

Succession Planning, Mentoring and Employees Career Progression

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Abstract: This paper examined succession planning, mentoring and employees career progression. The purpose to do a conceptual, theoretical and empirical review of literature on succession planning and mentoring. Thus after a general review of literatures it appears there is a consensus in literature that succession planning and mentoring is a process that needs to be properly implemented in organizations, as pointed out by the researches in the review that there are benefits and returns achieved by firms that had implemented successfully, succession planning and mentoring.

Keywords: Succession Planning, Mentoring, Employee Development, Career Progression.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the business environment is becoming very competitive and businesses are being confronted with the challenges of replacing competent and skilled employees that quit their jobs either voluntarily or involuntarily through retirement, relieve of appointment, pursuance of new aspirations, death etc. organizations are being faced with the challenge of inadequacy and lack of capable and competent successor to fill vacant positions.

In Korn's study (as cited by Ogunyomi, 2013) organizations are to act now and begin to plan for succession before top managers are ready for retirement. It is essential that organizations train successors before the vacancies are created.

One of the most appropriate avenues of effecting an effective succession plan is through mentorship. Egwu (2012) opined that mentoring has been identified as possible panacea to poor business leadership succession plan, while he strongly believes that effective mentoring can be a possible foundation to increase competitiveness.

On the relationship between mentorship and leadership succession, Egwu emphasize that mentorship is the root of corporate citizen and self-efficacy in organizations. According to Egwu, when people properly choose their mentors and mentees whom they are sure would be committed, loyal and patriotic leadership successor of the future, they are happier that their efforts would not at the end be in Vain. In Collins study (as cited by Faphounda, 2015) that succession planning is a method that can offer flawless leadership change across the organization. It entails strategic, systematic and planned attempts to extend capabilities in prospective leaders through anticipated learning incidents like objective rotations and educational training so as to occupy high level positions without nepotism.

Therefore the main objective of succession planning can be described as improving job filling for key positions through active development of long term successors by ensuring their career progress and making sure that they get the range work experiences they need for the future to encourage a culture of progression.

2. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Cox (1997) defined mentoring as a management process, styles and techniques which aim at entrenching organizational culture and philosophy.

The concept of succession planning and mentoring have been explored by several authors. For example, Rothwell (2001) views succession plan from the perspective of career development, and sees it as a deliberate and systematic effort by an

organization to ensue leadership continuity in key positions, retention and development of intellectual and knowledge capital in future and encouragement of individual advancement.

Schamer (2007) also views succession planning as co-creating a transformational stage during which management explores the future. Hall and Smith (2009) posits that mentoring unlike apprenticeship and coaching increase the skills abilities and talents of one being mentored.

According to Collins and Hussy (2009), succession planning also facilitates a flow of talent emerging from within the organization.

Dauaa, 2013 and Charan, Dortter and Noel (2001) see succession planning as perpetuating the enterprise by filling the pipeline with high performing people to assure that every leadership level has an abundance of these performers to draw from both now and in the future. Thus, from this perspective, succession planning is seen as management pipeline that accelerates management performance over a period of time.

Nwosu (2014) views succession planning as concerning the selection of talented employees to replace senior managers who leave the firm because of retirement, reassignment or other reasons. Nwosu further maintains that effective succession planning assures minimizing of no disruption and dislocation from organizations programs and goals

One can defect from the above that mentoring involves direct relationship with the mentor and the mentee, there is a face to face contact which offers a fertilizing opportunity for the growth, of trust and confidence in the parties. This allows the mentor and the mentored to give opportunities for the development of competence, capabilities, productivity and performance. Mentoring can be seen as a process, whereby an experienced, highly regarded, emphatic person (mentor) guides another individual (the mentee or protégé) in the development and examination of their own ideas, learning and personal and professional development.

Succession Planning, Mentoring And Career Progression:

According to Clutterbuck (2011) mentors have a number of roles in creating a healthy environment for succession planning and career management among these roles are.

i. Getting to know talent at an intimate yet objective level: Especially if the mentor is two or more levels ahead the mentee, their knowledge of the mentee can be invaluable in gaining a real understanding not just of what talent there is, but how willing it is to be employed in different ways.

ii. Focusing mentee's attention on internal career opportunities: It is common for people to look outside their current organization for their next job, partly because it is easier (especially through social networking and job search websites) and partly because it avoids letting your boss and / or colleagues know that you are the thinking of moving on. Mentoring assists in refocusing the mentee to look inward for advancement opportunities

iii. Addressing diversity issues: Case study data reveal that having a mentoring program which people from minority or disadvantaged groups are encouraged to join has a remarkable impact on the perception that people in those groups (whether mentored or not) have about their potential to advance in the organization.

iv. Influencing the systems that enhance succession planning: With help and encouragement from a mentor, mentees learn how to work with, rather than in conflict with systems such as appraisal, access to learning resources and how work is allocated. For example, mentors, often help mentees identify and recognize value of horizontal moves that build breadth of experience and expertise.

Mentoring As Key Principles In Succession Planning:

The under listed principles, according Byham and Nelson (1999) will enhance mentoring and succession planning

i. Top management commitment: It is the responsibility of the top leaders in the organization to convey succession planning as top priority of the organization and consequently seek the support of all organizational members.

ii. Workforce planning: Succession planning does not and cannot stand alone, it is derived from the overall corporate planning from which workforce planning otherwise known as human resources or manpower planning is carved out. Workforce planning entails analysis of demographic and trend, data forecasted attribution rates, availability of external labour and forecast of supply and demand for critical skill sets, which are later connected to the organizational recruitment and selected programmes, performance management learning and development, leadership development and career planning initiatives.

iii. Futuristic orientation: Succession planning should be seen as a means of meeting future business needs in specific organizational areas and implemented as one of the strategies for more elaborate workforce planning formwork.

iv. Development of successful culture: A successful culture should be developed at all strategic level of the organization, but only at the top level, with clearly shared responsibility for succession planning across the organization.

v. Focus on potential candidates for leadership roles: Succession planning should emphasize the need to identify potential candidates that can replace aging or quitting leaders

vi. Simplicity and flexibility: The rigidity and ambiguity of succession planning will not enhance its success. Succession planning should therefore be simple, concise, flexible and workable taken cognizance of the environmental variables which impact on the corporate planning.

vii. Openness: Succession planning must be made open to all organizational members across levels. The career aspirations values and preferences of each employee should be known at least to middle and top level management who are then leadership what given opportunity to indicate their interest in leadership.

viii. Capability template: Succession planning process should features the issue of capability templates, rather than developing people for specific, current job requirements Capability template enables organizations to close the gap between strategic intent and current performance through guided learning and development strategies, providing the basis for identification of potential and individual development plans.

3. THEORETICAL REVIEW

Two theoretical models are reviewed as follows:

- i. Relay succession planning model by Santorin (2004)
- ii. Scharmer (2007) Theory U Model

Relay Succession Planning Model:

Santorin (2004) came up with the first succession planning model, which is referred to as relay succession planning. Santorin suggests in the model that present business leaders of an organization must over a long period of time, pass the baton to a successor. Santorin documents that organizations that engage in relay succession plans boast better achievements, since the successors were given business tests and they had the ability to manage them in the pre-succession period. The capability of the incumbent business leader to relinquish the baton in real time presents the successors chance to assess the runs of management and simultaneously obtain training.

The impact of companies practicing this model is being evaluated using Santorin's model. This model is being evaluated in research comparing organizations that do not have such plans in place with those that have such. It was found that organizations that practice relay succession plans perform better because the successors were exposed to corporate challenges and were able to deal with such challenges in the pre – succession phase.

Nevertheless, while Santorin's research confirms that organizations with in house relay succession model boasted evaluated proceeds from their investment in the long run, some companies could favour external people to facilitate the introduction of new initiatives and dreams.

Scharmers Theory U Model:

This model was proposed by Scharmer (2007) He contends that there is need for organization top management team to support and take steps towards executing succession plans. In the first instance, this model view succession planning as beginning from the immediate future. It also sustains a notion of a U process of five movements that can make transformation achievable (Scharmer, 2007).

i. Co-initiating: In the words of Scharmer, at this stage organizations establish a common purpose with all stakeholders about a future event.

ii. Co-sensing: Is the second movement stage in which an organization sees the need at hand collectively across boundaries. Also at this stage, new ideas and innovations occurs through collective input.

iii. Presencing: Whereby the leadership of organization begins and see the future they envisage, this futuristic plan establishes a foundation for change and thereby spurs an organization to an expected end. Also at this stage, it is observed that the leadership let go often unresolved past issues and forge ahead a more realistic future

iv. Cocreating: At this stage leadership of organization explores the future and prototype what the future might look like. Leadership should make succession planning a long term concept rather than working on organizational immediate requirement

v. Coevolving: Can help an organization to embrace change and implement succession planning strategies in the context of an emerging future.

The two theories mentioned in this work are relevant to this study but I consider the relay succession planning model more suitable for this study.

The theoretical model on which this study revolves is the relay succession planning model. The implication for organizations using this model has been evaluated in Santorin's work compared with organizations that does not have such plan in place.

However it was recorded that those organizations that practice relay succession plans performed better because the successors were exposed to corporate challenges and were able to deal with such challenges in the pre – succession phase.

Empirical Review:

Several empirical studies have been carried out to establish the relationship between succession planning, mentoring and career progression. For instance, Ogunyomi (2003) was able to establish that mentoring is key in addressing the critical issue of dearth of key personnel faced by Nigerian organizations. The study suggested that organizations should implement mentoring programmes early enough in order to identify potential successors and start grooming process spanning a long period.

Kevin (2007) conducted a study on integrating leadership development and succession planning best practices the study concluded that organizations should develop mentor network by fully engaging all managers in mentoring relationship with direct reports and high potential employees in other work units. The study also suggested active manager participation in the organizations method of identifying and codifying high potential employees, and fully engaging managers at all levels in leadership development activities including teaching courses and creating projected based learning experience.

In a study carried out by Onwubiko & Oyemike (2010) on succession planning in academic libraries in Imo State, the study revealed that success plan exist. Written and unwritten succession plan is mostly applied, with job assignment and job rotation between departments as strategies used in implementation.

The perceived impact of succession planning includes ensuring continuity of leaders for key positions as well as increased opportunities for high potentials.

This what survival or collapse. This reveals that there is an apparent lack of a systematic approach and willingness to recruit, nurture, groom and retain potential leaders in most institutions in Nigeria. Though succession planning is critical to achieving business sustainability and competitive advantages organizations in Nigeria did not appear to have a well thought out succession plan. In a study conducted by Osibanjo, Abiodun, & Obamiro (2011) on succession planning and organizational survival, the results of the study showed that talent retention as a mediator variable in succession planning concept contributes significant effects in the survival and growth of organizations. The study also identified talent retention as a competitive weapon for organizational survival. Shadi & Noor (2011) concluded in their study of succession planning that surviving and preparing in the current challenging environment require reviewing the succession planning and management in the organizations by managers before reactively promoting or shedding staff. The study concluded that succession planning is a process and a system like any other human resources activities and needs to be properly implemented.

Dauda (2013) also carried out a study on business continuity and the challenges of succession in Nigeria, the research shows that cooperate succession planning is essential for any organization that is to achieve consistent performance, for profit making organizations in business organizations.

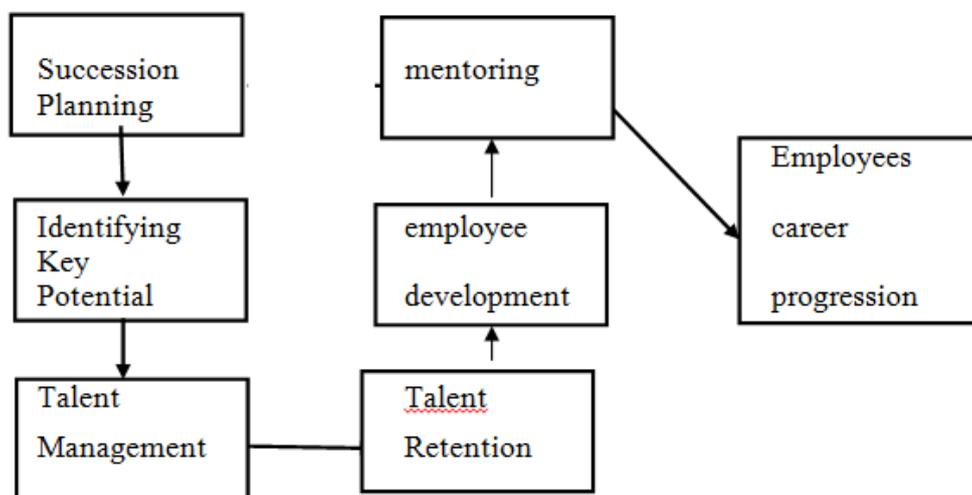
Stephen, Ochieng, Samuel, Odhiamboa and Emmanuel (2013) carried out a study on effects of succession planning programmes on staff retention, the study revealed that succession planning programmes emerged as a strong factor influencing staff retention, the influence was mainly through provision of employees growth opportunities and job satisfaction and this was enabled through programme such as job rotation, mentoring, coaching and other formal training programs like action learning.

In a study conducted by Nwosu (2014) on succession planning and corporate survival revealed that firms that fail to strategically put in place a well articulated effective succession planning policy will definitely encounter the problems of continuous existence and survival that may likely lead to liquidation thus the surest means of maintaining growth and survival of organization is through effective succession planning. The study identified mentoring, delegation, employee retention employee development, and internal recruitment as factors of effective succession planning. Also in a study conducted by Fapohunda (2015) on human resources planning and succession planning in Nigeria’s higher education. The study revealed that effective human resources and succession planning will no doubt transform higher education in Nigeria. Comprehensive succession planning and human resource directs the development of various levels of materializing faculty that will indeed transform higher education in Nigeria. The study also concluded that to reposition higher education for effective performance and service delivery public universities must institute efficient human resources and succession planning to assemble teams on internal talents aimed at improving management continuity, ethics and philosophy of the institution.

Seniwoliba (2015) study on succession planning, also revealed, that succession planning is one of those initiatives that many public higher institutions don’t find the time to start until its too late . If the university fails to address issues concerning succession planning at the right time it may end up facing the burden in the middle of the crisis. Succession comes to those who have the foresight and the ability to counter unexpected challenges.

Conceptual Framework:

MODEL ON SUCCESSION PLANNING



Source: Developed by authors (2016)

4. SUMMARY OF REVIEW

The literature reviewed examined, succession planning, mentoring and employees career progression. The several literatures on the subject matter pointed out that there are benefits and returns achieved by firms that had, implement successful succession planning and mentoring. The studies reveals that there is apparent lack of systematic approach and willingness to recruit, spture, groom, and retain potential leaders in most organization.

The studies also reveals that some of these institutions do not have recruitment strategy, hence in some cases the workforce are within the same age group and would retire about the same time. The consequences of this are obvious, talent and knowledge drain, critical skill gaps, a change in the dynamics of the business and disruptions. Survey literature also revealed that some institutions had no retention policies hence no effort is made to gain employee loyalty

and commitment. Furthermore the paper revealed that mentoring is germane to effective succession planning also implementation. The paper also revealed that organizations should implement mentoring programs early enough in order to identify potential successor and strategy grooming process spanning a long period.

Therefore those organizations that already have a succession planning and mentoring program in place must focus on overcoming program in place must focus on overcoming their exclusive obstructions to a best practices system while those organizations which do not presently invest in succession planning and mentoring should perhaps consider it seriously assessing the needs recruitments and appropriateness of implementation.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper provides a general view of succession planning, mentoring and career progression, the vital researches in succession planning and mentoring have been reviewed, the paper reveals that succession planning is imperative for any organization that is to achieve consistent performance. The paper shows that there is apparent lack of a systematic approach and willingness to recruit, nurture, groom and retain potential leaders in most institution through succession planning is critical to achieving sustainable competitive advantage most organizations especially in Nigeria do not have a well thought out succession plan. Success comes to those who have the foresight and the ability to counter unexpected challenges, however we cannot point out a single model for all types of organizations as each research which were reviewed can be tested in different organization settings. The process, steps of implementation and factors which influence in or affected by succession planning need to be analyzed in various types of organization with different jobs, responsibilities and cultures. Succession planning is important and useful to all types of organizations.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Thus after a review of vital researches on succession planning and mentoring, and based on the conclusions drawn above the following recommendation have been made:

- i) Organizations should establish effective succession planning capable of building pool of talents from within, this will enhance leadership continuity.
- ii) Organizations should have a retention strategy that will motivate employees and build up their commitment to the organization.
- iii) Organizations should implement mentoring programmes early enough in order to identify potential successors and start grooming process spanning a long period.
- iv) A well-developed programme should be designed offering training and education to employees. This could be internal, external, or a combination, but they need to be offered across the organization giving all staff the opportunity to participate in order to attain promotion.

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