KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER:
PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION’S WORKFORCE

A GOVERNING Editorial Online Forum
Thursday, September 26th, 2013
During Our Time Together

Erin Waters  Publisher  GOVERNING Magazine
(moderator)

Eileen Smith  Director of Product Marketing  Education & Government Workday

Katherine Barrett  Columnist  GOVERNING Magazine

Sara R. Wilson  Director  Virginia Department of Human Resource Management

Rebecca Hunter  Commissioner  DOHR, State of Tennessee

Rob Carty  Director  Career Services  Next Generation Initiatives
Eileen Smith
Director of Product Marketing
Education and Government
Workday
KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

“Ignorance is the curse of God; knowledge is the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.”

~ William Shakespeare
A layman’s definition of knowledge transfer:

The capacity to pass skills and information, nuances and know-how, from job generation to job generation.
The State Government Workforce Project

Goal: To study, research and report on changes in state human resource practices and shifts in the state workforce following the recession.

Project Partners:

* Katherine Barrett and Richard Greene, Governing advisors and columnists
* The National Association of State Personnel Executives
* Associate Dean Sally Selden at Virginia’s Lynchburg College
The State Government Workforce Project

- Timeline: Project research began in December 2012 and is tapping the experiences and observations of HR directors in all 50 states.

- Products: A series of presentations and publications will be released through 2014. Several presentations have been made thus far to NASPE. A column about knowledge transfer, based in part on SGWP findings will appear in Governing magazine in its November issue. Further reports and articles will follow.
Some topics covered beyond knowledge transfer:

- Employee Morale
- Retirement and aging of the workforce
- Workforce planning
- Recruitment
- Retention and turnover
- Compensation
- Benefit change (pension, retiree health and health)
- Employee morale (and public perception of state workers)
- Generational issues in the workforce
Five big takeaways about knowledge transfer from our interviews with state HR directors:

1. The long-awaited retirement outflow is finally beginning.
2. Long-term government employment may be declining.
3. States complain about lack of bench strength.
4. Workforce planning and training have been cut back.
5. HR directors are very worried about the loss of institutional knowledge and many of them are concerned that they don’t have adequate programs or approaches to deal with it.
Why Focus on Knowledge Transfer?

- Aging workforce
- Loss of institutional knowledge
- Lack of bench strength
- Limited succession planning
- Inefficiencies in training
Background

• Knowledge transfer identified as greatest human resource challenge
• Inefficiencies in training
  • Duplication of content, systems and support costs
  • Lack of shared training resources
  • Reporting
• 65 people from 29 agencies collaborated to solve issues
  • Diverse group including business owners, human resource officers, trainers and information technology specialists
• Detailed requirements gathered, documented, and released as RFP
• Commonwealth of Virginia Knowledge Center went live with 7 agencies in 2005
• System upgraded in 2012
How the Knowledge Center Works

• Centralized enterprise system in a decentralized culture

• Enterprise Administrator oversees the system at the “core” level

• Each participating agency has separate domain with own administrators
  • Each agency may customize business rules to fit individual needs
  • Each agency brands its domain

• Content can be shared multiple ways across the enterprise

• Business owner makes policy decisions, which become system requirements
Training Management

- Standardize statewide training management information
- Administer, plan, schedule and monitor cost for all training
- Design and manage learning resources and content assets
- Provide a blended approach of learning strategies
- Establish structured curriculum
- Provide e-commerce transaction capability
Knowledge Transfer

- Document competencies and skills required for each Career Group/Role
- Assess and measure workforce competencies
- Track and report employee progress
  - Training requirements
  - Licensures
  - Certifications
  - Re-certifications
- Provide employees access to resources
  - Easy access to training resources
  - Career information
  - Performance support
  - Online communities of practice
Benefits

• Facilitates statewide training
• Increases training efficiencies and effectiveness
• Reduces costs
• Consolidates existing systems
• Eliminates duplicate training content
• Increases accessibility
• Available on demand, anytime, anywhere
• Improves reporting
Challenges

- Finding the common ground among agencies
- Consistent policies for system usage
- Personnel data feeds come from various sources
- Knowledge of the system and its capabilities
- Funding support
- Insufficient support staff
Measures of Success

- **Customer satisfaction**
  - 3.68 rating on 4 point scale

- **Cost savings**
  - One agency alone saved annually $139,000 in hosting fees and $795,000 by eliminating 5 contractors

- **Usage**
  - 180 agencies
  - 300,040 registered users
    - 134,000 state employees
    - 250,000 very active users
Rebecca Hunter
Commissioner
Department of Human Resources
State of Tennessee
Knowledge Transfer
What are Local Governments Doing?

• Who is ICMA
• History of ICMA’s Initiatives
• Data
• Next Generation Programs
Who is ICMA?

• Professional association for city, county and town managers
• Founded in 1914 around government reform and ethics
• 9000+ members
• 100\textsuperscript{th} anniversary in 2014
For a Good Overview, Visit...

• lifewellrun.org
ICMA’s Next Generation Initiatives

• Began in 2003
• Address the changing demographic of the profession
• Attract and retain a diverse cohort to fill the shoes of today’s retiring managers
• Build connections, extend a lifeline, develop, prepare
ICMA surveyed CAOs and their deputies on how they entered the profession, retirement status, and their plans for succession

- 35% response rate in 2008
- 24% response rate in 2013
And I quote…

• While stability among our senior staff has been a great asset for the city, it will be a disaster when we all retire in the next five to ten years.

• Succession will happen regardless of planning.
And I quote…

• This process got a lot tougher during the recession because we eliminated so many positions that would traditionally be used to advance people.

• A lot of local governments are too small to implement bench-strength programs.
How many years total have you been working in local government (does not need to be consecutive years)?

- 30 years or more: 30.2%
- 20-29 years: 30.6%
- 10-19 years: 24.6%
- 5-9 years: 8.3%
- Fewer than 5 years: 6.3%
How many years total have you been in a management position(s) (CAO, assistant CAO, deputy, department head, etc.)?

- 30 years or more: 18.2%
- 20-29 years: 28.9%
- 10-19 years: 26.4%
- 5-9 years: 12.7%
- Fewer than 5 years: 13.7%
If you have worked for local government throughout your professional life, which best describes your local government career path?

- It began with an internship/fellowship during college: 51.4%
- It began with an entry level position: 31.5%
- Other (please describe): 17.1%
Do you think people relatively new to the local government profession can benefit from a career coach/mentor to help them plan their careers?

- Yes: 98.7%
- No: 1.3%
Would you be willing to serve as a coach/mentor for people relatively new to the local government profession?

- Yes: 87.8%
- No: 12.2%
When will you be eligible to retire?

- I'm eligible now: 27.0%
- Within 5 years: 17.9%
- Within 10 years: 15.7%
- More than 10 years: 39.4%
Once you are eligible, when do you plan to retire?

- Within 1-6 months of reaching eligibility: 7.6%
- Within 6-12 months of reaching eligibility: 6.3%
- Within 1-5 years of my eligibility: 37.2%
- It’s too far away!: 34.1%
- Other (please describe): 14.7%
If you and your entire senior staff retired within the next 30 days, do you have the capacity within your organization now to fill those vacated positions with qualified people?

- Yes: 15.0%
- No: 77.7%
- I don't know: 7.2%
Next Generation Programs

• Management Talent Exchange Program
• Local Government Management Fellowship
• Management internships (undergraduate, graduate)
• Internal sabbaticals
• Externships
Next Generation Programs

• Mid-career Manager Institute
• Certificate Programs (VLGMA)
• Regional internship pool
• Coaching program (coaches/mentors, webinars, newsletter articles, speed coaching)
• Student engagement
• Career changer outreach
• Succession plans
Please identify which approaches your local government uses to recruit and retain talent for senior management positions (CAO, assistant CAO, deputy, department head, etc.)? (Check all applicable.)

- We have a full-time graduate-level... 7.2%
- We have a part-time graduate-level... 14.1%
- We have a full- or part-time undergraduate... 11.1%
- We have step-up programs 7.7%
- We have mentoring programs 13.3%
- We have a complete succession plan 8.9%
- We use search firms for recruitment 33.4%
- We don't have specific programs 51.8%
- Other (please specify) 12.2%
Other Ideas for Local Governments

• Think regionally about establishing a management talent pool
• Plan for the future, no matter how small your organization
• Look for home-grown “diamonds in the rough”
• Coach, mentor, or talk to your staff about their careers and plans
Thank You
Questions
Thank you for attending!

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