoring, coaching stretch assignments, job rotation, job enrichment and training can be used in developing and preparing employees for senior management levels. Training and coaching go hand-in-hand, first employees get trained with plenty of technical support and then they are coached with motivational pointers. Through performance assessments, different strengths and weaknesses of employees can be identified and training can then take place in a meaningful manner. Mentoring is more developmental in nature, while training and coaching are more task or process orientated. Mentoring relies on the mentor’s specific knowledge and wisdom, while coaching and training rely on facilitation and developmental skills. Stretching and giving employees challenging assignments allows them to increase their competencies and skills. The benefits of job enrichment include growth and self-actualisation of the individual and better employee performance for the institution as the institution scores intrinsically motivated employees; less absenteeism, turnover and grievances; full use of human resources for society and society gains in more effective institutions.

4.4.6 Perception of employee development

This section consists of general questions seeking to assess the perception of employee development. Figure 4.29 shows that 35% of the respondents agree that the development period for potential successors should be 1 – 2 years; 35% support this notion, but states that that it should be 2 – 3 years; and 30% are of the view that it should be three years and more.
Figure 4.29: Length of development period for potential successors

Figure 4.30 indicates that 62% of the respondents agree with the use of personality tests to assess potential successors; and 38% disagree. The research indicated that the DST uses competency tests when recruiting middle as well as senior management positions and it is perceived to be a good method of recruitment in the DST.

Figure 4.30: Use of personality tests

Figure 4.31 illustrates that 57% of the respondents agree that qualifications are more important than work experience whereas, 43% of the respondents disagree with that notion. The research revealed that having a qualification puts one in a better position to be promotable rather than relying on the working experience alone. In fact the qualifications and work experience go hand in hand. An employee’s job specification contains qualifications, experience, knowledge, attitudes, emotions, physical abilities, initiative, judgement, computer skills, language and other skills. This is underscored by Hampel et al. (2010:279), who are of the view that both qualifications and work experiences are prerequisites for succession planning.
Figure 4.31: Qualifications vs working experience

![Qualifications vs. Work experience](chart)

Figure 4.32 shows that 43% of the respondents agree that the DST values learning and development and the 57% disagree. Although the DST offers training courses for employees, it is still not clear to what extent these certificates count when employees are considered for higher posts or promotion. However, the DST does offer bursaries for post-graduate studies so that employees can improve their qualifications whilst earning.

Figure 4.32: Value of learning and development

![Value of learning and development](chart)

Figure 4.33 shows that 54% of the respondents agree that the current promotion system at the DST is effective; and 46% disagree. Middle managers who possess the right qualifications and applied for higher positions have been promoted internally in the DST whenever a vacant post occurred but, there have been instances where external candidates have been preferred, which led to existing and experienced employees being demoralised which resulted in those employees eventually leaving the DST, causing loss of institutional memory. HR policies, practices and selection decisions in general should not only be displayed in the institution, but also have the desired effect on employees’ performance and institutional effectiveness (Dainty, Cheng and Moore 2005:3).
Figure 4.33: Effectiveness of the current promotion system at the Department of Science and Technology

![Effectiveness of the current promotion system](image)

Figure 4.34 illustrated that 59% of the respondents are satisfied with the performance appraisal process implemented in the DST; and 41% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the process. The research revealed that middle managers expressed more challenges in regard to the implementation of the PMDS in the DST such as the fact that supervisors focus more on non-performance rather than developing their subordinates; inconsistency in the allocation of marks between managers and non-managers, managers getting more money and non-managers getting less; assessments based on favouritism and not on performance, those who are close to the supervisor receive more marks but the ones with unhealthy relations (personality clashes) with their supervisors get punished by reducing their scores; lack of regular meetings to discuss performance and provide feedback, instead supervisors wait for the assessments to point out faults; and that focus is placed on the end result of the key result area and not the circumstances or challenges which might have prevented the employee to achieve the results. This discourages employees to go the extra mile or put in more effort as it will not be recognised.

Figure 4.34: Fairness of the performance appraisal system

![Fairness of the performance appraisal system](image)
From the above discussion it is clear that the DST has good policies and strategies in place for the development and retention of its employees, but there is no succession planning system in place to ensure that posts for critical senior positions are filled as soon as they become vacant. The analysis of the results also showed that even though there are policies in place in regard to human resources development such as the retention, job rotation as well as mentoring and coaching guidelines, implementation of the departmental policies has a profound impact on the management of people within the Department and on the careers of individual employees. The DST has to be staffed by career employees who are provided with opportunities for professional advancement and personal development. However, it is essential to make the DST more accessible to external applicants, in order to include all sections of society and to inject fresh ideas and skills to assist the Department to achieve its transformation goals. In future, promotion will be achieved only by those who can demonstrate, through competition with others, that they are the most suitable candidate for the position in question and employees will have more control over their own career development and there will be no barriers to applying for jobs at a higher level. Improved career and performance management will mean that good performance is recognised and rewarded, and that poor performance is identified and dealt with.

4.5 CONCLUSION
This chapter was based on the research analysis and interpretation of the results, focusing on gender, marital status, age group, DST programmes, and length of service of the respondents. The research also concentrated on the understanding of succession planning, the importance and benefits of succession planning, reasons for staff turnover and expectations of a successful succession planning system. The research also converged on the methods of assessing development needs, the effectiveness of methods of developing employees and the perception of employee development.

The next chapter concludes the research by presenting the findings, recommendations and conclusions of the research.
CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION
Chapter four of this research focused on data research analysis and interpretation of the results. In this chapter the data collected was reviewed, categorised, and presented in an interpretable manner. An overview of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) was also provided. This chapter will focus on the findings, recommendations and the conclusion of this research.

5.2 SYNTHESIS OF CHAPTERS
Chapter one was the introductory chapter to the entire research. It included the background and rationale on the importance of investigating succession planning in the DST. The problem statement, research objectives and research questions, literature review and methodology, demarcation and limitations of the research were also discussed.

Chapter two focused exclusively on the literature review on succession planning, concepts such as leadership, strategic planning, human resources development and retention, as well as other theories such as White Papers and guidelines, advantages and disadvantages on succession planning.

Chapter three was based on the research methods used for data collection, research processes, development of research instruments and piloting.

In Chapter four the results of the research were analysed and interpreted. In this chapter, the questionnaire answers exposed some issues which need to be addressed at the DST such as the turnover of managers with scarce skills, promotion and retention of employees, the performance management and development system as well as employee development.

Chapter five concludes the research and highlights the research findings, recommendations and conclusions.
5.3 THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH
The results of the research, together with the views of some of the researchers, revealed the following about the DST:

5.3.1 Turnover of managers with scarce skills
The research shows that reasons for the turnover of managers with scarce skills were due to better salary offers elsewhere which could be motivated by the need for growth and keeping up with the cost of living, for instance. Managers could be leaving the public service and moving to the private sector where they could be offering far bigger salaries and perks compared to the public service. Another reason is due to poor interpersonal relations with their managers. Unhealthy working relations between supervisor and subordinate have been found to be a huge contributor to employees leaving their jobs for a better working environment. Poor job fit has been identified by this research as one of the causes of unhappiness and job dissatisfaction among managers of the DST. The literature clearly shows that labour turnover and absenteeism are commonly associated with dissatisfaction (Mullins, 1999:630).

Research has revealed that other factors that lead to staff turnover include dysfunctional corporate culture, limited career development, lack of personal development and or growth opportunities, lack of recognition and generational differences such as a young innovative scientist reporting to an older but outmoded supervisor.

5.3.2 Promotion and retention of employees
The findings of this research indicate that the current employee promotion system is effective. However, some of the experienced and skilled managers have not benefited from the system and this has resulted in unhappiness among such managers, particularly when a vacant post is offered to an external candidate with no experience of the DST’s culture and procedures and even no experience of the public service. The research reveals that collective bargaining agreements require postings and testing for promotion and strictly prohibit showing favouritism to any individual for a position, even through cultivation of their skills and competencies.
This research shows that succession planning provides a reasonable return on investment as a risk management strategy; it indicates effective stewardship of scarce resources and enhances recruitment and retention, reinforcing the idea that people are assets and are critical to the success of the institution (Hampel et al. 2010:279).

5.3.3 Performance and rewards management

The research reveals that the employee performance evaluation and rewards management process is not fair because of unhealthy working relations between supervisors and subordinates. This is evident in cases where a supervisor nominates a favourite employee for recognition or acknowledgement for exceptional effort. The research shows that the DST favours the PMDS compared to other existing performance management systems although it has certain weaknesses such as, little indication of a real sense of ownership of performance management among line managers with no depth of commitment. The majority of middle managers perceive it as a top down approach with no feedback loop in operation.

The research revealed more challenges with regard to the implementation of the PMDS in the DST as supervisors focus more on non-performance rather than developing their subordinates; inconsistency in the allocation of marks between some managers and non-managers. Assessments based on favouritism and non-performance and those who are close to the supervisor; receive more marks than the ones who are not. Research reveals that managers do not convene regular meetings to discuss performance and provide feedback, instead supervisors wait for the assessments to point out faults; that focus is placed on the end result of the key result area and not the circumstances or challenges which might have prevented the employee to achieve the results. This has discouraged employees to go the extra mile or additional effort as it will not be recognised. The research also reveals that feedback enables incorrect behaviour to be eliminated and it reinforces correct behaviour, which indirectly contributes to employees’ positive attitude, which in turn enhances their performance.
5.3.4 Employee development

The research reveals that a major weakness in relation to training and development lies with inadequacies in the ability to evaluate as well as linking training and development with the strategy of the DST. The findings further reveal that the DST offers training and development courses for employees, but it is still not clear to what extent these certificates count when employees are considered for higher posts or promotion. The research also shows that a succession plan ensures that an institution has access to the required human resources, quantitatively and qualitatively; and that it is vital to link a succession plan to a business strategy to obtain the type of people with the required set of skills for the future.

The research reveals that employees no longer find their current jobs challenging because of limited career development as well as a lack of personal development. This situation has led to boredom, absenteeism, employees applying for jobs elsewhere and eventually leaving the department.

The research reveals that mentoring is the imparting of knowledge by a more experienced person to a person less experienced by providing guidance, support and understanding (Seymour, 2008:79). The research reveals that empowering of employees through the institution should be an integral part of employee development; such a practice which will allow employees to be innovative and ensure that performance is good (Nixon, 1995:36).

5.3.5 Employee morale and commitment

The research reveals that the majority of middle managers seem to prefer working for the DST compared to the other government departments, despite shortcomings such as favouritism, biasness, and nepotism. The research also reveals that factors such as lack of recognition, lack of growth opportunities, poor job fit, unhealthy working environment and a dysfunctional corporate culture lead to dissatisfaction, low staff morale and employees leaving the institution. The research indicates that positive motivation results in good performance and job satisfaction (Mullins, 1999:421).

The research reveals that other factors which influence frustration in middle managers could be the level and potency of need, the degree of attachment to the desired goal,
the strength of motivation, the perceived nature of the barrier or blocking agent, as well as the personality characteristics of the individual. The findings indicate that the most frustrating factor is the lack of support from the supervisors.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS
This section provides recommendations to the challenging findings that emanate from this research.

5.4.1 Turnover of managers with scarce skills
The responses to the Green Paper made it clear that national departments and provincial administrations are overwhelmingly dissatisfied with human resource management in the Public Service, which is over-centralised, excessively bureaucratic and rule-bound. It is focused on form rather than substance and results. Human resources planning is weak, post-filing and promotion criteria overemphasise educational qualifications and seniority, and little or no emphasis is placed on the requirements of the job to be done; and performance management is also under-developed (White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997:9). As a method of reducing staff turnover and retaining managers with scarce skills, the DST should strive to predict and meet its human resource requirements, and to manage its human resources effectively and efficiently as well as to transform its human resource practices designed in a different era for different purposes. This will retain the experienced personnel and preserve the DST’s institutional memory and strive for excellence and continuity of good practices and projects that can benefit the DST as well as the DST’s stakeholders.

To promote good interpersonal relations and the use of people as valuable resources of the institution, the DST should pay particular attention to the relationships between staff and the nature and content of their jobs. The work organisation and the design of jobs can have a significant effect on staff and their levels of performance. Therefore, the DST should also pay attention to the quality of working life. All senior managers need to understand how best they can make work more satisfying for staff and how to overcome obstacles to effective performance by offering counselling programmes which would assist the affected individuals to resolve conflict between them. The DST could also refer its affected employees to independent wellbeing programmes such as the Independent
Counselling and Advisory Services (ICAS), 1998 who offer different services and support institutions through the promotion of health and wellbeing of their employees whilst, at the same time, improving productivity and reducing absenteeism.

To minimise staff turnover, the DST senior management should adopt succession planning practices such as understanding the institution, knowing their people, creating trust, investing in the future, taking risks and establishing a coaching culture, creating an environment that fosters individual growth, channelling career development and creating opportunities for employees to try out new skills in real-life situations in order to avoid staff turnover, poor job fit, limited career development, dysfunctional corporate culture as well as lack of recognition.

5.4.2 Promotion and retention of employees
The DST should ensure that it creates promotion opportunities for all experienced managers as a method of improving the current promotions system. DST senior management should utilise the practices of succession planning to fill vacant positions by preparing those who are promotable by recognising and nurturing employees for upward mobility. Only then will early identification of key talent allow DST to proactively develop leaders for the future. In reality, good succession management develops a pool of talent with skills, attributes, and experiences to fill specific, often high-level positions. Inaccurate assessments of where talent is lacking can blindside an institution. The DST human resource policy should define clearly which positions should be filled by open, targeted and internal competition. Good succession management develops a pool of talent with skills, attributes, and experiences to fill specific, often high-level positions. The DST could consider having a quota or a certain percentage of positions that should be filled by internal candidates, in order to encourage employees to buy-in to the succession planning and inculcate it in the DST’s institutional culture, and therefore preserve and retain institutional memory.

5.4.3 Performance and rewards management
The principles of performance management are based on promoting institutional effectiveness, efficiency and accountability. As such, the DST should promote a performance management system that should enhance consultation and support in a
non-discriminatory manner. The DST’s plans for human resource development should be aligned with institutional goals and objectives; inadequate performance should be responded to timeously; and the DST should ensure that both managers and subordinates are workshopped (trained) in performance management. In its attempt to correct performance problems, the DST managers/supervisors should identify the root cause and then implement a plan of action to correct the problem.

To redress the weaknesses of the implementation of the PMDS, the DST should create a robust reward management programme based on a competency-based pay scheme that seeks to reward managers for developing their competencies in line with institutional requirements. By appraising managers against the competencies identified and setting development goals against the achievement of higher competency, offers a transparent and practicable performance management development tool.

The DST HR should regularly review the PMDS as well as the rewards management to address new challenges and where strategic human resource plans indicate a need for more flexible policies to match rapid change in the environment - job evaluation schemes will have to be modified accordingly. The DST should ensure that candidates who are earmarked for future senior management positions, should be given training that is tailored to their needs in order to improve institutional preparedness e.g. attending workshops on the Performance Standards Interpretation, 2012 facilitated by the DST HR and a qualified external service provider so that they can understand the value of performance management and development in the DST; contract effectively on the performance management agreement; write quality work plans which reflect strategic alignment and SMART performance standards; link performance standards (targets) to ratings; and recognise the self-management skills needed to manage the agreement over the performance cycle effectively.

5.4.4 Employee development
The DST managers should be aware of the diversity of methods available for the transfer of knowledge. Performance assessments can help development in the sense that through assessing employees, possible future requirements and career opportunities can be identified. Effective DST managers need to understand the contextual issues related to
the specific workplace training and development. Training should not be conducted just for the sake of training, but should serve a serious purpose i.e. the attainment of skills and competencies.

To ensure that training and development is effective, the DST management should link it to performance management as a way of ensuring that both individual and institutional needs are met. In linking training and development with strategy, the DST HR should offer its employees training courses that are aligned with the DST’s strategy so that on completion of the training courses, employees will be able to implement what they learned in their day-to-day duties and be able to contribute towards the DST’s vision, mission, goals and objectives. The DST should, therefore, apply the best development methods such as the 360 Degree Feedback, executive coaching, mentoring, networking, job assignments and action-learning in developing its middle managers.

Literature shows that it is critical that the succession plan provides a method or plan for providing employees the opportunity for professional development; and the plan should be tailored to the individual needs and interests of the successor. The DST, therefore, should tie the criteria being evaluated to the strategy of the Department; and provide feedback as knowledge of results is critical to both learning and motivation.

5.4.5 Employee morale and commitment

In managing and reducing the employees’ frustration and job dissatisfaction, the DST should improve the implementation of the following practices among others: socialisation of employees; training and development; job design and work organisation; equitable HR policies; recognition and rewards; effective communications; participative styles of management; and attempting to understand the individual’s perception of a situation. The DST should also implement career pathing for its professionals, identify and retain key talent in current positions as well as those in the pool of successors; assess high performers and high potential individuals and consider promoting such employees to managerial positions in order to reduce high staff turnover within the DST.

To redress the shortcomings such as favouritism, biasness, and nepotism, the DST should prevent this by not only considering closed books (external candidates), instead of internal
employees with potential for new positions. The DST should also be robust in the fighting of possible nepotism in the DST in order to reduce or alleviate low staff morale. The DST should also consider implementing a total quality management approach which is capable of establishing a single instrument that can measure all relevant competencies with an accuracy level, robust enough to support substantial quality gains in the management of an institution’s most valuable human assets.

The DST should implement retention strategies such as succession planning and ensure that there is transfer of knowledge from Generation X with adequate skills and experience to Generation Y who are still at entry level and are eager to learn and gain more experience with regards to their work.

5.5 CONCLUSION
The results of this research have proven that the DST has good policies and strategies in place for the development and retention of its employees, but there is no succession planning tool or system in place to ensure that posts for critical senior positions are filled as soon as they become vacant. The analysis of the results also proved that even though there are policies in place in regard to human resources such as the retention, job rotation as well as mentoring and coaching guidelines, the DST senior management is failing the employees by not effectively implementing the existing policies. The DST line managers and the human resources managers do not thoroughly enforce such policies, strategies and guidelines to ensure that all the senior managers are aware and knowledgeable enough to implement such strategies in their respective directorates and units and prevent conflict, grievances and low staff morale which could eventually lead to turnover of high performing employees.

Through properly instituted succession planning, employees of the DST will be able to grow within the Department, thereby promoting the preservation and transfer of institutional knowledge management. Public service institutions could still benefit from succession planning by utilising developmental tools such as coaching, mentoring, stretch assignments and action learning, to groom middle managers. Staff retention is a strategic human resources priority which should inculcate institutional culture, in order to preserve and retain institutional memory in the DST.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A: Questionnaire

SURVEY

SUCCESSION PLANNING - A DEVELOPMENTAL TOOL IN DEVELOPING MIDDLE MANAGERS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DST)

All information will be treated as confidential. You are not required to provide your name and you will remain anonymous in all written reports

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Question 1: Gender
1.1 Female
1.2 Male

Question 2: Marital Status
2.1 Married
2.2 Single
2.3 Divorced
2.4 Widowed
2.5 Separated

Question 3: Please indicate your age group
3.1 20 – 29
3.2 30 – 39
3.3 40 – 49
3.4 50 and over
Question 4: Please state your programme:
4.1 Programme 1
4.2 Programme 2
4.3 Programme 3
4.4 Programme 4
4.5 Programme 5

Question 5: How long have you been employed at the DST?
5.1 0 – 5 years
5.2 6 – 10 years
5.3 11 – 15 years
5.4 16 – 21 years
5.5 21 years and more

SECTION B: THIS SECTION DEALS WITH YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF SUCCESSION PLANNING.

Tick one answer only

Question 6: Which description best fits your understanding of succession planning?
6.1 The identification of high performing, talented employees for challenging tasks, further development and increased incentives aimed at retaining them within the institution.
6.2 Developing internal people with the potential to fill management and leadership positions in the institution; recognising and managing talent within the institution.
6.3 A process of preparing potential successors for key positions in an institution, through a systematic evaluation process and training.

Question 7: How important do you think it is for the DST to implement a formal succession planning system?
7.1 Very important
7.2 Important
7.3 Somewhat Important
7.4 Not Important

**Question 8:** How do you think it will benefit the DST to implement a formal succession planning system at the DST?
8.1 By improving employee commitment and retention
8.2 By facilitating employee development
8.3 Preserve knowledge transfer and institutional memory
8.4 By reducing turnover of managers with scarce skills

**Question 9:** What are the reasons for turnover of managers with scarce skills at the DST?
9.1 Better salary elsewhere
9.2 Better opportunities for development
9.3 Poor interpersonal relations
9.4 Retirement

**Question 10:** What do you think should be the main purpose of succession planning at the DST?
10.1 To easily identify replacements to fill key positions
10.2 To develop employees
10.3 To achieve strategic goals
10.4 To retain organisational talent

**Question 11:** What would be your expectation of a succession planning system at the DST?
11.1 To highlight current skills and accomplishments
11.2 To map out the development of further knowledge, skills and abilities
11.3 To prepare staff for advancement or promotion into more challenging roles
11.4 To develop employees to reach their potential
SECTION C: THIS SECTION REQUIRES YOUR OPINION ON THE METHODS OF IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS

**Question 12:** Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following methods of identifying potential successors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>12.1 Self-nomination</td>
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<td>12.2 Performance Management and Development System</td>
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<td>12.3 Job Holder</td>
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<td>12.4 Supervisor</td>
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<td>12.5 Head of Department</td>
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<td>12.6 Human Resource Development</td>
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</table>

**Question 13:** Please rate the effectiveness of the following methods in assessing development needs.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Most effective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Least effective</th>
<th>Not effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13.1 Self-assessments</td>
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<td>13.2 Performance Evaluation Ratings</td>
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<td>13.3 360-Degree Feedback</td>
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<td>13.4 Interviews</td>
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</table>

**Question 14:** Please rate the following methods in terms of their effectiveness in developing employees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>14.1 Job rotation</td>
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<td>14.2 Job enrichment</td>
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<td>14.3 Coaching</td>
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<td>14.4 Mentoring</td>
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</table>
**Question 15:** How long do you think the development period for potential successors should be?

15.1 Less than 1 year
15.2 1 – 2 years
15.3 2 – 3 years
15.4 3 years and more

**SECTION D: THIS SECTION CONSISTS OF GENERAL QUESTIONS SEEKING TO ASSESS YOUR PERCEPTION OF EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT**

**Question 16:** Should personality tests be used to assess potential successors?

16.1 Yes
16.2 No

**Question 17:** Do you think that qualifications are more important than work experience?

17.1 Yes
17.2 No

**Question 18:** Do you think the DST values learning and development?

18.1 Yes
18.2 No

**Question 19:** Do you think the current employee promotion system is effective?

19.1 Yes
19.2 No

If no, please state why:

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
Question 20: Do you think the performance appraisal process is fair?

20.1 Yes
20.2 No

If no, please state why?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time and participation. It is highly appreciated.
Appendix B: Permission letter to conduct research at the Department of Science and Technology

Dear Ms Vuyokazi Kraai

Dear Sir/Madam

ETHICAL CLEARANCE TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

Your request to conduct a research study on "Succession tool in developing middle managers at the Department of Science and Technology" is hereby approved.

Kindly note that your request to conduct a research study is approved, and approval is granted subject to your compliance with the departmental policies, any directives or legislation applicable to information and records of the department.

Warm regards,

M MOTSWIANE
DIRECTOR: TM, OD & PM
DATE: 03/09/2013