

Five Steps to Succession Planning Success

There are few events that have as much impact on a business as the departure of a key employee. The process used to position a replacement, or “successor”, can make a lasting impression on your workforce and your customers. Not only is it critical to have a succession plan in place for key executives but also for those individuals

who are considered leaders and keepers of core business knowledge.

So when should succession planning start and how do you get started? Below are five simple steps necessary for succession planning success.

- 1. Begin Planning Before Someone Departs** Succession planning must not be done reactively, but proactively. Waiting until a key leader is going out the door is insufficient and can create unnecessary complications, risk, and financial costs associated with the loss of important company knowledge.
- 2. Identify Key Positions** Succession planning should be targeted not only to key executives but to other individuals as well. It is important to identify critical roles in your organization and then evaluate those roles based on a)their value to the organization’s success, b)their ease of replacement, c)whether you’ll need to lean on external talent or whether you can train internally. You’ll want to focus your efforts on positions that are of high value to the organization and those that are the most difficult to fill/replace.

3. Define the Competencies and Requirements What skills and competencies do people need to fill the roles you’ve identified? Before jumping into the identification of these requirements, make sure you know the company’s overall strategy and 3 to 5 year plan. Competencies should always be mapped back to corporate strategy, so that’s step one in this particular piece of the equation. Next, figure out the key competencies and skills needed for each position so you know exactly what you’re looking for.

4. Take Inventory You can save a significant amount of money by training internal talent, so take a hard look at your current workforce before jumping into a costly external search. Evaluate past performance reviews and appraisals and take steps to gauge future potential to see who might be the best possible candidates. Interviews, simulations, observations, and other types of assessments can provide a lot of information on an individual’s potential, especially if that high performer hasn’t had the opportunity to display their capabilities in certain areas.

5. Don’t Forget These Individuals What’s the use of following all of these steps if you’re not going to follow through and develop that talent? Ensure that you communicate the plan to the targeted individuals to ensure active participation in their future development (and the future of the company!). Give these individuals opportunities for growth, mentorship and training – all geared toward the position you’ve identified as a good fit for them in your succession plan. It’s also important that you focus on retaining this core group, those individuals you’ve singled out with the variety of skills and knowledge that you find important to your company’s future growth strategy. Assessments, meaningful reviews and reliable compensation management ensure you reward and retain these top performers.

Summary As critical as succession planning is for organizations, it is often completely ignored. A lot of companies and managers are not prompted to act until a key leader has turned in his/her resignation. The benefits of having a well thought out and executed succession plan drastically outweigh the risks of the alternative. Without a plan or solution in place, your company may lose weeks or months of productivity and morale, and suffer irreparable damage. Identifying who can fill key roles and preparing those people can ensure leadership continuity and maintain the business’ stability and ultimately, profitability. Finally, don’t set it and forget it! Re-visit your succession plan at least quarterly. Business strategies change, product lines evolve, the economy fluctuates and talent comes and goes. Re-evaluating the plan periodically will ensure you stay on top of things and don’t lose momentum!

Adapted from an article by SilkRoad Technology, Inc.

November
2009

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Supervisor Training

Are you:

- new to the supervisor role?
- having trouble supervising others?
- perceived as the “Bully on the Block”?
- not getting the most from your employees?

Our 1/2-day class will improve your supervisory skills.

What Is It? A class that focuses on the basics of how to more effectively lead employees, maintain a productive work environment and foster good employee relations.

What Will Be Covered?

Highlights include:

- Delivering constructive feedback
- Giving credit when due
- Discussing changes with employees prior to implementation
- Making best use of each person’s ability
- Earning employee’s cooperation and respect

Participants will also learn how to deal with employee problems by:

- Delivering constructive feedback
- Getting the facts
- Weighing those facts
- Making the decision
- Taking action
- Checking results

Who Should Attend?

Anyone with direct reports, or anyone who directs the work of others, whether new to the position or in need of a refresher.

Course materials are based on the
“Training Within Industry” (TWI)
Job Relations methods

Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2009
Location: Owego Treadway Inn
Sign-in: 7:30 am
Class: 8:00am – 12 noon
Fees: \$ 50 — AM&T Associates
\$ 100 — all others
(Credit Card Payments accepted)

Registration deadline: November 11, 2009

To register, contact Norma Cushner, 607-774-0022 ext. 302
Or sign up online at: www.amt-mep.org/events

Comprehensive Training Program for Lean Enterprise Champions

This course is a first-time offering in the Southern Tier region for people who are going to be responsible for leading and implementing Lean principles within their company.

Eight full-day sessions will be delivered once a month starting in January, 2010.

Each session emphasizes hands-on, practical training that provides a foundation for participants to move into Lean leadership positions within their companies.

This is the first opportunity in the Southern Tier for dedicated participants from multiple companies to exchange ideas, share experiences, and learn from each other over an extended time period.

This program incorporates eight, full-day sessions using proven, nationally-developed course material.

Monthly Course Schedule

January	- Principles of Lean Enterprise - Creating a Lean Roadmap
February	- Company Tour - Lean Leadership & Creating a Lean Culture with guest speaker(s)
March	- Value Stream Mapping
April	- 5S: Workplace Organization - Standardized Work
May	- Problem Solving Tools - Kaizen Facilitation
June	- Set-up Reduction - Total Productive Maintenance
July	- Cellular Flow Manufacturing
August	- Pull / Kanban Systems

Class size limited to 12 participants

For questions: contact

Carol Miller, 607-774-0022 x316 or cmiller@amt-mep.org
Mobile: 607-237-8031

Fees: \$1,900 — AM&T Associates*
\$2,400 — all others*

**Including meals and training materials*

To register: contact

Norma Cushner, 607-774-0022 ext. 302 or go to: www.amt-mep.org/events

- An on-site Lean Assessment will be provided for each participant company
- Participants will be assigned short homework exercises between sessions
- Continuing Education Units (CEU) credits can be awarded upon request
- Training qualifies for inclusion in the 80 hours requirement towards the Society of Manufacturing Engineers' (SME) Bronze, Silver and Gold Levels of Lean Certification

Basic Project Management

Are you:

- stressed out?
- dropping the ball?
- behind schedule and over budget?
- wondering what to do?

Our 8-hour class will improve your project management skills.

What Is It?

“A “train and do”, workshop introducing the basics of Project Management, including classroom presentation and exercises on how to organize and manage projects and bring them to a close” –

on time and on budget.

Who Should Attend?

This training is for anyone with project leadership responsibilities, whether new or in need of a refresher.

Course Outline:

1. Introduction to Project Management
2. Individual Roles and Responsibilities
3. Defining the Mission & Approach
4. Methodology Overview
5. Work Plan Review and Sign-off
6. Project Tracking (Working the Schedule)
7. Action and Contingency Plans
8. Project Status Reporting
9. Book shelving Project Management Data

Course materials are based on methods described in the Program Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK), published by the Program Management Institute (PMI)

Date: Wednesday, December 9, 2009
Location: Owego Treadway Inn
Sign-in: 7:30 am
Class: 8:00am – 4:30pm
Fees: \$ 50 — AM&T Associates
\$ 100 — all others
(Credit Card Payments accepted)

Registration deadline: December 2, 2009

To register: contact
Norma Cushner, 607-774-0022 ext. 302
or go to: www.amt-mep.org/events

*AM&T Associate since 10/2006*

North Point Technology, LLC provides industrial automation and control system engineering services, including consulting, programming, and commissioning for a variety of industrial clients and municipalities.

The firm employs a highly specialized staff of engineers who serve clients throughout the United States as well as Australia and the United Kingdom from North Point's offices in Upstate New York and Park City, Utah.

Founded in 2002 by Robert Lee, P.E., North Point has grown significantly in size and scope of supply. Clients benefit from the depth and breadth of North Point's knowledge and experience as they assist them in implementing new products, solving difficult process problems, and achieving higher manufacturing efficiency and quality. North Point has also developed proprietary software that gives them capabilities unique in their field. This software affords clients more cost effective software solutions, resulting in shorter development and commissioning periods.

North Point was recently honored with the Central New York Fast Track 50 Award and the Economic Champions Award. "We are proud to be a thriving part of the Upstate economy and offer our gratitude to AM&T for all their efforts to keep our manufacturing sector strong."

For more information about North Point Technology, LLC, please contact:

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boblee@northpointusa.com

Around the Southern Tier

Call number or visit www.amt-mep.org/events.htm for details

- Oct 22 Business After Business Reception** — Chemung County Chamber — 607-734-5137
- Oct 26 Multi Chamber Mixer**— Corning Area Chamber — 607-535-4300
- Oct 29 Business After Hours** — Otsego County Chamber — 607-432-4500
- Oct 29 Annual Labor & Employment Law Update** — Greater Binghamton Chamber — 607-772-8860
- Nov 4 Conference - Best Practices for Commercializing University Technologies** — see page 7
- Nov 4 Annual Student Mentor Program & Local Business Expo** — Watkins Glen Area Chamber — 607-535-4300
- Nov 5 REDEC/RRC Informational Seminar** — Corning Small Business Dev. Center — 607-962-3021
- Nov 9 Joint STOC/AM&T Meeting Featuring CCMR** - 607-772-8863 ext. 5
- Nov 10 Business Before Hours** — Otsego County Chamber — 607-432-4500
- Nov 12 Business After Business Reception** — Chemung County Chamber — 607-734-5137
- Nov tbd Business After Hours** — Corning Area Chamber — 607-936-4686
- Nov 10 Business Before Hours** — Otsego County Chamber — 607-432-4500
- Nov 18 Supervisor Training** — AM&T — 607-774-0022 x302 to register
- Nov 18 REDEC/RRC Informational Seminar** — Corning Small Business Dev. Center — 607-962-3021
- Dec 8 Annual Awards Breakfast** — Chemung County Chamber — 607-734-5137
- Dec 9 Basic Project Management Workshop** — AM&T — 607-774-0022 x302 to register
- Dec 11 6th Annual Small Business Holiday Party** — Otsego County Chamber — 607-432-4500

12 Rules of Success from Apple CEO Steve Jobs

Steve Jobs went from being an unemployed college dropout to becoming one of the most successful entrepreneurs of all time. And he did it thanks to these “12 Rules to Success”:

1. **Do what you love to do.** Find your true passion. Make a difference. The only way to do great work is to love what you do.
2. **Be different.** Think different. Better to be a pirate than to join the navy.
3. **Do your best at every job.** Don't sleep! Success generates more success so be hungry for it. Hire good people with a passion for excellence.
4. **Perform SWOT analysis.** As soon as you join/start a company, make a list of strengths and weaknesses of yourself and your company on a piece of paper. Don't hesitate to throw bad apples out of the company.
5. **Be entrepreneurial.** Look for the next big thing. Find a set of ideas that need to be acted upon quickly and decisively and jump through that window. Sometimes the first step is the hardest one. Just take it. Have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.
6. **Start small, think big.** Don't worry about too many things at once. Take a handful of simple things to begin with, and then progress to more complex ones. Think about not just tomorrow, but the future. Put a ding in the universe.
7. **Strive to become a market leader.** Own and control the primary technology in everything you do. If there's a better technology available, use it regardless of whether or not anyone else is using it. Be the first, and make it an industry standard.
8. **Focus on the outcome.** People judge you by your performance. Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren't used to an environment where excellence is expected. Advertise. If they don't know about it, they won't buy your product. Pay attention to design. We made the buttons on the screen look so good you'll want to lick them. Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works.
9. **Ask for feedback** from people with diverse backgrounds. Each one will tell you one useful thing. If you're at the top of the chain, sometimes people won't give you honest feedback because they're afraid. In this case, disguise yourself, or get feedback from other sources. Focus on those who will use your product - listen to your customers first.
10. **Innovate.** Innovation distinguishes a leader from a follower. Delegate. Let other top executives do 50% of your routine work to be able to spend 50% of your time on the new stuff. Say no to 1,000 things to make sure you don't get on the wrong track or try to do too much. Concentrate on really important creations and radical innovation. Hire people who want to make the best things in the world. You need a very product-oriented culture, even in a technology company. Lots of companies have tons of great engineers and smart people. But ultimately, there needs to be some gravitational force that pulls it all together.
11. **Learn from failures.** Sometimes when you innovate, you make mistakes. It is best to admit them quickly, and get on with improving your other innovations.
12. **Learn continually.** There's always “one more thing” to learn. Cross-pollinate ideas with others both within and outside your company. Learn from customers, competitors and partners. If you partner with someone whom you don't like, learn to like them - praise them and benefit from them. Learn to criticize your enemies openly, but honestly.

The easy reaction might be to say, “...sure, but Jobs is in a dynamic industry. This doesn't apply to me...” However, if you step back and honestly evaluate these 12 rules, you'll be hard pressed to find more than two that truly don't apply to your situation.

Read these several times this week and, for each rule that makes sense to you, write down at least one action that you can take to move a step closer to achieving success the Jobs way.

Adapted from an article by Bob Hill as published in BusinessBrief.com

CONFERENCE TO HIGHLIGHT BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR SOUTHERN TIER ENTREPRENEURS

Aspiring entrepreneurs and managers of existing businesses will learn how to locate and identify best practices for commercializing university technologies at a conference scheduled for November 4th at Binghamton University. Attendees at the Southern Tier Business and Entrepreneur Conference will have access to expert advice on businesses planning, intellectual property, and funding programs that can lead to successful business creation and expansion.

Lois Kang, coordinator of the event, explained that the purpose of the conference is to foster regional economic development by strengthening the connection between the Southern Tier's leading research institutions, entrepreneurs and the innovation needs of local companies. The event will highlight two university organizations, the Cornell Center for Technology Enterprise and Commercialization (CCTEC) and the Binghamton University Technology Transfer and Innovation Partnership. One of the primary functions of these two organizations is to foster the growth of new businesses based on technologies that are developed within the universities.

Presenters include Dr. Eugene Krentsel, Binghamton University's Assistant Vice President for Technology Transfer and Innovation Partnership, and Dr. Alan Paau, Cornell University's Vice Provost and Executive Director for Technology Transfer and Economic Development. They will explain what their organizations do, what resources are available to foster new start-ups and expand businesses, and how the staff of the two centers work with inventors, entrepreneurs, and investors to create successful transitions from innovation to new enterprise. There will be other speakers from the two universities to elaborate on university resources supporting technology and entrepreneurship.

Kang noted that over the years, Cornell technologies have been licensed to industry partners all over the world, including over 200 companies in the US. More recently, the same pattern is emerging at Binghamton University, with the launch of new companies based on technologies developed there. One goal of conference organizers is to enhance the communications channels among the Southern Tier research universities and the broad business and entrepreneurial communities. Opportunities for networking among the attendees will be plentiful during break times and during the continental breakfast and buffet lunch provided for attendees.

The conference will be held at the University Union on the BU campus and is open to the public. There is no charge to attend, however **advance registration is required**.

To register or for more information, contact Lois Kang at sk479@cornell.edu or 607-734-4453.

Licensing opportunities through Binghamton University research:
research.binghamton.edu/TT/LicensingOpps.htm

Licensing opportunities through Cornell University research:
www.cctec.cornell.edu/technology/

SBIR/STTR INFORMATION: www.sbir.gov/solicitations/index.htm

Funding Opportunities: www.nystar.state.ny.us/fon/funding.htm

\$5,000,000 Available for Environmentally Preferred Power Systems Technologies

Program Opportunity Notice (PON) 1670

Proposals Due: by 5:00 PM Eastern Time

Due Date: December 10, 2009

For more information see PON 1670 at www.nyserda.org/Funding



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Southern Tier Region of NY