IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES TO CREATE A LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION PLAN PROCESS

By

TERESA COMEY

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MASTER OF ARTS

In

LEADERSHIP AND TRAINING

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

-----------------------------------------------
Project Sponsor, Richard Shore

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Faculty Project Supervisor, Barbara Ross-Denroche, MA

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Committee Chair, Doug Hamilton, Ph.D

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DEDICATION
During my very personal two-year MALT journey of learning and self-discovery, life continued around me. Not all journeys are equal or fair. On December 13th 2002, my sister-in-law Linda Comey lost her battle with cancer. I would like to dedicate this project to Linda Ann Comey and to say thank you to her for the many quiet lessons that she taught me. In her life Linda was the essence of a true servant leader.

Linda was only 48 years old when she passed away. She left behind her husband John and three daughters Paula, Kimberley and Megan, who miss her everyday. Linda was sick when I headed off to my first residence at Royal Roads in the summer of 2002. We communicated daily via email. In one of her emails she wrote of the importance of community and how our families made up a large integrated community.

I think you have discovered the real reason [why] we are here. Building our community, family and all that … it is the way we are to live our lives. My greatest hope is that all our lives are enriched by others and that [I] have [led] by example and cemented some small part of myself in all our family (L.A. Comey, personal communication, July 29, 2002).

Linda Comey faced her death with grace and dignity. She showed strength and a resolve to lead by example, not only in her life but also in her death. Linda illustrated the incredible qualities of a “sage” leader. Through her actions she showed us the importance of family, of being a good family member and how our lives are enriched by the relationships we have with each other. Thank you Linda for being one of my greatest teachers…until we meet again!

*The weakest in all beneath heaven gallops through the strongest, and vacant absence slips inside solid presence.  
I know by this the value of nothing’s own doing.  
The teaching without words,  
the value of nothing’s own doing:  
few indeed master such things.* (Lau Tzu)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No journey is a solitary journey. It would have been impossible for me to embark on this learning adventure if I had not had the support, encouragement and love of my family and friends.

For many years I have had the burning desire to return to school and see if I could fulfill my wildest ambition, a master’s degree! It was a little hole in my heart. I have a secret list of things I want to accomplish in my life and this was right on top of the list. I first spoke of this wish to my Running Friends, a group of bright, interesting and wonderful ladies with whom I have run most mornings for the past seventeen years. After a biking trip through the grounds of Royal Roads my Running Friends encouraged me, pushed and prodded me until I sent for the RRU registration papers. Ann, Lena, Liz, Heather, Becky, Jane and Denise thank you for pushing me out to the abyss and encouraging me to leap! Thank you for listening to my wandering thoughts and learning for the past two years. Each of you deserves a master’s degree in friendship. A special thank you to Denise for asking me the really hard question: What would fill the hole if I didn’t do it?

My parents, Ron and Beverley Kellett, have supported me and loved me all my life. Thank you for your ongoing, unconditional love. Through your example I have learned the value and love of family, the importance of a good conversation and to be curious. Everyday I feel your love and pride.

Thank you to Richard Shore and Terry Christie, my research sponsors, for welcoming me into your organization, the City of North Vancouver. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you over the past seven months and I appreciate your support and trust in me. Thank you also to the Directors’ Team of the City for challenging me along the way and forcing my learning to a deeper level.

During my time as a member of MALT 2002-2A I have formed wonderful new relationships which I will carry with me for the rest of my life. Thank you to James, Trish, Brenda, Libby, Sue, Susan and Lori for being such great dorm buddies. Our laughter shook the tower of Nixon and I am sure it still resonates there today. You made our summers away from home so much fun! I also have to thank the faculty of MALT for creating a safe learning environment that challenged me, frustrated me, encouraged
me and pushed me farther than I could ever have imagined I would go. I want to say a special thank you to my project supervisor Barbara Ross-Denroche for listening to me and coaching me through those insecure moments during my research project. You were only an email or telephone call away and sometimes it was not what you said, it was just the question you asked that lit the path!

To my own family I need to extend my immense gratitude. To my daughter, Kristina, thank you for encouraging your Mom and believing that I could do it! I especially want to thank you for all the editing and proof reading you have done for me over the past two years. To my son Michael, thank you for understanding that dinner might not happen and for cooking those many dinners for mealtimes I forgot even existed! When I received my acceptance into RRU I will never forget your comment: “I don’t get it Mom, but if you are happy, I’m happy for you.” Michael, thank you for being happy for me.

Finally I want to acknowledge the love and support of my husband, Brian Comey. Thank you for giving me the space I needed to take this journey. For the past two years I have been glued to the computer and all you could see was the back of my head. Thank you for understanding and waiting for me. Thank you for keeping the home fires burning when I was away in residence for two summers. Thank you for walking my dog, Buddee, while I was away, and for being the parent-in-residence. You are truly my best friend. I look forward to wherever our journey together takes us.

To know contentment is wealth, 
and to live with strength resolve.

To never leave whatever you are 
is to abide,

and to die without getting lost –
that is to live on and on. (Lau Tzu)
CHAPTER ONE - STUDY BACKGROUND

The Problem

In the next ten years a significant number of the City of North Vancouver employees will be retiring. The potential loss of their skills and experience will present a challenge to the City in their day-to-day operations as well as achieving their future objectives. At the date of this research project, there is no formal succession plan for the City.

The retirement rate for the City is typical of demographics within society (Shore, 2002). The average age in 2002 for the City Department Directors is documented as 50.14 years. It is predicted that retirement for City staff averages 11.2 people per year for the period 2002-2006 (Shore, 2002). It will be a challenge for the City of North Vancouver to attract and retain employees in a competitive marketplace. Richard Shore, Director of Human Resources, identified one strategy, “emphasize development of current staff in order that they are ready for future challenges” (2002, p.1).

The Research Question

The research question for this project is: How can the City of North Vancouver identify future leaders in the Finance Department, and retain and accrue knowledge to the benefit of the organization?

For this research project, the scope of data was limited to the Department of Finance in the City of North Vancouver. The project was a pilot project using action research, with the objective being to develop a leadership succession plan process for the Finance Department and to create a model process that could be used by other departments in the City.

In discussion with Mr. Richard Shore, Project Supervisor, and Mr. Terry Christie, Director of the Finance Department, the decision was made to create, through this research
IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESSION…

project, a competency-based leadership-succession plan process. The following objectives were to be achieved through this pilot project:

- Identify the leadership competencies that are valued and needed in the City to meet projected needs in 2005 and beyond.
- Identify the leadership competencies valued and needed in the Finance Department of the City.
- Determine how the City can transfer existing knowledge from its employees who are retiring and determine methods that could be used to impart this knowledge within the organization for the benefit of its employees and the City.
- Develop a process model for the City to use for the purpose of identifying leadership successors and a process model that could be created to develop its employees to meet future competency requirements.

Benefits

There are many benefits for the City of North Vancouver to move toward the competency-based model for employee development. Using the leadership competencies as a guide, the City of North Vancouver can develop a multi-faceted plan to develop staff and replace its leaders. The City will be able to develop succession and leadership programs, which will allow them to identify those in the organization who have the desired competencies, and through strategic succession planning they will be able to develop and increase the pool of leadership skills within their organization. Succession planning and leadership development are key activities, which together will ensure that the City has leaders ready now and in the future. Through alignment of succession planning and leadership development the City will be able to ensure long-term leadership sustainability (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a, p. 3). “Succession
planning can identify those individuals who have the abilities, talent and potential to turn the
vision…into a reality, the alignment to leadership development can ensure that this potential is
realized” (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a, p. 3).

The City of North Vancouver will need a succession plan that includes knowledge
management. As people leave the organization, how can the City prevent their vast knowledge
from walking out the door with them? Processes need to be developed to create an environment
for the transfer of knowledge as well as for the traditional means of capturing knowledge. By
meeting these objectives, the City of North Vancouver will be in a better situation as it faces the
multiple retirements scheduled over the next few years.

The Opportunity

Succession planning is defined as “a program that an organization systemizes to ensure
leadership continuity for all key positions by developing activities that will build personnel talent
from within” (Wolfe, 1996, p. 4). Richard Shore, in his 2002 report to Council, defined
succession planning as “the ongoing process of systematically identifying, assessing and
developing employee talents to meet the future staffing needs of the organization” (p. 7). The
leadership within the City of North Vancouver has been fairly stable for a number of years, so
there has been no need to make a formal succession planning a priority. A review initiated by the
HR Department of organizational personnel service data, identified a potential leadership
problem if the City does not become proactive in developing its future leaders.

In order for the City to fill a shortage of leaders it has several options. These include: 1)
looking outside the organization to hire hard-to-find people; 2) doing nothing and seeing a
decrease in service to the municipal community; 3) “tap[ping] into the quality people already in
their organization, thus growing and keeping their own leaders” (Byham, Smith & Paese, 2002,
The third option is the most desirable for a number of reasons. Staff with high potential is given an opportunity to learn new skills and take on new responsibilities. Potentially this would reduce the number of people leaving the organization due to lack of opportunity for advancement. Developing your own leaders reduces the time and resources needed to attract outside talent. The City of North Vancouver Strategic Plan objectives set out the challenge to “be an employer of choice and to attract and retain employees in a competitive marketplace” (Shore, 2002, p. 1). The same report has also identified that “[one] strategy is to emphasize development of current staff in order that they are ready for future challenges” (Shore, 2002, p. 1).

In order to develop leaders, the City needs to identify high-potential candidates. This means looking beyond the individuals already within each department, and expanding the identification organization-wide, “out of the silos of departments – apply[ing] resources corporately” (Shore, 2002, p. 9). This means that an individual’s potential will be identified. Individual development plans need to be developed. The City of North Vancouver is advocating a competency-based leadership model. By using this model, the organization can identify the key competencies that will meet current and future challenges, as well as the skills, knowledge and abilities that are important to the success of both the individual and the organization. This model would set out a road map for individual development.

The Organization

The City of North Vancouver is a municipality with a population of over 41,000 residents (CNV, 1999, p.5). Incorporated in 1907, the City is governed by an elected Mayor and Council. The City Administrator is the chief administrative officer and [s]he is appointed by and is responsible to the City Council for the administration of the entire municipal organization in accordance with Council policy and the Municipal Act (CNV, 1998, p. 5). There are eight
A Strategic Planning Committee is currently working in the City Administration to establish a Strategic Plan for the organization. At this time the City’s new mission statement, vision, values and strategic goals are developed and more steps are underway to complete the Strategic Plan by February 2004, with plans to re-examine it annually once it has been created. The leadership succession plan proposed for this project aligns with the City’s Strategic Goal, Innovation and Learning, which stated:

“We will attract, develop and retain a talented, results-oriented workforce. Our goal is to ensure we have the knowledge, skills and abilities to meet our commitments to the community now and in the future” (CNV, 2002, p. 1).

Thus the pilot project, leadership competency identification for the Finance Department, is an important component for the City of North Vancouver in meeting its strategic objectives. “A key to comprehensive succession planning is integrating talent planning with organizational strategic planning” (Rothwell, 2003, ¶1). Leadership competency identification, leadership development and succession planning are all necessary for the Finance Department to have the future skills necessary to sustain their department. “The succession planning process itself must reflect the quality of leadership that [the City] is striving to develop in its future leaders” (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a, p. 5).
The City of North Vancouver Organization

Figure 1: City of North Vancouver Organization Chart  (Adapted from CNV, undated, p. 1.)

The Finance Department “plays a leadership role in serving and supporting a broad client base that includes the public, Mayor and Council, the City [Administrator], senior management and staff. It also provides financial reporting and control services to the City as mandated under the [Local Government Act]. It upholds the fiduciary responsibility to manage the City’s assets and provides guidance for the overall stability of the City’s financial resources” (CNV, undated b.,¶ 1).

The Finance Department as Research Subject

To create a leadership competency profile for the Finance Department it was necessary to look at the interactions that it had with other departments of the City. The Finance Department did not work in isolation but instead it was interconnected to the activities throughout the City. In order to understand the leadership competencies that are desirable for the Finance Department, it was necessary to employ systems thinking. “Systems thinking…seeing beyond what appear[ed]
to be isolated and independent incidents to deeper patterns…[to] recognize connections…and therefore [be] better able to understand and influence them” (O’Connor & McDermott, 1997, p. xiii). With systems thinking in mind, researching the desirable leadership competencies required reaching out to the whole of the City to ask for their input. The Finance Department leadership, while being responsible for its daily operations, had responsibilities for the business needs of other City departments.
CHAPTER TWO – INFORMATION REVIEW

Review of Organizational Documents

An extensive review of organizational documents was undertaken to fully understand the organization and its strategic objectives. The data from these documents has been imbedded throughout this document and used in context. The report, Human Resources Department Confidential Information Report to Mayor and Council, Succession Planning, dated July 23, 2002, prepared by Richard Shore, Director of Human Resources, was reviewed and used as the rationale for adopting a formal leadership-succe ssion plan process. The report contained demographic organizational data. While the data has not been directly reported, non-confidential general references have been used from this report. The City’s draft Strategic Plan was reviewed. This document established the City of North Vancouver goals and objectives.

The Strategic Plan

At the time of this project, the City was embarking on creating a Strategic Plan to establish priorities and to create a broader, higher level analysis of the organization to complement their traditional practice of business plans. This document was scheduled to be completed by February 2004. The City’s Business Plan established a three-year focus on the projects and priorities of the organization, while the Strategic Plan focused on the long-term organization. The Strategic Plan identified “leadership” as one of its values and it developed a Strategic Goal to ensure that the City had the “knowledge, skills and abilities to meet [their] commitments to the community now and in the future” (CNV, 2003, p. 1).

The new vision for the City of North Vancouver, as presented to Council on September 29th, 2003 stated:
“To be a vibrant, diverse and highly liveable community that strives to balance the social, economic and environmental needs of our community” (CNV, 2003, p. 1).

The new Mission continued:

As the City of North Vancouver evolves, we are passionate about being a vibrant people place. We will enhance our reputation as the City of choice – the place to live, work, play and do business. We will vigorously pursue efficiency and effectiveness to achieve service excellence. Our common purpose is to serve our community in a manner that promotes enduring community pride (CNV, 2003, p. 1).

The City of North Vancouver values:

**Behavioural Excellence** - We work with the highest ethical standards of professional behaviours including honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, respect and humanity.

**Service Excellence** - We value service excellence. We set challenging goals and realistic objectives within a climate of limited resources.

**Leadership** - We value leadership that inspires the best from everyone.

**Accountability** - We clearly define expectations and measure results.

**Communication** – We practise and encourage open communication.

(CNV, 2003, p. 1)

Leadership alone would not help the City create a desirable future. Clearly defined objectives are necessary for the future leaders to produce and measure excellent results (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 256). The City’s strategic plan outlines the anticipated objectives for the organization. The leadership competencies created through this research project must align with the organizational strategic plan and help the future leader understand what the organization expects from him [her] through his [her] leadership role (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 256).
Leadership success occurs when there is a crossover of competencies, organizational needs and individual personal satisfaction in the role (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 118). The identification of leadership competencies is the first step for the City in developing future leaders who fit their organization.

**Review of Supporting Literature**

In order to address the needs of the City of North Vancouver and to give context to the research question, a number of topics were reviewed:

1. Succession planning
2. Leadership competencies
3. Knowledge management.

Since the City did not have a succession plan, it was the goal of Mr. Richard Shore, Director of Human Resources, Project Sponsor, that this research project would be the first step to create a pilot leadership succession plan for the Finance Department. The Draft City Strategic Plan identified the organizational value of leadership (CNV, 2003). The Strategic Plan set a number of goals, one of which was “Innovation and Learning.” This goal stated:

> Our goal is to attract, develop and retain a talented, result-oriented workforce. We will ensure we have the knowledge, skills and abilities to meet our commitments to the community now and in the future. (CNV, 2003, p. 1)

The topic of succession planning was reviewed in order to assist in the development of a pilot succession plan in one department, and to create a leadership competency development model that could be used for the other departments.

“Competency identification and values clarification are increasingly important foundations for an effective succession plan” (Rothwell, 2001, p. 77). The literature indicated
that competency assessment could be beneficial in aligning the organization’s strategic plan with the competencies of its leaders now and in the future. Competency development and assessment were to become the building blocks to succession planning (Rothwell, 2001). Therefore it became important to review the literature on the role of leadership competencies in the development of an effective succession plan for the City.

When developing succession plans, the literature stated that there was a “growing awareness of knowledge transfer – the process of distilling and transmitting the lessons of experience from outgoing employees to those who take their places” (Rothwell, 2003, ¶10). It became apparent that the City would need to include in its leadership plan the means to transfer the existing knowledge from its current employees and impart it to the organization. The topic of knowledge management and the transfer of tacit knowledge were researched as part of the literature review.

Succession Planning – Creating a Leadership Plan

“Leaders are…responsible for future leadership. They need to identify, develop, and nurture future leaders” (DePree, 1989, p. 14).

Succession planning versus replacement planning.

Leaders of an organization need to look forward and consider the continued survival and efficiency of the organization. This requires strategic planning for the future leaders of the organization. This type of strategic planning prepares for a succession of leaders, rather than depending upon replacement as the only means of filling future management and leadership vacancies.

Companies traditionally practiced replacement planning which concentrated on pre-selecting backup people for key positions (Byham, Smith, Paese, 2002). This type of planning
was ideal for holiday scheduling and for emergency coverage if anyone became ill or was suddenly unable to work. This worked when organizations were stable, large and hierarchical. People remained in positions longer and there were fewer changes in job responsibilities and organizational direction. Technical and competitive changes occurred slowly, organizations employed many middle managers; HR resources were large and the control of personnel systems was more centralized (Byham et al., 2002).

Today the business environment is very different: (i) there is less stability in organizations; (ii) organizations are flatter; (iii) there are few middle managers; (iv) changes occur rapidly in all sectors; (v) business units are decentralized, resulting in fragmentation of HR initiatives; and (vi) top executives have little time to spend on leadership development and succession management (Byham et al., 2002). In this new environment, planning for future organizational leaders cannot be left to the traditional replacement model but needs to be more purposeful and strategic to meet the needs of today’s rapidly changing business climate.

*Succession planning gives long-term direction.*

A leadership plan can establish a strategy for existing resources and personnel. It can make it easier for an organization to meet changes and give it options for the future. The role of a succession plan is to give direction for long-term planning and ensure the best use of resources to achieve the objectives of the organization (Byham et al., 2002; Rothwell, 2001; Wolfe, 1996). It aligns with the values, missions and goals of the organization, while preparing individuals for achievement and organizational success. A succession plan develops programs that ensure “growth and continuity [of employees, while helping the organization] assess corporate functions and results” (Wolfe, 1996, p. 7, 8). Successful organizations have long-range formal plans that
cover all of their business operations including leadership development (Barner, 2000; Byham et al., 2002; Rioux & Bernthal, 1999; Rothwell, 2001).

Organizations with highly effective succession plans involve their executive, senior and frontline management throughout the process (Rioux & Bernthal, 1999). This creates responsibility from all levels of management for the identification and development of candidates. When candidates are identified, most organizations consider the employee’s career wishes and aspirations. Organizations use objective assessment data regarding current performance and readiness or potential (Rioux & Bernthal, 1999). This helps identify the development needs of a candidate. Candidates are selected for potential developmental assignments and formal training programs to meet the objectives of the program. The process meets the needs of both the organization and the individual involved in the succession program. Involving the candidate in the process and identifying his/her career goals and aspirations produces a better person-job fit (Rioux & Bernthal, 1999). “Organizations benefit most when succession management integrates with other HR systems and strategically links to the overall business plan” (Rioux & Bernthal, 1999, p. 4).

By looking at its current talent pool, an organization can use a succession and leadership plan to increase opportunities to develop its high-potential performers, identify its replacement needs, and increase the talent pool of “promotable” employees (Byham et al., 2002). When planning to develop leaders from within, the organization will need to look at the current competencies of the organization and determine what training and development will be necessary to meet its future needs (Rothwell, 2001).

Organizations want leaders who offer diverse talents and get the job done while modelling appropriate ethics. It is for these reasons that organizations are looking at values and
competencies as critical success indicators (Rothwell, 2001). Competencies have become key measurement and decision-making criteria in Human Resources programs and in succession planning (Rothwell, 2001). Leadership planning builds core competencies and turns leadership potential into practice (Terry, 2001).

Identifying Leadership Competencies

“An organization requires several things from the people chosen to be candidates for the future. These people must bring to their responsibilities certain characteristics, traits that should be present in all leaders” (DePree, 1989, p. 181).

Leadership planning calls for an assessment of the competencies that are needed for an organization’s leadership positions. “Competencies are critical as systems building blocks because they can be used to evaluate performance and guide actions” (Cook & Bernthal, 1998, ¶7). The literature indicates that competencies fall into several categories, depending on the model. While the models are very similar, they are broken into classifications that generally reflect interpersonal competencies, leadership competencies, business result competencies and personal competencies (Byham et al., 2002; Clark, 1999; Cook &; Bernthal, 1998; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Zenger & Folkman, 2002). Appendices IV & V of this report outlines and compares the different leadership models researched for this project.

While each position has a job description (outlining the different job skills and knowledge for that role), the City has no record of the ideal leadership competencies that are valued for leaders in the City and in the Finance Department. It became apparent that the project had to start with the evaluation of leadership competencies.
Competency models.

When competency models are used for succession planning, many benefits result. Competency models clarify the skills, knowledge and characteristics required for the job in question. They provide a method to assess a candidate’s readiness for a role, focus training and development plans to address missing competencies and allow an organization to measure the number of high-potential performers (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999).

The competencies should reflect the organizational culture and values, as well as its members (Byham et al., 2002). Initially, members of the organization need to ask the following question: What values, personal traits and characteristics do they admire and look for in their leaders? While this question will develop an important list of desirable competencies, the competency model developed must also reflect the business requirements of the organization (Byham et al., 2002; Cook & Bernthal, 1998). Thus, competency models need to answer two questions: 1) What skills and characteristics are required to do the job? 2) What behaviours have the most direct impact on performance and success in the job? (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999)

Before leadership candidates can be identified, the organization must clearly articulate its business requirements. Leadership competency assessments need to be designed around a clear understanding of the current and future needs of an organization (Barner, 2000). This will require a broad view of the short-term and long-term business requirements to determine the type of leadership competencies most desirable for the model. “Competencies have little value without an established strategy for applying and aligning them with organizational objectives” (Cook & Bernthal, 1998, ¶18). Competency models ensure that decision makers focus on the same attributes and skills that are important and relevant to success in the positions under consideration (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999).
Using competency models to develop future leaders.

Competency-based practices can motivate individuals to improve their knowledge and skills in the core competencies of the organization. Competency-based organizations can adjust activities to support employee development in the core competencies. Compensation and reward strategies can be tailored to motivate growth along the organizational competency model (Curtis, Hefley & Miller, 1995.)

When creating their succession and leadership plans, executive team members must identify their major business objectives and any anticipated challenges in meeting the objectives. They will need to specify what assumptions that have made in developing their business plans. By looking over this list, the executive team can determine what kind of leadership is needed to reach these objectives, what type of leadership is already in place, and the implications of any competency gaps (Barner, 2000, p. 49). When correlated, this data demonstrates current and anticipated business changes and the implications for leadership activities. “Competencies identified…become more effective when linked to the organizational/core competencies that senior leaders define” (Cook & Bernthal, 1998, ¶16).

Once the organization has identified the competencies that are required to meet its future business needs, it will have to assess the current status of its organization. Are these competencies in place today? What are the gaps between their current state and what have they identified for the future? Measuring the leadership gap is not a finite process, but a continuous process. Rebecca Luhn Wolfe, Ph.D., calls this the “Circle of Leadership” (1996, p. 61). Wolfe’s model has six major steps: 1) make a commitment to leadership continuity; 2) assess the present; 3) assess the future needs; 4) establish a succession planning program; 5) identify and develop
individual talent; and 6) evaluate and reward. An organization that makes a commitment to succession planning will need to re-evaluate the leadership competencies on a continual basis.

**Knowledge Management**

In his report to City Council, Mr. Shore stated that an important and related factor to the City’s upcoming leadership challenge is the potential loss of middle management knowledge due to retirement. Mr. Shore stated, “This will need to be a consideration in the development of departmental [succession] plans” (2002, p. 11). The topic of knowledge management was therefore reviewed for this project.

*Tacit and explicit knowledge.*

When people retire they take with them their organizational knowledge, both explicit and tacit. Knowledge in organizations is typically considered either explicit, work-skill knowledge found in books and manuals that is relatively easy to capture, or tacit knowledge that is stored within and shared between people and is difficult to articulate and capture (Lesser, 2000, p. 9). Organizational knowledge is the understanding of how the organization operates, including the areas of function, systems (long-range planning, budgeting) and services (Byham et al., 2002, p. 91). Future city leaders will need to have an understanding of how the organization functions and how the different departments function and inter-relate (Byham et al., 2002). Conger and Benjamin (1999) concur that an objective for leadership development is to impart relevant knowledge so that it can immediately be applied to a leadership position.

*Knowledge transfer in succession planning.*

Trends in succession planning include knowledge transfer, “the process of distilling and transmitting the lessons of experience from outgoing employees to those who will take their places” (Rothwell, 2003, ¶ 9). Traditional knowledge-capture practices, such as exit interviews,
attempt to capture insights, experiences and knowledge before it walks out the door (Burtha, 2002) but Burtha suggested that this tradition should not be considered sufficient to retain knowledge. It would be beneficial to an organization if employees had the opportunity to transfer tacit knowledge before they changed positions or left the organization (Burtha, 2002).

Succession plans need to be designed to include opportunities for tacit knowledge transfer and Rothwell (2003) suggested mentoring, career programs, executive coaching and retiree management programs as opportunities for grooming successors and optimizing their performance. Burtha (2002) agreed that opportunities need to be created for knowledge sharing. He recommended that an organization create opportunities for people to connect both formally and informally. “Building a sense of community, trust and relationship between people helps decrease the natural friction of knowledge sharing and increases the velocity of information and knowledge within an organization” (Burtha, 2002, ¶ 4).

Trust, communication and knowledge transfer.

A transparent succession and promotion plan will help to build trust in the City of North Vancouver. The more transparent the succession process becomes, the higher the level of trust in the organization. This trust will create a more open environment that: 1) allows each individual to share knowledge; 2) gives each individual access to the knowledge base; and 3) lets everyone talk directly with the person who has the best knowledge in the organization (Cohen & Prusak, 2001, p. 47). In creating an environment that allows knowledge sharing, further trust will result (Cohen & Prusak, 2001). Peter Drucker noted, “Organizations are no longer built on force but on trust” (cited in Cohen & Prusak, 2001, p. 51). Today we often hear that we are working in a “knowledge economy.” Most knowledge is in people’s heads yet it “is rarely shared, swapped, traced and fertilized to ensure that it remains…with the firm when employees leave” (Droege &
Hoobler, 2003, p. 50). Therefore, it is important that people have the opportunity to share their intelligence and imagination.

The knowledge in a firm exists in the networks and communities in the organization (Cohen & Prusak, 2001). The social networks and relationship that connect people in organizations create the social structures that aid in the retention of tacit knowledge (Droege & Hoobler, 2003). Tacit knowledge is in the minds of people as well as their routines and activities and is not often documented. When people come together they bring their tacit skills, assumptions and knowledge to the collaboration. When they work together knowledge moves slowly from person to person, each absorbing, contributing, discussing, negotiating and adjusting until they come to an understanding of how to do something together (Cohen & Prusak, 2001).

“Through repeated communication and negotiation, knowledge is diffused through networks, and even sometimes networks of networks” (Cohen & Prusak, 2001, p. 67).

“Capturing all types of employee knowledge equates to the retention of wealth within” (Droege & Hoobler, 2003, p. 52). The knowledge within an organization does not decrease with use. Rather, the more it is used, the more knowledge is created (Droege & Hoobler, 2003). Tacit knowledge is shared through storytelling, highly interactive conversations, direct experience and through engaging people throughout the organization (Droege & Hoobler, 2003; Smith, 2001). Organizations need to create the environment, programs and incentives to stimulate knowledge sharing.

Knowledge sharing programs.

Many large organizations have created incentives and programs to stimulate knowledge sharing (Smith, 2001). Organizations recognize that there will always be some turnover in staff but by understanding how social networks can help keep some of the tacit knowledge within,
strategies can be implemented to help capture the knowledge before it is lost. In the case of the City of North Vancouver, the imminent exodus of retiring management has created an immediate need to implement some form of knowledge management. Droge and Hoobler suggested three organizational strategies:

1. Promote relationship-building activities that enhance connections between individuals, departments, groups and organizations.

2. Modify interdependence between departments. This means that the departments which work independently of one another are encouraged to work together on projects, share information, resources and complete job tasks using pooled resources.

3. Develop reward systems to motivate employees to engage in knowledge sharing. (2003, pp. 59-60)

Programs such as rotating leaders across many functions, moving people horizontally among different functions, secondments to other departments for a period of time, job swapping between individuals, and enabling job sharing are a few examples of activities which support the development of broad knowledge in an organization (Bunning & Kur, 2002). A program such as succession planning would link to knowledge management by promoting the sharing of knowledge. The assignments and development opportunities of the selected high potential candidates would promote knowledge sharing. If these programs include incentives where employees are rewarded for adding to corporate knowledge, knowledge sharing can be tied to performance and financial variables (Smith, 2001). It is important for the organization to state their expectations for sharing knowledge. The organization also needs to develop fair programs to encourage both tacit and explicit knowledge sharing.
CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Methods

Action research was used for this project. I chose action research, a qualitative approach, because it was grounded in the day-to-day realities of the people studied (Palys, 1997, p. 423). I chose this method because I believe that the values and common understanding shared by all participants in this research would make a difference to the project. Action research would thereby bring about resolutions that were supported by every member of the group. This project required the participation and collaboration of the participants. Action research works to improve an organization or a problem, giving “a better understanding of the multiple layers of meaning and the fullness of institutional actions” (Parsons, 2001, ¶ 12).

Data Gathering Tools

My research methods for this project included a survey and a focus group. I chose a survey because it was relatively easy to administer and enabled me to acquire a breadth of data quickly (Palys, 1997). The Stakeholder Survey sought data from the different City departments about desirable leadership competencies for the ideal leader in the City of North Vancouver, and in the Finance Department. I determined that a focus group would allow representatives from the Finance Department to discuss the research topic and analyze the raw survey data into meaningful groupings. The focus group would explore the many possibilities regarding the information sought (Lucasey, 2000).

The focus group members participated in a method called the Technology of Participation, TOPTM. This method (TOPTM) was created by the Institute of Cultural Affairs to provide people with a structured method to: (i) recognize all contributions; (ii) help groups sort through large amounts of data; (iii) to pool participants’ contributions into larger, more
informative patterns; and (iv) successfully deal with polarization, conflict and diversity (Spencer, 1989). The raw data was stripped from the Stakeholder Survey, and the focus group was invited to comment on the data. They were then given the task to sort the data into meaningful leadership competencies.

A second survey was planned but, upon re-evaluation, it was cancelled. The second survey was to be sent out electronically to the participants of the Stakeholder Survey group and the Focus Group. The purpose of the second survey was to collect data regarding general observations of current leadership competency behaviour in the pilot department, as compared to the ideal competencies identified by this research project. This would have produced a gap analysis. My concern was that the survey would question general observable leadership behaviour in the Finance Department without identifying who was being observed. Since general questions about leadership were not connected to an individual or a specific action, I believed that there was an opportunity for misinterpretation of the data and unintentional harm to the leadership team. Since the potential for harm was in direct conflict with the Royal Roads University Ethics Policy, I decided after discussion with the Research Team to cancel the second survey.

A presentation of the City’s leadership competency model was made to the Directors’ Team for their information. The objective of this presentation was to introduce the leadership model created in collaboration with twenty-one employees of the City and to demonstrate how the model aligned with leadership competency models researched in the literature. Another objective of the presentation was to demonstrate how the City’s model fitted with the organization’s Strategic Plan and how the model would fit into a leadership-succession plan for the City. The Directors were invited to ask questions and comment on the process and model.
Study Participants

The Stakeholder Group consisted of eighteen representatives from all City departments who had business or customer relationships with the Finance Department. Since the Finance Department was its own customer, two representatives were included in the Stakeholder Survey. The Stakeholder Representatives were invited by their Department Director to represent their work group. From the eighteen surveys distributed, twelve were completed and returned.

Figure 2 – Stakeholder Survey Representative Departments
The following criteria were used to select the Stakeholder representative selection. The individual must have:

1. Broad knowledge of the City;
2. Broad knowledge of the Finance Department and staff;
3. A high level of interaction with the Finance Department;
4. A mix of length of service with the City;
5. Volunteered to participate;
6. Committed and been willing to devote full effort to the project;
7. Agreed to represent his/her own views (Note: The individual was invited to include the views of fellow department members.); and
8. Understood that the data would be public information, but individual input and contribution would be kept confidential.

Restrictions:

It would be limited to one senior manager per department.

The Focus Group consisted of volunteer members of the Finance Department. The research project was introduced to the Finance Department employees during a special meeting. At that meeting, members were invited to sign up. Eleven individuals volunteered to participate in the Focus Group.

The following is the criteria used to determine the focus group. The individual had to:

1. Be a member of the Finance Department;
2. Be a volunteer to participate;
3. Have had a mix of level of service with the City;
4. Be committed and willing to devote full effort to the research project;
5. Agree to represent their own views in this focus group;

6. Understand the data would be public information, but that individual input would be confidential.

Further to the criteria, the focus group could not include the Director of Finance because of the concern that his presence, as the most senior leader of the department, would inhibit the full participation of others.

The Directors’ Team from the City of North Vancouver participated in the research study in the following manner. At the request of the research team, the directors were invited to support the research project and to assist in the selection of the stakeholder participants. The Directors’ Team reviewed the draft leadership competency model and their input influenced the development of the action steps and recommendations that arose from this project. It was important to involve the Directors’ Team in the research project because the research indicated that organizations with highly effective succession management systems involve their senior management in the process (Rioux & Bernthal, 1999).

Study Conduct

The research methodology consisted of the following steps:

1. Through discussion with the HR Director, it was determined which departments of the City had stakeholder relationships with the Finance Department (See Figure 1).

2. Richard Shore, HR Director and Project Research Sponsor, sent a letter to the Director of each Stakeholder Department. The Directors were requested to appoint representatives to complete a questionnaire on behalf of their department. The questionnaire focused on the leadership competencies that would be ideal for their department when working with the
finance department (See Appendix I). The representation criteria was determined by the Project Advisory Team and outlined in the letter to the directors.

3. Five questions were sent to the Stakeholder Representatives (See Appendix II). They were asked:
   a) Do you give free and informed consent to participate in the survey?
   b) What do you value in the “ideal” leader for the City of North Vancouver?
   c) What do you value in the “ideal” leader in the Finance Department of the City?
   d) Please give examples of how the future “ideal” leader in the Finance Department would behave. (The future was defined as 2005 and beyond.)
   e) How can the leadership of the City ensure knowledge is transferred and captured within the City?

4. The data for each question was compiled into word documents. As the researcher, I pulled leadership behaviour statements out of the responses and listed them in separate word documents, one document per question. To protect confidentiality, the responses were electronically sorted into alphabetical lists.

5. The compiled alphabetical list was distributed to the stakeholders for their review.

6. Stakeholders were requested to give their feedback as to whether everything was captured satisfactorily in the lists.

7. The focus group from the Finance Department was invited to an off-site meeting room.

8. The focus group was invited to give their input on the Stakeholder data.

9. The focus group participated in a Technology of Participation activity. During this activity they compiled and themed the leadership data and created leadership competency themes.
10. The focus group gave titles to the themed leadership competencies.

11. As researcher, I compiled the leadership competencies into a document and circulated the document (via email) to the focus group for their input and feedback.

12. I cross-referenced the City’s competency document with five research models of leadership competencies and created a chart to align the models.

13. The City competency document was presented to the Project Team for their input. The Project Team identified an additional category, “self-directed learner,” that they felt was missing from the model created. After reviewing the Strategic Plan and the leadership competency literature, this category was added to the model under the competency “Focused Self-Direction.”

14. The Leadership Competency Model draft was forwarded to all the Stakeholders and Focus group participants for their feedback. A copy was also forwarded to the City’s Directors’ Team for their information.

15. A formal presentation of the Leadership Competency Model was made to the Directors’ Team. The minutes from this meeting are found in Appendix III.

16. At their request, a casual discussion was held with the Directors’ Team, focusing on the topic of leadership competencies versus management. The purpose of this meeting was to encourage open dialogue and further explore the topic.
CHAPTER FOUR - RESEARCH STUDY RESULTS

Study Findings and Conclusions

“The aura with which we tend to surround the words leader and leadership make it hard to think clearly. Good sense calls for demystification” (John Gardner in Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 1).

It was the intention of this research project to identify leadership competencies as a starting point for the City of North Vancouver to create a succession plan process. As the researcher, it was my hope that the collection of data, collaboration and careful analysis would create a starting point for the City. Through the collection of data from twenty-one representatives of the City of North Vancouver and extensive research into the literature of leadership competency models, a collaborative competency model was created for the organization and the pilot department, the Finance Department.

Language is Important

Through my research I discovered that language had an impact upon understanding and comprehension (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 9). Zenger and Folkman suggested that the language of leadership is difficult to define or specifically describe (2002). From this, I interpret that the language of a leadership competency model is important. To have impact, I decided that the City model would need to be comprehensible to the whole organization.

Language socializes the vision, values and mission of an organization and helps to carry the message back to the employees of the organization (Conger & Benjamin, 1999). In order to unite the Strategic Plan of the City of North Vancouver and the leadership competency model in a meaningful way, I realized that I would have to be cognizant of the shared language within the organization. In order to demystify the City of North Vancouver model, it needed to be general
but accurate and written in the language of their culture. With this in mind, in order to create a City model of language, the responses from the stakeholder survey were stripped of unedited phrases. Repetitions and patterns of language emerged from this process.

The following words and phrases were stripped from the raw data collected in response to Question 2 of the stakeholder survey. Key words are identified below. The responses presented to the focus group were left in entire phrases.

Question 2: What do you value in the ideal leader for the City of North Vancouver?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Response</th>
<th>Number of Responses based on 12 surveys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approachable</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicates (well, openly, with all)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision (builds, supports, contributes to)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens &amp; Hears Listener</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable (of: trends, other depts. gov., shares)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident (in others, self, in abilities)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values (exemplifies, strong, others)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive attitude</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognizes (staff, strengths, celebrates)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leads by example</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages (growth, staff, risks, supportive)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courage &amp; Not Afraid</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands (goals, roles, concepts, depts. org.)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Praises Staff (efforts)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear (expectations)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While I could have made some assumptions based upon the stakeholder data, I decided to withhold my judgement and take the raw data to the focus group. I left the statements intact except when responses were similar. I wanted the focus group to work with the bulk data so that they could bring their cultural understanding of the language to the process and create themes that were meaningful to them as an organization.
During the focus group, a situation arose which was a good example of how language affects understanding. A work group of three participants struggled with an appropriately descriptive name for one compilation of data. The data included the following statements:

Understands customer and stakeholder relationships with the City
Understands the community
Understands the operations and objectives of all City departments
Understands staff benefits to and from the City
As a leader is able to access other leaders
Understands how decisions impact other departments
Supports longer strategic plan

While I was acting as the facilitator of the focus group, I was tempted to assist them in naming this category. I would have named it “systems thinking” because through my research and academic study these statements clearly demonstrated what I understood to be a systems approach (O’Connor & McDermott, 1997, p. 59). It was difficult not to interfere in the naming process, but I understood it was important for them to use their own language to create the competency. The group decided to name it “Understands the Big Picture.” Since a system is dependent upon how parts are related and how they interact, the name that they gave it was a descriptive definition of systems thinking (O’Connor & McDermott, 1997). The group had created a title that clarified for them an important leadership competency. This exercise during the focus group reinforced the fact that language was a very important element in improving the understanding of the topic (Zenger & Folkman, 2002).
Competency Models are Characteristic

Leaders are both unique and alike. They are unique in that each one has a different set of competencies that ideally fit the organization … they are alike in that to be highly effective they need to have at least one strength in each [competency block]. The net effect is that leaders do not appear to be alike…the basic components are similar…despite the fact that they look very different from the outside. In the end, leaders are extremely different to the outside, with several fundamental similarities under the surface. (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 115)

I learned that competencies are not unique to a department or an organization. The data collected from CNV demonstrated that the competencies were alike whether the question was asking about the ideal City leader, the ideal finance department leader, or the ideal future leader. Zenger and Folkman would agree with this finding. “Despite the efforts to create distinctive lists of competencies, there is a remarkable sameness about them from one company to other” (2002, p. 87). The statements and responses found in the data of the stakeholder survey and the focus group input were very similar.

One notable difference was the professional qualities that were specific to the field of finance and the professional skills required to excel in that department. Zenger and Folkman (2002) addressed this in their literature by discussing the competencies for a role in the marketing department versus the competencies for a role in the research and development department of a firm. They stated that, while the competencies between the departments are largely the same, the differences would be a result of the actual skills required for that job. “What makes for success in one firm is a carbon copy of what causes success in another” (2002, p. 87). This was reinforced when the CNV competency model was cross-referenced with five other models of leadership
competencies (see Appendices IV and V). All the leadership competency models had blocks that included the following: 1) Interpersonal Skills; 2) Organizational Leadership Skills; 3) Business/Organizational Results; 4) Personal Attributes and Character (Byham et al., 2002; Cook & Berthnal, 1996; Clark, 1999; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Zenger & Folkman, 2002). More important than the actual method of breaking down the data into blocks was the organization of the competencies into smaller manageable chunks that could later be easily identified and used throughout the organization (Clark, 1999).

Time was not an issue when developing ideal leadership competencies for the future. The participants were asked what they valued in the ideal leader for the City of North Vancouver and the Finance Department. They were then asked how the future ideal leader in the Finance Department would behave. (The future was defined as 2005 and beyond.) One statement that stood out from a stakeholder survey: “I don’t think the FUTURE ideal leader would behave any differently than what I have just stated…Why wait until 2005?” Other respondents commented that their input for the future-focused question would be the same as for the previous questions but they added a few finance-specific skills that recommended keeping abreast of technology changes and accounting practices.

Knowledge Retention

One of the concerns facing the City of North Vancouver was the loss of knowledge from retiring employees. Therefore, a question about knowledge retention was asked as part of the stakeholder survey. It was planned to bring this question and the stakeholder data to the Focus Group but there was not enough time during the session to deal with this question. Upon reviewing the data collected and looking for themes, I identified several very definite themes. The following themes were identified:
Create a culture of information sharing
Create job overlap before transition
Cross Training
Training and education opportunities
Job sharing
Successor training programs
Share duties to develop new skills
Central storage of documents, presentations, and documents
Mentor opportunities
One-on-one information sharing

When I reviewed the competencies that were identified by the focus group, I discovered that many of these themes occurred in other sections. For example: “Training, mentoring, staff development, development of future leaders” behaviours fitted the competency “Mentorship and Developing Others.” The competency “Communication Skills” also overlapped some of the themes found in data for the knowledge question. From the data collected, a couple of key themes were not specifically covered in the other competencies and therefore identified as behaviours for the competency Knowledge Sharing:

Creates a culture of information and knowledge sharing;
Creates one-on-one opportunities to share information.

Since Richard Shore, HR Director, expressed a concern about the retention of knowledge the Research Team discussed whether this topic was adequately represented in the competency model. It was decided that “knowledge sharing” should be an identified leadership competency for the City of North Vancouver. Thus it was included in the competency model. Clearly
identifying knowledge as a competency meshed with the City’s strategic goal “Innovation and Learning” which seeks to ensure that the City has the knowledge, skills and abilities to meet present and future requirements. By reinforcing the importance of knowledge sharing as a leadership competency, the City further defines what it values in its leaders. It is important for the City to identify knowledge sharing as a competency. “Unless management clearly states expectations for sharing knowledge, employees are only likely to share explicit knowledge because it is easier to code, document and transfer. Employees must be encouraged and rewarded for sharing tacit knowledge” (Smith, 2001).

The literature reinforced this decision. In the research I discovered that some organizations think that knowledge sharing is so important that they use incentives and performance reviews to stimulate sharing (Smith, 2001). “The value and worth of individual, group and corporate intellectual assets grow exponentially when shared and increase in value with use” (Smith, 2001).

By identifying knowledge sharing as a competency, the City reinforces its importance. When employees leave the City, the basic knowledge about their tasks remains with the organization but the tacit knowledge, the tricks of the trade, can be lost. New knowledge is created through ongoing interaction between tacit knowledge found within individuals, and explicit knowledge possessed in the organization (Droege & Hobler, 2003).

Tacit knowledge is a resource to the City of North Vancouver. It is “difficult to find substitutes for the ‘know how’ that flows out of an individual’s tacit knowledge” (Droege & Hobler, 2003, p. 54). “It is a unique resource developed in the intellect, skills and experience of a firm’s human resources” (Droege & Hobler, 2003, p. 54). Therefore it seems prudent that knowledge sharing be a leadership competency for their organization.
Process Is Important

While the research has indicated that leadership competencies have characteristic qualities and are not unique, through this research project I have concluded that the process of having the City of North Vancouver participate in the development of their own model was extremely valuable. “Canned tools and processes often fail as they do not provide ownership to the participants and fail to account for the different cultures, climates and nuances found in every organization. For effective change to take place you must involve the individuals in the development and implementation of a new process” (Clark, 1999). By asking the participants to identify what they valued in a leader, the process has been a change agent for the organization. “For effective change to take place you must involve the individual in the development and implementation of a new process” (Clark, 1999). The process resulted in the City identifying what they valued in their leadership team and what they would look for in their future leaders. This was the first step in their succession plan process.

Creating a Shared Model.

The data that was collected from twenty-one representatives throughout the City, the Stakeholder Survey participants and the Focus Group participants led to the development of a Leadership Competency Model. The twelve Stakeholder Survey participants were from the different divisions of the organization, and the nine participants in the Focus Group came only from the Finance Department. This was a collaborative process that sought input from many levels of the organization, including managers and front-line employees. An individual would not have had the knowledge necessary to envision the ideal leader, a leader who would appeal to the entire organization. To accomplish this goal it was necessary to include many stakeholders in the development of this initiative (Yukl, 2002).
An Appreciative Inquiry of Self-Discovery.

By asking the City to engage in the process of identifying leadership competencies, the focus became a journey of self-discovery. The participants discovered what was working in the organization and how to create the best for the future. This was an “Appreciative Inquiry” approach to research. One of the benefits of using Appreciate Inquiry (AI) was that it asked the organization to look at itself and to focus on what had been working within the organization. AI “theorizes that people and organizations create their collective realities by their shared experiences and conversations” (Bonney, 2003).

AI is a methodical and intentional process for organizational development. “To effect change one must intentionally focus the organizations conversation toward its noblest and most positive experiences” (Bonney, 2003). Therefore, by asking the questions, we have begun the first steps of enhancing positive leadership development within the City of North Vancouver. One senior manager, who participated in the focus group, commented to me that the event had given her much to think about as a leader in the organization. This type of feedback agreed with the AI research of Gervase Bushe who stated that “through the process of inquiry itself, the elements that contribute to superior performance are reinforced and amplified” (1995). During the process of this research project, the City was asked to understand what created superior performance, as defined by their organization.

Importance in the Commitment of the Senior Management Team

The Project Sponsors, Richard Shore and Terry Christie, are both members of the City’s senior management team, the Directors’ Team. As Project Sponsors, they have been committed to the project and the development of the leadership competency model and they are committed
to the development of a succession plan process. The involvement of other members of the Directors’ Team in this project was more symbolic, although they were kept informed throughout the project of the objectives, process and progress. A presentation was made to them at the onset of the project and the directors were invited to support the project by seeking representatives from their departments to be participants in the Stakeholder Survey. They were kept abreast of the project via two presentations that I made during their Directors’ Team meetings and, at their request, I participated in an informal dialogue about leadership competencies.

The directors expressed a number of concerns to me about the philosophical issue of leadership versus management and that the competencies did not make specific recommendations for the role of a manager. At the second meeting, a couple of the directors made the comment that there are good managers without leadership skills and that leadership and management competencies are exclusive of each other (see Appendix III). After this meeting I was left wondering whether it was just a philosophical question regarding the difference between managers and leaders, or whether there was real cultural resistance in the City to the development of leadership skills throughout the organization. Zenger and Folkman (2002) acknowledged that some organizations differentiate between management development and leadership development, but they cautioned that few people had the luxury of functioning in one role exclusive of the other. They say that most positions of authority require a mix of both leadership and management activities, connected in obvious and subtle ways. Zenger and Folkman (2002) used the analogy of a tennis camp where the instructor focused only on the forehand stroke, then told the participants to come back later and learn the backhand stroke. There is a difference in the strokes but you need both skills to play tennis. Zenger and Folkman (2002) inferred that the skills of leadership
and management are similar to the skills of tennis. In organizations you need both leadership and management skills to function successfully.

The literature review for this project indicates that the support of the executive and senior management is necessary for the success of a leadership development program and a succession process (Byham et al., 2002; Rioux & Bernthal, 1999; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a; Zenger & Folkman, 2002). If the City of North Vancouver wants to embark on a leadership/succession plan process it will be necessary for the Directors’ Team to be involved in the process and to give its support to the initiative. The Directors’ Team will need to see the value and embrace a plan that includes the development of leadership skills, as well as the more tactical skills of management (Zenger & Folkman, 2002).

Study Recommendations

Recommendation One - CNV Leadership Model as a Standardized Base Model

Through this research project I have concluded that all leadership competency models are somewhat characteristic. Therefore I believe that the model created by the twenty-one research participants forms an excellent base for the other departments of the City of North Vancouver. The model defines blocks of competencies and behaviours desirable for leaders in the City of North Vancouver. During this research project the CNV model was cross-referenced with five different competency models. The CNV model illustrated that while the language was different and some of the behaviours were aligned differently, the essential building blocks of each leadership competency model was similar. According to Zenger and Folkman, “what makes for success in one firm is a carbon copy of what causes success in another” (2002, p. 97). Therefore I recommend that this leadership model become the basis of an organization-wide leadership competency model.
The Finance department leadership competency model is ready to implement immediately, and I recommend that it be adopted and become the basis of a leadership development process as well as other HR initiatives as outlined in this project.

While I believe that the CNV model will become the base, I recommend that there should be a process for each department to examine their own leadership model. By inviting members of each department to examine and discuss the model, the adoption of the leadership competency model will more successful. In addition, there would be the opportunity for self-discovery and reflection within the other departments. Therefore I recommend that each department create a focus group to discuss the CNV leadership competency model. Using an appreciative inquiry approach, the department should discuss the language and implications of the leadership competencies and how best to integrate the behaviours in their department. Each department should be invited to contribute to the list of specific behaviours that reflect their department but align with the base CNV leadership competency model. I believe that this will satisfy the request of the Directors’ Team for some flexibility in the model for their different departments. The focus group will also identify which competencies are of greater importance to their department. Yukl agreed that it was important to be flexible about leadership behaviour competencies and not assume that we already know which competencies are the most useful (2002, p. 46-47). Through self-discovery, each department will benefit from the process as it amplifies and reinforces the leadership competencies in the model, and the process itself becomes an impetus for change (Bushe, 1995).

While it is important to include department members in a process of examination of the model, it would benefit the City to keep some standardization of the model throughout the organization. Standardization will assist the City in meeting its objective of using leadership
competencies in the development of a succession plan process. A standard organization-wide model will allow greater flexibility in creating organizational development programs and assist in career, succession and placement planning throughout the organization (Byham & Moyer, 1996).

*The City of North Vancouver Competency Model*

The following competency model was created using the data collected in this research project.

**Personal Attributes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethics</th>
<th>Values – Accountability, Behavioural Excellence, Leadership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Goals</strong> – Customer Goal, Internal Functioning, Innovation and Learning Goal</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Trustworthiness</td>
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<td>▪ Integrity</td>
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<td>▪ Sincerity</td>
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<td>▪ Honesty</td>
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<td>▪ Fairness to all</td>
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<td>▪ Strong work ethic of self and others</td>
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<td>▪ Understanding of gender issues</td>
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<td>▪ Demonstration of discretion</td>
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| **Focused – Self Direction** |
| Values – Accountability |
| **Strategic Goal** – Internal Functioning, Financial |
| ▪ Self Directed Learner |
| ▪ Plans ahead |
| ▪ Can organize time and commitments |
| ▪ Stays on track and finishes what needs to be done |

| Respect |
| Values – Behavioural Excellence, Service Excellence, Leadership |
| **Strategic Goals** – Internal Functioning, Customer Goal, Innovation and Learning |
| ▪ Respectful of all |
| ▪ Earns the respect of all |

| Finance Department |
| ▪ Respected by accounting peers |
### Interpersonal Skills

#### Communication Skills

**Values** – Communication

**Strategic Goal** – Customer, Internal Functioning,

- Clearly defines expectations
- Has good oral and written skills
- Clearly demonstrates how each person’s job contributes to organizational vision
- Communicates with all sectors and levels
- Allows others time to reflect to come to consensus
- Has own vision and communicates it
- Assists others in finding the answers
- Maintains open door policy
- Facilitates two-way communication

**Finance Department**

- Is visible to all City employees
- Uses plain language to explain financial procedures

#### Listening Skills

**Values** – Communication, Behavioural Excellence

**Strategic Goal** – Customer, Internal Functioning

- Is a good active listener (people feel heard)
- Has time for everyone
- Has a structure in place for questions and information

**Finance Department**

- Listens to other departments and is receptive to input

#### Soft Skills – Working with People

**Values** – Behavioural Excellence, Leadership, Accountability, Service Excellence, Communication

**Strategic Goals** – Internal Functioning, Innovation and Learning

- Demonstrates a positive attitude
- Is patient and empathetic toward others
- Is approachable
- Is friendly
- Is flexible
- Is compassionate
- Sits back at times
- Handles pressure
- Engages with staff, does not appear aloof
- Is conscientious
- Is not critical
- Is supportive, offers a safety net for staff
Focus on Results

<table>
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<th><strong>Creative Problem Resolution</strong></th>
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<th><strong>Responsible and Accountable</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
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<th><strong>Visionary and Innovative</strong></th>
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Organizational Leadership

**Understands the Big Picture**

**Values** – Service Excellence, Leadership, Communication

**Strategic Goals** – Customer Goal, Financial Goal, Innovation and Learning, Internal Functioning

- Supports the City’s longer strategic plan
- Understands the community, the customer and stakeholder relationships with the City
- Demonstrates an understanding of the roles/responsibilities of others and communicates it to the team
- Understands the operations and objectives of all City departments
- As a leader, is able to access other leaders
- Understands how decisions impact other departments

**Finance Department**

- Supports a sustainable City
- Supports corporate and community agendas
- Knows the stakeholders of the finance department
- Makes financial decisions for the health of the organization

**Confidence and Courage**

**Values** – Leadership, Behavioural Excellence, Communication

**Strategic Goals** – Financial, Innovation and Learning, Customer, Internal Functioning

- Demonstrates leadership skills even in difficult situations
- Makes tough decisions
- Embraces change
- Demonstrates courage in admitting that an idea did not work out
- Not afraid of idea rejection
- Understands internal and external politics and makes it work
- Questions status quo
- Gives Council their best professional advice
- Challenges people to be their best
- Delegates and asks for help when needed
- Embraces differences in individuals and skills
- Is comfortable around subordinates with more/different knowledge/skills
- Demonstrates confidence in own skills and the skills of others
- Leads by example and through own behaviour; exemplifies the values of the organization

**Mentorship and Developing Others**

**Values** – Leadership, Communication, Behavioural Excellence, Service Excellence, Accountability

**Strategic Goals** – Innovation and Learning, Internal Functioning, Financial
- Recognizes strengths in others and encourages development
- Listens and gives feedback
- Values the opinions of others
- Demonstrates a personal interest in staff
- Encourages staff education and growth; recognizes their accomplishments
- Encourages staff in pursuit of organizational goals and objectives
- Flexible in his/her work and the work of others
- Empowers staff at all levels
- Encourages development of future department leaders
- Motivates staff
- Encourages staff to take risks and allows others to make mistakes
- Enables staff to self manage; take responsibility for own work
- Makes work challenging and exciting
- Demonstrates pride in staff and rewards performance
- Assists in the development of goals and objectives for each position
- Encourages independence
- Acts as a mentor

**Team Development**

**Values** – Communication, Leadership, Behavioural Excellence

**Strategic Goals** – Innovation and learning, Internal functioning

- Is a team player within own department and with other City departments
- Motivates and empowers team to achieve the City goals
- Works with others as opposed to having people work for them
- Works well with others to create a harmonious team
- Builds a vision for the team and helps them support it
- Recognizes staff and celebrates success
- Demonstrates interest in other City employees
- Demonstrates empathy and support of staff in both private and public
- Demonstrates value for staff

**Finance Department**

- Demonstrates Finance assistance and support to/for other departments

**Knowledge Sharing**

**Values** – Leadership, Communication, Behavioural Excellence, Service Excellence, Accountability

**Strategic Goals** – Innovation and Learning, Internal Functioning, Financial

- Creates a culture of information and knowledge sharing
- Creates one-on-one opportunities to share information
## Professional Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professionally Qualified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong> – Service Excellence, Behavioural Excellence, Leadership, Accountable</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategic Goals</strong> – Financial, Internal Functioning, Innovation and Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Understands and is experienced in municipal government</td>
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<td>▪ Demonstrates good management skills and embraces latest management and leadership information</td>
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<td>▪ Presents a professional image to others</td>
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<td>▪ Demonstrates and practises coping strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Embraces technology and keeps abreast of changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Understands Government regulations and keeps abreast</td>
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### Financial Department

| ▪ Is an accounting professional with good financial administration skills |
| ▪ Demonstrates Finance Stewardship according to the Local Government Act |

### Financial Leadership

| **Values** – Accountability, Leadership, Service Excellence |
| **Strategic Goals** – Financial, Customer, Internal Functioning, Innovation and Learning |
| ▪ Acts as a Steward for the Finance Department |
| ▪ Acts as a leader among other North Shore and Regional Financial Officers |
| ▪ Is fiscally responsible, administers financial controls |
| ▪ Understands possible funding sources |
| ▪ Assists and motivates all City departments to look for different ways to do things, while delivering better service |
| ▪ Creates a sustainable financial environment |
| ▪ Protects City’s funds and assets while optimizing City’s finances |
| ▪ Is skilled in investment and maintenance of City funds |
| ▪ Educates others about financial process and procedures |
Leadership Competencies and Job/Role Competencies

With the City’s leadership competency model as the base for the overall organization, each job/role would link to this base model. Together a job/role competency model is created. Each role will require a different level or definition of the base competencies to be successful for that role (Byham, 1996). For example, the demonstrated behaviour for the CNV competency, “Creative Problem Resolution,” would be different in a front-line job and a higher-level position. The definition of creative problem resolution may change across the organization levels and from department to department. Despite the similarity in the competency list for all the levels, the behaviour requirements for each these positions would be different (Byham, 1996). “There are differences in the leadership behaviours and practices required at different levels of the organization” (Zenger & Folkman, 2002, p. 4). Once the job/role competency model has been developed, each incumbent will have a clearly defined expectation for performance and areas for development.

Aligning the competencies with different roles and jobs.

If each job and role within the City of North Vancouver has different requirements that result in successful performance, how can leadership competencies be aligned with the different jobs? The first step is to identify the competencies required for each job. Byham and Moyer (1996) suggested that there were two approaches that could be used to identify job competencies. One approach focuses on the success of a job performer, and the second approach focuses on what is necessary to perform a job well. The first approach (performer focused) looks at high-performing job incumbents and seeks to identify which competencies result in their success. Byham and Moyer (1996) did not recommend this approach since the individual in the job would likely have moulded the job to maximize and lever his/her personal strengths. This would result
in a job competency model that would be biased to the present incumbent and would not necessarily bring about future performance success with another incumbent.

The second approach is job-performance focused. Each job would be analyzed to seek the common elements that are required for successful performance. This approach separates the success of one person from the requirements of the job and results in a more accurate picture of what a person must do to succeed (Byham & Moyer, 1996). The result is a clear understanding of how job success is obtained. To understand how to perform well in a job, several people need to participate in an analysis. Byham and Moyer recommended that the analysis include a range of people “fully functioning in the job/role who can provide information…how they spend their time…[and] managers above the target job/role who can provide critical incidents related to specific examples of effective and ineffective job performance” (1996, p. 19).

While I prefer the appreciative inquiry approach to discovering, understanding and amplifying the best job practices and processes, Byham and Moyer (1996) suggested there was value in identifying what leads to ineffective performance. They continued “Researchers have long noted that the reasons for job failure are not the mirror image of the reasons for job success” (1996, p. 19). By assessing and comparing superior and average performance, competencies are identified which result in both outstanding and average performance. By assessing and comparing superior and ineffective performance, Byham and Moyer suggested that important information will be identified as to what leads to “both highly effective (superior) and ineffective job performance” (1996, p. 19). “When only effective and average performance are examined, valuable data is lost” (Byham & Moyer, 1996, p. 19).

After the competencies have been identified for each job, and later in the program development, a behavioural anchored rating scale can link job performance with the job
requirements. At that time the City needs to determine which scale is the most appropriate to achieve the organizational objectives. Byham and Moyer used performance descriptors such as outstanding, superior, effective, acceptable, successful, ineffective and poor (1996, p. 20). The rating scale has to be carefully considered for effective use of the job/role competencies identified (Byham et al., 2002).

A Likert scale lets evaluators make judgements relative to a competency description. Such a scale could rate competency performance on a scale of 1-5. For example: 5) Much more than acceptable; 4) More than acceptable; 3) Acceptable; 2) Less than acceptable; 1) Much less than acceptable (Byham et al., 2002). Development Dimensions International (DDI) uses the following a behavioural scale: “5) Excels in all key actions; 4) Excels in some but not all key actions; 3) Performs well in the most important/critical key actions; 2) Performs well in some key actions; 1) Performs adequately in basic key actions” (cited in Byham et al., 2002, p. 99). In their learning competency assessment, Royal Roads University uses the following behavioural scale: 5) “Exemplary performance; 4) Consistently exceeded expectations in demonstrating…the outcome; 3) Consistently demonstrated the…outcome; 2) Occasionally demonstrated the…outcome; 1) Failed to demonstrate the…outcome” (2003, p. 84). Zenger and Folkman use a different scale, a four-stage model that links competencies with stages of individual growth. The four stages are: Stage I) Depending on others; Stage II) Contributing independently; Stage III) Contributing through others; Stage IV) Leading through vision. Regardless of which type of model is used, it is important to develop clear scales that are easy to use and that allow for reliable and consistent evaluation of an individual’s competency performance (Byham et al., 2002; Byham & Moyar, 1996; Zenger & Folkman, 2002). This creates a clear and effective job/role competency model.
Recommendation Two – Linking Leadership Competencies to Succession Planning

“We cannot be what we want to be by remaining what we are” (Max Depree in Byham et al., 2002, p. 15).

The City of North Vancouver’s succession-planning activities need to link clearly to the organization’s strategic plan, a competency evaluation process and a leadership development program throughout the organization (Byham et al., 2002; Byham & Moyer, 1996; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a; Zenger & Folkman, 2002). “Succession planning and leadership development are two elements of the same process” (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a, p. 3).

Using the leadership competency model as a guide, the City needs to start by looking inward at its current employees and identifying individuals with high potential (Byham et al., 2002; Zenger & Folkman, 2002). Since the competency model has been aligned with the strategic plan of the organization, the City has a map to find its future leaders and talent (See Figure 3). Byham et al. (2002) recommended that the identification of talent be an active process rather than an emergent process. Therefore the City needs to seek out potential leaders within their organization (Byham et al., 2002; Zenger & Folkman, 2002).

This is an excellent time for the City to look at its organizational development needs. The process requires a commitment from the senior management level (Byham et al., 2002; Zenger & Folkman, 2002; Rioux & Bernthal, 1999; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a). By looking at the leadership competency model and the strategic plan and objectives, the current senior level of the organization can determine what talent they need to fulfill the future targets. The opportunity exits to lever the strengths and develop the weak areas within the organization, while uncovering the experience and knowledge required for the future (Byham et al., 2002). This proactive planning will result in a more successful leadership/succession process for the City of North
Vancouver. The research project Leadership Forecast completed in 2003 found that organizations with succession management plans have a seventy percent (70%) success rate of identifying the right candidate with potential and experience for long-term success, while organizations without a plan achieved only a forty-nine percent (49%) success of their internal promotions (Bernthal & Wellins, 2003, p. 3). By identifying high-performing talent and gaps in the organization, the process of succession planning begins and the City starts to prepare itself for the future.
Figure 3 – Leadership/Succession Competency Diagram

CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER
Strategic Plan

Vision, Values & Goals

LEADERSHIP
COMPETENCIES

Participants are
identified for
Development

Department
Professional/Job
Skills & Competencies

PROFESSIONAL SKILL
Development
Education & Development
as per Job Description

LEADERSHIP
Development
Competency Based
Development

Pool of
Leadership
& Skill
Talent

SUCCESSION PLAN
Includes identified Leadership
and Professional Skill Development
Individual candidates are at different levels
of development to move into
positions as they become available

City of North Vancouver
Strategic Goals
And Objectives
Leadership/Succession Plan
ensures that the vision is realized
Leadership Competency Development – A Pool of Talent

How can the City identify a pool of talent and prepare future leaders within the organization? Byham et al. (2002) proposed the development of an acceleration pool, rather than hand-picking one or two people for each position. This pool is a group of high-potential, talented candidates for higher-level jobs. The talent pool is a process which is significantly different from creating a list or chart of potential candidates who are pre-selected for positions (Byham et al., 2002; Byham & Moyer, 1996; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a). The City would be wise to look for their talent pool members throughout the organization. A variety of ages and stages of career should be represented (Byham et al., 2002). Zenger and Folkman (2002) contended that most organizations only tap into a fraction of their employees’ potential and suggest that, with training, people will rise to higher levels of performance. The talent pool must engage committed and motivated people who have the potential to fill any one of several senior management positions (Byham et al., 2002; Byham & Moyer, 1996) and the personal desire to undertake and participate in the process (Byham et al., 2002; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a).

“Leadership development is a continuous process – not a one-time event” (Byham et al., 2002, p. v). Creating a talent pool requires a commitment by the City of North Vancouver to a process of leadership and job or skill development that seeks to meet the strategic objectives of the organization. The most important role of a leader is to produce excellent results and those results must align with the organization’s strategy (Zenger & Folkman, 2002). The talent pool will develop leaders through a process that increases their skills and stretches their abilities, gives regular feedback and provides mentoring and coaching. The benefit of a talent pool is that it focuses on skill and knowledge development and it eliminates senior managements’ deciding “Who’s going to back up whom in the organization” (Byham et al., 2002).
Byham et al. (2002) recommended that people be nominated to the pool by each division of the organization, based upon job performance, leadership development potential and a set of organizational criteria that is both current and future focused. A committee would then review the nominees against the defined criteria and, as a group, decide who is invited into the pool. Once a pool member has been selected, the process of the program is explained and the member has the opportunity to decide whether s/he will join the pool (Byham et al., 2002: Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a). Byham et al. (2002) cautioned that there should be no stigma attached to a nominee opting out of the pool, since many personal considerations must be weighed by the nominee before accepting a place in the talent pool.

The talent pool process, defined by Byham et al. (2002), consists of the following stages:

1. Nominating, Identifying High Potentials
2. Diagnosing Development Opportunities
3. Prescribing Solutions to Development Opportunities
4. Ensuring that Development takes Place – Documenting Development
5. Reviewing Progress & New Assignment (p. 20)

Steeves & Ross-Denroche (2003) agreed that organizations must commit to a process of an “integrated and progressive succession and leadership-development planning system” (p. 3). Their process model integrating succession planning and leadership development suggests results that include:

- Individuals in place who have leadership capabilities that will sustain present and future strategies.
- Succession initiatives that are measurable and results-driven.
- A high-performance culture that attracts and retains people who can support the strategic plan. This culture includes strong leaders who develop future leaders.
- A results-orientated planning process that encourages accountability for development (p. 3).

Figure 4 – Model of Succession Planning and Leadership Development

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An Integrated Model of Succession Planning and Leadership
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Leadership Competency and Other HR Initiatives

Various human resources activities can be tied to the job/role competency models (Byham, 1996; Byham & Moyer, 1996). Once the City of North Vancouver has adopted the competency model system, it can be used for many other initiatives including candidate selection, promotion, training and development programs, performance management, feedback and career planning. Cook and Bernthal (1998) agreed “competencies are critical system building blocks” (¶8). They found that seventy-five percent (75%) of their research respondents used competencies to support selection, promotion, training and development; sixty-five percent (65%) of respondents linked the competencies to performance management systems; and over half of respondents linked the competencies to career planning and succession planning. By adopting a Job or Skill Leadership Competency program, the City of North Vancouver will have a concise process for many of their HR initiatives.

Recommendation Three – Commitment of the City Manager and the Directors’ Team

Before the process even begins, the Directors’ Team needs to commit to the leadership development and the succession plan process. As outlined in Chapter One of this project, the City is facing a leadership crisis. It is predicted that retirement for City staff averages 11.2 people per year for the period 2002-2006 (Shore, 2002). The Directors Team must face this crisis immediately. Then they must come to an agreement about the outcomes that they expect from a succession plan (Byham et al., 2002; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a), and they need to see the alignment of the competency model with the strategic plan. It will be important for the entire team to understand why a succession plan process is important for the City and they must move forward to prevent the impending leadership crisis. They must see the value of the process and...
how it relates to the achievement of the organizational goals (Byham et al., 2002; Rioux & Bernthal, 1999; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a).

According to Byham et al. (2002), the CEO of an organization plays the most important part in the outcome of a succession program. The commitment and backing of the City Manager, as the executive member of the Directors’ Team, is paramount to the future development of City leaders and the succession plan. Byham et al. (2002) made the following recommendations for the CEO and the senior management team:

- Establish defined succession outcomes – align with the organization’s strategic plan.
- Demand measurement – periodical measurement of the succession plan against the strategic goals.
- Ensure alignment with key stakeholders – the City Manager, the Directors’ Team and the departments will be affected by the process and are therefore important to its success.
- Create a vision for the talent pool and an operation plan – the Directors’ Team and City Manager need to make some basic decisions about the pool, the size, the investment in training and when the pool will be implemented.
- Establish an Executive Board to review the candidates – determine who will facilitate the decision about who gets into the pool and how they will develop.
- Assure the best people get nominated for the pool – the Directors’ Team needs to commit to a process that looks for the best and brightest.
- Ensure priority is given to succession activities such as Executive Board meetings, and members of the Directors’ Team need to be active on the board.
- Act as a mentor for one talent pool member.
Support the talent pool system in all promotional decisions all promotions should go through the Executive Board using an agreed-upon promotional system. If a promotion is being considered, ask if that the person is a member of the talent pool, or if a talent pool member has been considered.

Meet one-on-one with talent pool members – breakfast meetings, lunches or small groups will let the City Manager and Directors’ Team share their thoughts with the pool members and give them an opportunity to get to know the members.

Attend and participate in talent pool training events – the participation of the City Manager and the Directors’ Team will help to motivate and retain valuable people.
CHAPTER FIVE – RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Organizational Implementation

Implementing a leadership competency model and a leadership development/succession plan process in the City of North Vancouver will require a good change management process. Change management is about helping the people in the organization through a change, proactively managing the process to achieve the desired result (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). From an organizational perspective, the business case clearly points to the need to identify leadership competencies and to the adoption of a leadership development/succession plan process to meet the demand for new management; however, this is a new initiative for the City. The City must move forward to prevent their impending leadership crisis. The employees throughout the City will be impacted by the adoption of the leadership competency model, the implementation of a leadership development program and the creation of a succession plan process. Management will need to equip their people with the tools necessary to help them understand and accept the importance of the new processes.

Change is a process that can be broken down into time periods or phases. Strategies need to be adapted for each phase (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). Individuals within the City will adopt the leadership competency model, and leadership development/succession plan process at different speeds. The ADKAR change management model characterizes the change process in five steps: 1) Awareness of the need to change; 2) Desire to participate and support the change; 3) Knowledge about how to change; 4) Ability to implement new skills and behaviours; 5) Reinforcement to keep the change in place (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003, p. 36). At the organizational level, this research project has identified the need to develop the competency model and a leadership development/succession plan process. Mr. Shore and the City Manager have
expressed their support of the research results but there remains resistance by the Directors’ Team. At this point, although the leadership crisis is imminent, not all Directors agree with the project. This research project has given the City of North Vancouver the knowledge and specific recommendations for adopting the process. The City will have to identify whether it has the resources and the desire to implement this initiative. If the initiative is adopted, records will need to be kept to reinforce the program and to make process adjustments as required for the future.

For the City to implement the process successfully, it needs to match the adoption of change by its members with the business need that the City must have future leaders and managers in place by the scheduled exodus due to retirement of management and directors. Hiatt and Creasey (2003) cautioned that attention must be paid to the business need and to the employees who were affected by the change. The City must therefore be transparent in implementing this initiative and must recognize that change management activities need to be tailored in all phases of the process (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). Starting with the Directors’ Team, individual change management and leadership development activities need to be put in place to enable it to adapt to the change. The activities include training managers and supervisors to equip them with the tools to assist their employees through the implementation of the leadership competency model and the development of the leadership/succession plan (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003).

Organizational Change Management

Through carefully managing the implementation of the leadership competency model and the leadership/succession plan, the City of North Vancouver will be practising and modelling an important leadership competency, change management. Hiatt and Creasey (2003) stated that the most effective change management process consists of three phases:
Phase 1: Preparing for change → Define change management strategy → Prepare change team → Develop a sponsorship model.

Phase 2: Managing Change → Develop change management plans → Take action and implement plans.

Phase 3: Reinforcing change → Collect and analyze feedback → Diagnose gaps and manage resistance → Implement corrective actions and celebrate successes (p. 63).

Phase 1 – Preparing for Change

This phase features activities to prepare the team to manage change, prepare the business leaders to support the change and create a high-level change management strategy (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). During this phase, the City needs to assess the scope of the change, including the number of departments which are affected by the implementation of this program and whether the program should be implemented gradually or adopted fully at this point.

The first question the City needs to answer is whether or not it is ready to adopt the program at all. They must also understand and accept the impending leadership crisis that exists in the City. If they do not adopt the program how will they get ready as an organization for the mass exodus of management due to retirement? Without using a competency model as the guide, how will the City ensure that they hire the skilled people they need in the future?

The second question is whether the program should be implemented in one department (the City Hall) or across the entire municipal operation. The City will have to (i) determine whether the program fits in with their strategic plan; (ii) assess what other change is going on at this time; and (iii) identify resistance to the adoption of this program. Following this, project resources will need to be acquired and a team put in place to initiate the program. Concurrent with preparing the team, a project champion or sponsor is recommended (Hiatt & Creasey,
2003). The Directors’ Team, as stakeholders in the process, needs to be evaluated for its level of support for the project. This step is the starting point for building sponsorship of the project. The support of the Directors’ Team is paramount for successful implementation of this project.

**Phase 2 – Managing change**

This phase includes the design of the organizational change management plans and leadership change management issues. It starts with an assessment of the directors’ own skills to support and drive the strategies. It then involves the implementation of a communication plan, coaching plans, training plans, sponsor plans and resistance management plans (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). The City’s communication plan should begin by (i) stating the reasons for developing a leadership competency model and a leadership-succession plan, (ii) noting the impact of retiring managers and directors that has made this program necessary; and (iii) explaining why this process has been chosen. The City’s plan should include the current employment challenges that will be faced in attracting and retaining employees in a competitive marketplace (Shore, 2002). The communication must clearly identify the results and risks the City of North Vancouver will face if this program is not implemented.

The communication needs to include messages about the change itself, including: (i) the vision for the change; (ii) the scope of the change; (iii) the objectives for the change; and (iv) the nature of the successful implementation of the program (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). The City’s strategic plan aligns with the development of this program; this too will have to be clearly communicated. It is important to identify those most affected by this program and those least affected, the nature of the change, when it will change and what will not be changing as a result of this initiative (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003).
Communication about how the change affects the employees will be necessary, especially once the program has been adopted. The City must clearly state that implementing the leadership competency model and leadership/succession plan process is not an option but a necessity for the future of the City. The City’s change sponsors must be ready to answer the questions about “What is in it for me” from the perspective of each employee and any implications that the program has for their job security (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). The City will need to be clear what type of behaviours and activities will be expected from the employees, how they can get assistance during the implementation and ways to provide feedback during the process (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003).

During Phase 2 a schedule will need to be developed for the overall project. The schedule must include a timeframe for the project, when new information will be provided, how information will be distributed, and major project milestones (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). The City would benefit by communicating early success stories about the program, and any decisions that have been made in the program implementation.

Key Roles of Senior Management

The City’s supervisors and managers will play key roles throughout the program. It is imperative to the success of the program that the City management supports the program (Byham et al., 2002; Hiatt & Creasey, 2003; Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003a). Once the supervisors and managers are in agreement with the program, the project sponsors need to develop leadership around change management and train the supervisors to use effective change management strategies with their employees. According to change management authors Hiatt and Creasey (2003), training is “the cornerstone for building knowledge about the change and required skills” (p. 70). This means that the City should develop a training program based upon the skills,
knowledge and processes required to implement the leadership competency model and the leadership/succession plan process.

The City can expect resistance from its employees and managers. This is a normal process in change management (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). Ongoing and persistent resistance can threaten the project. Therefore it is important to have an action plan ready to deal with these situations. The project sponsor will need to identify, understand and manage resistance to the project with the goal being to gain support of the employees through the transition (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003).

**Phase 3 – Reinforcing the Change**

At this phase, the results of the change management activities are assessed and any corrective steps are noted (Hiatt & Creasey, 2003). Included in this phase are celebrations of successes and reviews of the process. Hiatt and Creasy (2003) noted that this is the stage where the ownership of the process transfers from the change management team back to the organization and becomes part of the day-to-day operations of the City. By standing back and reviewing the entire program, the City can evaluate its successes or failures and identify process changes for future organizational projects. Hiatt and Creasey (2003) cautioned that it is a mistake to skip this reinforcement phase and missing it can result in a project failure as if no change management practice was implemented at all. Therefore I would recommend that the City of North Vancouver plan to do a project review once the leadership competency model has been implemented and the leadership/succession plan process has been put in place.

**Proposed Project Implementation Checklist**

**Implementing Phase 1 – Preparing for Change.**

Define what is being implemented and what strategy to use:
1. Determine if the Directors’ Team supports the project. Do an assessment of who is and who is not involved. How can we increase their support for the project?

2. What is the scope of this project? Is the project going to be implemented in just one department, throughout the City Administration only, or in the whole organization? Does this include the Fire Department and the RCMP Administration?

3. Is the project graduated? Does it start with the implementation of the leadership competency model, or does the project include the implementation of a leadership/succession plan?

4. Is the City of North Vancouver ready for this project? Does the project align with the values and strategic plan of the organization? Where might there be potential resistance to this project?

Create a Project Team:

1. Acquire the resources for this project.

2. Appoint a lead project facilitator. Will the project facilitator be an external consultant or will the organization assign an internal employee to head up this project? How much time-per-week will the City allocate to the project lead?

3. Who else will sit on the project team? Will there be Directors’ Team representatives on the project team? Will a member of the Human Resources department be a member of the project team?

Develop a Sponsorship Model:

1. Access the team member readiness to lead the project.

2. Identify the stakeholders for the project and their level of support.

3. Train the project team including the project itself and the change management process.
Implementing Phase 2 – Managing the Change.

Change Management Plans:

1. Develop a communication plan. Be able to respond to the following questions: What is the rationale for this project? What business issues are creating the need for this project? What competitive issues in the marketplace are making this project necessary? What might happen if this project is not implemented? What is the organizational vision for this project? What is the scope of the project? How does the project align with the strategic plan? What are the components of the project and when will it happen? What is not changing as a result of this project? How will the project impact employees? What is the impact on day-to-day activities? From the employee’s perspective, what is in it for them? How will this project impact City job security? How can I get help during the implementation of the project? How can I give my feedback? What is the timeframe for the project? When will you be putting out new information? How will I find out that information? What are the project milestones? How will I know if it is going well? Will you share your successes with me?

2. Develop a coaching and training plan. Front line supervisors are key communicators for this project. Use the change management process to prepare the supervisors to meet their challenges and project resistance. Use training to deliver the tools, knowledge and skills necessary for the project.

3. Create a sponsorship plan. Which sponsorship activities can the key leaders in the organization participate in? How can the City Manager demonstrate his support for the project? How can the Directors’ Team show their support for the project? The City Manager and the Directors’ Team will need to show visible support of the project.
4. Prepare a resistance management plan. How can the project team identify, understand and manage resistance throughout the project? Train the project team, using the change management process, to be ready for resistance and expect resistance to the project.

Implementation Plans:

Complete details for implementation are discussed in Chapter 4. Below is an outline of the implementation steps.

1. Adopt the CNV Leadership Competency Model as a standardized base model.

2. Develop Leadership Competency models for each department. Each department needs to create a focus group to examine the base model; using appreciative inquiry, adapt the model for their department. (The Finance department competency model is ready for immediate implementation and this department could serve as a pilot project for leadership development and succession planning.)

3. Link department leadership competencies to job/role competencies within the department using the job performance method. Use the appreciative inquiry research method to amplify the best job practices and processes.

4. Create a behavioural anchored rating scale for each competency to link job performance to the model.

5. Adopt the Leadership/Succession Plan. Use the leadership competency model to look inward and identify individuals with great potential within the organization. (If not developed throughout the whole organization, adopt the program as a pilot project in the Finance department.)

6. Develop a Talent Pool program for developing future leaders within the City. Develop an active process of seeking out talent within the City of North Vancouver.
7. Establish an Executive Board to actively participate in the talent pool program.

8. Link human resources activities to job/role competency models. This includes initiatives such as candidate selection, promotion, training and development programs, performance management, feedback and career planning.
Figure 5 – Implementation Process

Endorsed by Directors’ Team

- Adopt CNV Leadership Competency Model as standardized base

- Develop Leadership Competency Models for each department
  - Create department focus group
  - Link department leadership competencies to job/role competencies
    - Create Behavioural Anchored Rating Scale

- Use job performance method & AI

- Adopt Leadership Development/Succession Plan Using Competency Models

- Actively look for talent in all the City’s departments

- Develop a Talent Pool

- Establish an Executive Board Participates in Talent Pool

- Link HR activities to Job/Role Competency Models
  - Candidate selection
  - Feedback
  - Promotion

- Collect Data Assess Outcomes
  - Training and Development
  - Career Planning
  - Performance Management

- Assess Process

Endorsed by Directors’ Team
Implementing Phase 3 – Reinforcing the Change.

Collect and analyze data:

1. Determine measurable program outcomes and collect data. For example: Has the leadership competency model been adopted for different departments? Does the department use the leadership competency model for candidate selection? Is the model used for other initiatives, such as training and development programs? Collect data on how often the model impacts training decisions. How is the model used in career planning? How often has the model been used in assisting in the identification of talent within the organization? How many people are currently in the talent pool? At what stage of development are the talent pool members?

2. Once the City has determined which organizational outcomes they value and will support the strategic plan, collect the data. Talent pool members should manage their own records and data. The pool member should submit a report to the talent pool Executive Board and its immediate supervisor. Keep an updated record on the individual’s HR file.

3. Survey the management team to collect qualitative data about the leadership competency program and the leadership/succession plan process.

Diagnose gaps and management resistance:

1. Over time, assess the measurable outcomes.

2. Look for patterns of success and concerns from the qualitative survey. Bring the results to the Executive Board, the Directors’ Team and other stakeholders.

3. Are the leadership competency program and the leadership/succession programs being used throughout the organization? Which departments are using the programs; which
departments are not? Follow up and determine what is and what is not working for the supervisors and management.

Implement corrective actions and celebrate successes:

1. Once the data is collected, processes can be put in place to adjust the program to make it more effective for the organization.
2. Share all program successes throughout the organization.

Future Research

The third phase of change management process, “Reinforcing Change,” (outlined above) should be a focus for future research for the City of North Vancouver, in my opinion. At this stage, the City can assess the results of the change management activities used in implementing this project. Also at this stage, collection processes can be implemented to determine whether or not the leadership competency program and the leadership/succession plan programs have been successful. By developing a process that focuses on the measurable outcomes, the City can develop capacity to ensure future organizational success (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003b).

To ensure a useful measurement process, the City must identify the most important program initiatives (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003b). What outcome or outcomes are the most important to the organization? Is the answer the adoption of the leadership competency model throughout the City? Or is it the use of the competency model in identifying and developing leaders? Is it using the competency model for a number of HR initiatives, including performance review, identifying candidates, and/or developing training programs for employees in the organization? Or is the desired outcome to create a talent pool from which the City can draw successful leadership candidates? The City could decide to measure several of these outcomes. It is important for the City to determine the desired outcomes and then work backwards to create a
measurement process. “The gap between the desired future goals and the present reality must be defined” (Steeves & Ross-Denroche, 2003b, p. 3).

Steeves and Ross-Denroche (2003b) outlined a measurement process using the following steps:

1. Define the desired organizational outcome.
2. Break the organizational outcome into the desired results for individuals, groups and the organization.
3. Ensure the process is desired with the outcomes in mind.
4. Measure the changes and results, individually and collectively.
5. Correlate the two forms of measurement.
6. Integrate the results into the organizational results. (p. 3)

Developing and implementing new organizational programs takes time. Competency based programs are not quickly measurable. Byham et al. (2002) cautioned that people improve at their own speed, depending on their motivation and the time available to develop, the difficulty of the new skill and their personal life situation. Programs to develop and grow leadership competencies and develop leaders within the City are long-term projects. Therefore when the City develops measurement processes it would be beneficial to use several different methods.

Zenger and Folkman (2002) recommended continual feedback as a measurement process for individual development. They listed 360-degree feedback, frequent performance discussions, team-building session, and coaching relationships as mechanisms for feedback. Some of the most simple and valuable feedback and measurements are letting people know how they are doing, where their strengths lie, what deficiencies they have or what mistakes have been made.
Zenger and Folkman (2002) advocated making development part of the organizational culture, and building accountability into the process. They suggested two markers: (i) that program participants be held accountable to integrate their learning; and (ii) that they demonstrate concrete business indicators such as productivity improvement, revenue generation, customer satisfaction, cost reduction or employee retention as indicators that they have implemented their learning.

Steeves and Ross-Denroche (2003b) suggested that there is real value in attempting to measure the impact of a leadership development program. Their research indicated that the City should look for both organizational and individual outcomes. Through continual assessment and measurement of the program initiatives, the City can make adjustments in the program to meet organizational needs. The result will be an effective leadership development process that will position the City to meet its strategic objectives.
CHAPTER SIX – LESSONS LEARNED

Research Project Lessons Learned

The focus of this research project rose out of several conversations that I had in August 2003 with Richard Shore, Director of Human Resources for the City of North Vancouver. I had approached Mr. Shore about sponsorship for my major project. I was interested in studying organizational social capital and how the relationships that are formed within an organization are a true asset to the organization. I was specifically interested in how the social interactions arising from relationships would lead to both the transfer of knowledge within an organization and the creation of new knowledge. Mr. Shore was interested but he had a more pressing problem. The City of North Vancouver was faced with a significant number of its management and directors retiring in the next few years. Mr. Shore was interested in keeping knowledge in the organization, but he needed to look at developing and finding new leaders. After several conversations, Mr. Shore and I decided that there was the opportunity for a project that would benefit both of us and he agreed to sponsor my research project. He wanted to look at competency based leadership programs and succession planning. He also wanted to see how the City could keep and transfer some of the organizational knowledge that was going to leave with the retirees. After much thought and discussion, Mr. Shore and I carved out an exciting leadership project that would benefit the City of North Vancouver and meet the criteria for this Royal Roads program.

Start at the Top

“One of the myths of management is that good strategic planning and an appropriate vision will ensure an institution’s future…this simply isn’t enough. Only the effective selection, nurture, and assignment of senior people will secure an institution. When I ask myself about the
future of an organization, this is my answer: Senior Leaders are the future” (DePree, 1992, p. 208-209).

It was difficult to narrow the scope of this project so that it could be completed within the time available. To narrow the scope, Mr. Shore and I decided that we needed to focus the project on one department only. Terry Christie, Director of Finance, agreed to participate in the project and he became the third member of the research team. Mr. Shore, Mr. Christie and I decided that the project would start by identifying leadership competencies that are valued by the City of North Vancouver, and the research would determine the leadership competencies for the Finance Department. Mr. Shore sent out an electronic communication to the Directors’ Team of the City of North Vancouver notifying them of the project.

September 4th, 2003, I made a presentation to the Finance Department to introduce the project that was going to take place with the help of their department. The feedback was very positive and over half the department volunteered to participate in the project. On September 8th, 2003, I was invited to the Directors’ Team strategic planning meeting to give a presentation on the project. The feedback from this meeting was mixed. They wanted to see me succeed personally, but they didn’t agree with the topic. There was resistance to the theory that leadership development and succession planning are part of the same process. A couple of the participants wanted to discuss leadership theory and the different styles of leadership. Most participants wanted to keep the conversation focused on their own personal philosophy of leadership and their definition of succession planning. Looking back, I see the resistance. There were a number of things I could have done. I could have started my data collection by researching the members of Directors’ Team. I could have had a focus group with their team. I could have had some discussion and learning days to talk about how leadership development and succession planning
fit together. I missed this opportunity, however we began the very valuable dialogue focused around leadership.

The research project was to focus on creating a leadership competency model for the City and for the Finance Department. The competency model was supposed to be the first step in creating a leadership/succession plan process. I neglected to ask the Directors’ Team if this was something that they, as leaders of the organization, even wanted. Richard Shore and Terry Christie wanted the model, but did the rest of the Directors’ Team?

The City of North Vancouver was in the process of developing its strategic plan. One of the values in this strategic plan was “Leadership – We value leadership that inspires the best from everyone” (CNV, 2003, p. 1). I did not ask them to explain what this meant to them. I made an assumption that I understood what it meant. Today, I see that discussion should have started by clarifying this value.

Understanding Culture.

In January 2004 I was invited on two occasions to meet with the Directors’ Team. The first of these meetings was to present my research findings and to present the leadership competency model. Again the feedback from the Directors was mixed. Several of the Directors wanted to discuss the difference between managers and leaders. They were not sure how the leadership model would fit into their management positions. I was invited back to a second meeting with the explicit purpose of discussing the difference between management and leadership. This was another warning sign that we were not all in agreement. I had assumed that since the strategic plan listed leadership as a value, that the City would want their managers to also be leaders. Was the culture of the organization resistant to leadership development?

According to Steeves (2002) it is important to be aware of the culture of an organization and
“what elements of this culture may facilitate effective leadership behaviours – and what might get in the way” (p. 2).

I thought that the adaptability of the model and the recommendations that I was making to use the model as a starting point for each department would align with the City’s value, called leadership. I had not asked the Directors’ Team to interpret this value for me. Again I had made an assumption without asking for their input, and I had not effectively communicated my understanding of the value.

Steeves (2002) cautioned that organizations that want more effective managers should not embark on a leadership development process. Steeves (2002) advised that “any organization contemplating leadership development is to go in with…eyes open” (p. 2). She suggested that organizations may not fully understand what they are asking for. “Unless senior management truly recognizes and embraces the behavioural changes that will inevitably result from any successful investment in leadership development, such an initiative will likely do more harm than good” (Steeves, 2002, p. 2). As a researcher I should have enquired to see if the Directors’ Team supported the leadership development initiative. Hiatt and Creasey (2003) in their research about change management wrote, “Often business leaders fall into the trap of communicating broad and general messages about change….The natural reaction to change, even in the best circumstances, is to resist” (p. 53). However I believe that I have provided a valuable research project for the City of North Vancouver that will help them prepare for the massive exodus of retirees over the next few years. At this point of the project it is now up to the City to decide what will be their next steps. They need to acknowledge the Directors Team resistance to developing their own leaders, and either move forward to overcome this obstacle, or develop another plan to prepare them for the future.
**Impact on the Action Steps**

Once I realized that I had not successfully included the senior management in the process, I understood that I needed to pause and review change management theory for the implementation plan for this project. The feedback that I was getting from the Directors’ Team pointed back to the research of change management. I needed to determine the root cause for their resistance to this project and the steps that needed to be implemented. The implementation strategies that I have suggested in Chapter 5 fully reflect this realization. It was necessary for me to outline steps that would be remedial change management actions. Also outlined in Chapter 5 are the key roles and support that is necessary for the City Manager and the senior managers.

Hiatt and Creasey (2003) recommended using a structured change management process at the beginning of a business change to avoid having to do damage control and “fire-fight.” They acknowledged that in reality it is not always possible to initiate the process at the beginning of a project. The process outlined in their research is flexible enough that it can be adjusted to fit the project lifecycle. This project is early enough in the cycle that change management activities can successfully be implemented. However, before the project goes any further it will be necessary to use a change management process and to gain the support of the Directors’ Team.

**Be Careful What You Measure**

One of the original objectives of this project was to identify ideal leadership competencies for the Finance Department and then, through a second survey, measure whether or not the identified behaviours were visible. The intent was to do a leadership competency gap analysis, establish a baseline and make leadership development recommendations for the Finance Department. After creating the leadership competency model I had doubts about the value of doing the gap analysis. If the intention was to measure observable leadership behaviours, then
who exactly was the survey measuring? The survey did not specifically identify the focus of the measurement. It was intended to be a general observation of the department. I was concerned that the responses to the questions would not be general. The person filling out the survey would likely have one specific person or situation in mind when responding to the questions. If the data was negative then there would be no way of knowing the cause of the feedback, and no way to take remedial action. There was also the risk that people on the leadership team in the Finance Department would feel threatened by a negative response that was not intended for them personally. The opposite of that would be a positive response which reflected on the entire team, giving them a false, rosy picture of their current competencies and limiting development opportunities.

Upon reflection I realized that there was little research value in the second survey. There was no plan in place for the results of the second survey other than to give a generalized statement of the current general leadership behaviours. After reviewing the Ethical Principles of the American Psychological Association, I was concerned that there would be conflict with Principle Seven: “A research procedure may not be used if it is likely to cause serious and lasting harm to participants” (APA in Palys, 1997, p. 91). I also thought that there was a conflict with Principle Nine: “Where research procedures may result in undesirable consequences for the participant, the investigator has the responsibility to detect and remove or correct those consequences” (APA in Palys, 1997, p. 92). For the purpose of this project, I interpreted the word “participant” to include the research study focus, the Finance Department. Palys (1997) noted that a researcher should always “leave a situation better for your having been there” (p. 116). In good conscience, I could not proceed with the second survey. After presenting my concerns to the Research Team, they agreed to the change in procedure.
REFERENCES


http://www.ddiworld.com/pdf/COMPETEN.pdf


http://www.cnv.org/CityOrg/

http://www.cnv.org/CityOrg/FinanceOverview.htm


http://learn.royalroads.ca/openwebresources/malt/intro1_fm.htm


APPENDICES

Appendix I: Stakeholder Survey

Informed Consent – Stakeholder Survey Group

You have volunteered to participate in the Stakeholder Survey for my research project, "Creating a Leadership - Succession Plan." I appreciate your interest in this project.

The purpose of this research is to create a leadership plan process for the City of North Vancouver. This process starts with creating a list of leadership competencies. Your involvement will help to create a list of leadership competencies that are valued by the City of North Vancouver and by the Finance Department.

Time Commitment for this project:
Your involvement will take approximately 1 hour to complete the Stakeholder Survey. You are invited to solicit input from other members of your department. I would estimate that this would add another 1-2 hours to the time commitment.

The data from the Stakeholder Survey will be compiled to start creating a list of Leadership Competencies for the City of North Vancouver, Finance Department. Once the data has been compiled into a document, you will be sent a copy of the document to see if I have captured the input from the surveys. I do not anticipate your review of the document to take longer than 1 hour of your time.

The survey data will be reviewed by the Finance Department Focus Group. The Focus will work with me to create the leadership competencies for their department.

You will be asked to participate in a final survey in early January. The plan is to distribute this survey electronically. Your time commitment will be approximately 30-45 minutes to complete this survey.

Your total time commitment is anticipated to be less than 5 hours over 3 months.

Your right to withdraw:
Your participation in this project is strictly voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this project at any time. Your right to participate or not participate will be kept confidential. You have the right to withdraw at any time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements.

Confidentiality:
Information will be summarized by me, in an anonymous format. The summaries will be used in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to you or any other individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand.

The final project will be housed at Royal Roads University and will be publicly accessible.

Verification of Project:
To verify my credentials as a student with Royal Roads University you may telephone either Dr. Gerry Nixon, Dean of Royal Roads at (250) xxx-xxxx or Ms. Angella Wilson, Coordinator MALT (250)xxx-xxxx.

My Project Faculty Supervisor is Barbara Ross-Denroche. She can be reached via email at barb@exceptionalleadership.com, or telephone at 604-XXX-XXXX.
Stakeholder Survey #1 Questions

The Research Question:
How can the City of North Vancouver identify future leaders in the Finance Department, and retain and accrue knowledge to the benefit of the organization?

Do not respond to this question! Your responses to the following four questions will assist the researcher in answering the research question.

Question # 1
I have reviewed the Consent Document that accompanies this survey. I agree that I am giving my free and informed consent to participate in this survey.

Stakeholder Response:
________________________________________________________________

For the following three questions you are being asked to represent your views and the views of your department in your responses to these questions. You are invited to solicit input from other members of your department and to answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Question # 2
What do you value in the “ideal” leader for the City of North Vancouver? What specific skills, behaviours, traits, knowledge, attitudes and abilities would be ideal in a leader? If possible please give examples. (Have you seen examples of this “ideal” leader either in the City or elsewhere? Use this leader to describe the skills, behaviours, traits, knowledge, attitudes and abilities etc., that would make the ideal leader for the City.)

Stakeholder Response:
________________________________________________________________

Question #3
What do you value in the “ideal” leader in the Finance Department of the City of North Vancouver? What specific, behaviours, traits, knowledge, attitudes and abilities would be ideal for a leader in this department? Please give examples. If you have seen “ideal” leadership, please give examples (without names) of how these values have been
demonstrated. (If you have seen this leader in another department or another organization, describe how this leader would be “ideal” in the Finance Department.)

Stakeholder Response:

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**Question #4**

Please give examples of how the FUTURE “ideal” leader in the Finance Department would behave? What would this future leader do? The future is defined as 2005 and beyond. (Have you seen examples elsewhere, of the ideal future leader? Describe how this leader would be the ideal future leader for the Finance Department.)

Stakeholder Response:

---

**Question #5**

As people retire from the City of North Vancouver, there will be a tremendous loss of knowledge. Much of this knowledge is stored within the people retiring or leaving their positions.

How can the leadership of the City ensure that knowledge is transferred and captured within? Please give examples.

Stakeholder Response:
Appendix II: Focus Group Consent

Email – Consent Form
Focus Group

Thank you to each of you for volunteering today during my project presentation. You have volunteered to participate in the Focus Group for my research project "Creating a Leadership/Succession Plan." I appreciate your interest in this project.

The purpose of this research is to create a leadership plan process for the City of North Vancouver. This process starts with creating a list of leadership competencies. Your involvement will help to create a list of leadership competencies that are valued by the City of North Vancouver and by the Finance Department.

Time Commitment for this project:
Your involvement will take approximately 3 hours for the Focus Group, tentatively scheduled in late November. You will be notified via email of the date once it has been set.

The data from the Focus Group will be compiled to create a list of Leadership Competencies for the City of North Vancouver, Finance Department. Once the data has been compiled into a document, you will be sent a copy of the document to see if I have captured the input from the group. I do not anticipate your review of the document to take longer than 1 hour of your time.

You will be asked to participate in a final survey in early January. The plan is to distribute this survey electronically. Your time commitment will be approximately 30-45 minutes to complete this survey.

Your total time commitment is anticipated to be less than 5 hours over 3 months.

Your right to withdraw:
Your participation in this project is strictly voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this project at any time. This being said I would appreciate that if you attend the Focus Group that you schedule the time to be available for the full 3 hours. However during the Focus Group, if you are uncomfortable with the process or with participating in the Focus Group, you have the right to withdraw during the session.

Your right to participate or not participate will be kept confidential. You have the right to withdraw at any time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements.

Confidentiality:
Information will be recorded by audio and then summarized by me, in an anonymous format. The summaries will be used in the body of the final report. At no time will any specific comments be attributed to you or any other individual unless specific agreement has been obtained beforehand.

The final project will be housed at Royal Roads University and will be publicly accessible.

Verification of Project:
To verify my credentials as a student with Royal Roads University you may telephone either XXXX of Royal Roads at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or XXXXXXX MALT (XXX) XXX-XXXX.

Your Agreement to participate:
Please reply via return email, and type in the words "I agree" in the body of the message. This will give your written free and informed consent to this project.
Thank you and I look forward to working with you in the near future,

Teresa Comey, MA candidate
Influencing Leadership
Facilitating Business and Leadership Development
Phone XXX-XXX-XXXX
Phone XXX-XXX-XXXX
IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR SUCCESSION…94

Appendix III: Minutes from Directors’ Team Meeting

EXCERPT from a City of North Vancouver Directors’ Team Meeting notes
2:30 p.m., January 13, 2004, Conference Room A

PRESENTATION – LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES – TERESA COMEY

R. Shore presented a recap of the project work, which forms the basis of Teresa’s Master’s Thesis. Teresa reviewed the purposes of the research – to identify leadership competencies and action steps to move forward. Twenty-one staff members participated in the consultation process. The leadership attributes (data) were aligned with the Strategic values and objectives. The competency blocks were identified as personal attributes, interpersonal skills, results focused, organizational leadership, professional qualifications. This model was then compared with existing models in research literature, and it was shown that this model is successful. Knowledge sharing is an important aspect of a successful environment – it must be identified as a competency and recognized. Focused self direction, i.e. a self directed learner, is an important additional behaviour.

For leadership to be demystified, you need to adopt a language that is understandable, such as was used by the participants. Competencies are both characteristic and unique, but there are smaller chunks that are identifiable. The method employed in this project was the Appreciative Inquiry method. It builds upon the best of the best, and focuses on the noblest and most positive experiences. The Study Recommendations, i.e. steps for the future, are yet to be developed.

Comments:

- Was there any discussion on the difference between a leader and manager – not specifically.
- If we aim at the ideal, the attributes may not be the same in different situations – how was that addressed?
  Leadership is about the individual, not adopting a specific style – models have to be in process over time – but there are attributes that are static and consistent – such as integrity, ethics etc. A model is a standardization for the organization, but each department, each position, each individual requires different or varying aspects of the model. Good leaders are able to adapt their style to each situation (situational leadership).
- When you think of the great leaders, each one has their unique style – difficult to define or put in a box.
- Behaviours, values, and principles are all different – the guiding principles and core values are markers around which the organization is run, behaviours model whether we are meeting the values and principles.
- By definition, leadership is the ability to guide people to be the best they can be; management is the achievement of goals and objectives.
- What is the next stage – identifying competencies for each job, align with hiring process, review the entire organization for talent, promoting training/mentorship program, followed by recommendations to building a succession plan process; identification of gaps and performance management is another outcome, as is individual career planning.
- Needs and circumstances dictate the type of leadership required; also competencies vary for an organization and for an individual; also for diversity within a team, flexibility is essential – e.g. different skills are required in an emergency situation than in the office environment, albeit the same individual.
- Fred spoke to following up on the discussion with Teresa.

Richard concluded the presentation, noting one consideration will have to be given to how the results of this work will be integrated into our organization and how we develop and hire our future leaders.
Appendix IV: Leadership competency comparison

Several leadership competency models were examined during this research project. An overview of five different models has been reviewed in this document.

Byham, Smith and Paese (2002) produced a model of competency clusters that fit into four domains. Their research has found that there are four types of classification that reflect the behaviour, knowledge and motivations that relate to executive success.

1. **Interpersonal Skills**: Communication with impact; Cultural interpersonal effectiveness; Customer orientation; Developing strategic relationships; Persuasiveness

2. **Leadership Skills**: Building organizational talent; Change leadership; Coaching/teaching; Empowerment/delegation; Influencing others; Selling the vision; Team development

3. **Business/Management Skills**: Business Acumen; Entrepreneurship; Establishing strategic direction; Global acumen; Managing the job; Mobilizing resources; Operational decision making.

4. **Personal Attributes**: Accurate self-insight; Adaptability; Driving for results; Energy; Executive Disposition; Learning Orientation; Positive disposition; Reading the environment; Valuing Diversity.

Zenger and Folkman (2002) grouped sixteen behaviours into a framework of five leadership competency categories that they believed made an organizational difference.

1. **Character**: Displaying a high integrity and honesty.

2. **Personal Capacity**: Technical and professional expertise; Solving problems and analyzing issues; Innovation; Practising self-development.

3. **Focus on Results**: Focus on results; Establish stretch goals; Take responsibility for outcomes/initiatives.
4. *Interpersonal Skills:* Communicating powerfully and prolifically; Inspiring and motivating others to high performance; Building relationships; Building others; Collaboration and teamwork

5. *Leading Organizational Change:* Developing strategic perspectives; Championing change; Connecting internal groups with the outside world.

Kouzes and Posner (1995) recommended a model of four competencies and ten behavioural indicators:

1) *Challenging the Process:*
   i) Search out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate and improve.
   ii) Experiment, take risks and learn from the accompanying mistakes.

2) *Inspiring a Shared Vision:*
   iii) Envision an uplifting and ennobling future.
   iv) Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams.

3) *Enabling Others to Act:*
   v) Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
   vi) Strengthen people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks, and offering visible support.

4) *Modelling the Way:*
   vii) Set the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.
   viii) Achieve small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment.

5) *Encouraging the Heart:*
   ix) Recognize individual contributions to the success of every project.
x) Celebrate team accomplishments.

Cook and Bernthal (1998) presented a competency model that identified three categories or types of competency:

1. *Organizational Competencies*: Unique factors that make an organization competitive.

2. *Job/Role Competencies*: Things an individual must demonstrate to be effective in a job, role, function, task or duty, an organizational level, or in the entire organization.

3. *Personal Competencies*: Aspects of an individual that imply a level of skill, achievement, or output.

Clark (1999) in his model, The Pyramid of Leadership, broke the leadership competencies into three main groups, which formed the basic requirements for a person to become a leader.

1. *Core or Essential Competencies*: Communications; Teamwork; Creative Problem Solving; Interpersonal Skills; Managing Client Relationships, Self-Direction; Flexibility; Building appropriate relationships: Professionalism; Financial.

2. *Leadership (special) Competencies*: Leadership Abilities; Visioning Process; Creation and Leadership of Teams; Assessment of Situations Quickly and Accurately; Fostering of Conflict Resolutions (win-win); Project Management; Implement Employee Involvement in Strategies; Coaching and Training of Peers and Subordinates.

Appendix V – Competency Comparison Chart
Appendix V – Chart
Chart 1 – Comparison of City of North Vancouver Leadership Model with other Competency Models

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<td>Core or Essential Competencies</td>
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<td>* Listening</td>
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<td>* Soft Skills – working with people</td>
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<td>* Cultural Interpersonal</td>
<td>* Inspiring &amp;</td>
<td>* Recognizing</td>
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<td>effectiveness</td>
<td>motivating others to</td>
<td>contributions of others</td>
<td>* Creative problem solving</td>
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<td></td>
<td>* Developing Strategic</td>
<td>high performance</td>
<td>* Celebrating team</td>
<td>* Interpersonal skills</td>
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<td>Relationships</td>
<td>* Building relationships</td>
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<td>* Persuasiveness</td>
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<td><strong>Organizational Leadership</strong></td>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
<td>Interpersonal Skills</td>
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<td>Leadership (special)</td>
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<td>* Understanding the Big Picture</td>
<td>* Building Organizational Talent</td>
<td>* Communicating</td>
<td>* Recognizing</td>
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<td>* Leadership abilities</td>
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<td>* Confidence &amp; Courage</td>
<td>* Changing leadership</td>
<td>with impact</td>
<td>contributions of others</td>
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<td>* Visioning process</td>
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<td>* Mentoring &amp; Developing others</td>
<td>* Coaching/teaching</td>
<td>* Cultural Interpersonal</td>
<td>* Celebrating team</td>
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<td>* Creating/leading Teams</td>
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<td>* Team Development</td>
<td>* Empowerment</td>
<td>effectiveness</td>
<td>efforts</td>
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<td>* Assessing situations</td>
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<td>* Sharing Knowledge</td>
<td>* Influencing others</td>
<td>* Developing Strategic</td>
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<td>* Selling the vision</td>
<td>Perspectives</td>
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<td>* Fostering Conflict Resolution</td>
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<td>* Team development</td>
<td>* Championing change</td>
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<td>* Connecting internal</td>
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<td>* Coaching/teaching peers</td>
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<td>Professional Competencies</td>
<td>Business/Management Skills</td>
<td>Focus on Results</td>
<td>Challenging the Process</td>
<td>Job/Role Competencies</td>
<td>Professional or Individual Competencies</td>
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<td>* Professionally Qualified</td>
<td>* Business Acumen, Entrepreneurship, Establishing strategic direction, Goal acumen, Managing the job, Mobilizing resources, Operational decision making</td>
<td>* Focus on results, Establish stretch goals, Taking responsibility for outcome /initiatives</td>
<td>* Seek opportunities to change, grow, innovate &amp; improve, Experiments, take risks, learn from mistakes</td>
<td>* Things an individual demonstrates to be effective in job, role, task, organization</td>
<td>* Business Acumen, Technical competency</td>
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<tr>
<th>Personal Attributes</th>
<th>Personal Attributes</th>
<th>Personal Capacity</th>
<th>Enabling Others to Act</th>
<th>Personal Competencies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Ethics, Focused- self direction, Respect</td>
<td>* Accurate self-insight, Adaptability, Driving for results, Energy, Executive Disposition, Learning orientation, Positive disposition, Reading the environment, Valuing Diversity</td>
<td>* Technical &amp; professional expertise, Solving problems &amp; analyzing issues, Innovation, Practicing Self-development</td>
<td>* Foster collaboration - promote cooperative goals &amp; build trust, Strengthen people by giving power away, give choice, develop competency, offer support</td>
<td>* Aspects that imply a level of skill, achievement or output.</td>
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<td>* High integrity, Honesty</td>
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