



## Human Resources & Health and Safety



Do you employ staff?

### The Benefits of Succession Planning

#### What is Succession Planning?

This is the practice of identifying and developing potential talent, either in the short or long term. Succession planning creates a quality talent pool within a Company, ensuring that there will always be a suitable and capable candidate ready to fill a role when one becomes available due to a more senior employee leaving the Company or moving to a different role. This is a pre-emptive and preventative approach, by ensuring that there is always a talent pool of capable individuals to choose from, a Company is less likely to have an important role left empty for a prolonged period of time, or filled with someone with inadequate skills, both of which could have a negative effect on the Company.

Historically, succession planning has been viewed as a practice that is only necessary in large/corporate Companies for “senior” positions, but times and views have changed. Companies are a lot less hierarchical nowadays; there is greater emphasis on the synergy it takes to enable a Company to operate effectively. All roles are important and therefore succession planning is something that should be undertaken for technical or skilled roles and middle management, as well as higher positions within the Company.

Succession planning can take many forms, but the two most common ways to develop an employee for a significant move are Job Shadowing or Secondments to other departments. Job shadowing, learning from a colleague/mentor by working as they do, is a great way for an employee to develop the skills necessary for one particular role. Secondments to other departments, otherwise known as Lateral Moves, are useful when you want an employee to learn skills they may not come across in their own department/area of work, or if you want an employee to develop a greater understanding of the Company as whole. This is the approach usually taken when you want to develop an employee for an unspecified role and are therefore attempting to ensure their skillset is versatile and adaptable.

## The Benefits

1. Builds Strong Leadership. By fully preparing employees before they are in managerial/important roles, they are more likely to be capable and confident in their ability, enabling them to be strong and positive role models for other employees.
2. Provides a Company with Adaptability. We are working in constantly changing environments. With the 2008 Recession and this years' Brexit, the environment in which our Companies are operating in is constantly changing. By fully developing employees in different roles, it is more likely that they will be adaptable and able to cope with change. If a Company is filled with adaptable employees it is more likely to be adaptable itself.
3. Provides a Bigger Picture. This is for both the employee and for the employer. For the employee, training and development can be a great way to learn about the Company as a whole and to gain a clearer understanding of how they fit into it and the part they play. For the employer, the process of deciding which employees should be trained next or "promoted" is a good way to take the time to get to know all the employees in the Company. It can be easy to overlook or lose touch with employees you don't usually work with, but succession planning should help to prevent this from happening.
4. Strengthens Departmental Relationships. It can be easy for employees in different departments to have next to nothing to do with each other, but if employees are switching between departments as part of their development, they are creating bonds with a wider range of colleagues. Connections such as these promote synergy and help to keep the entire Company working together as a strong team.
5. It's Positive and Motivational. When employees are given a tailored training programme designed just for them, they know that they are being invested in. The fact that their employer is willing to invest in their future shows that they are considered to be valuable and important. We live in a culture where people are more prone to putting themselves down than thinking about themselves positively, so being invested in by an employer can promote employee engagement, be a great morale booster and a real motivator for many employees.

## How Can We Help?

If you have any queries relating to the subject of this e-newsletter or any other HR related issue, then please don't hesitate to contact us at [hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk](mailto:hradvice@hasslefreehr.co.uk) or on our office number 02476992869.