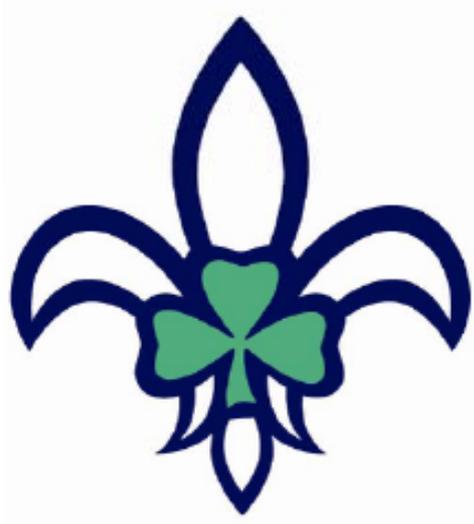


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# Succession Planning in Scouting Ireland

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A Worked Example  
of Succession  
Planning in the  
Group or County.

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John Brennan  
Chief Commissioner  
Adult Resources.  
January 2009

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## A definition of succession Planning

*Succession planning is a process whereby an organization ensures that employees are recruited and developed to fill each key role within the company. Through your succession planning process, you recruit superior employees, develop their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and prepare them for advancement or promotion into ever more challenging roles. Through your succession planning process, you also retain superior employees because they appreciate the time, attention, and development that you are investing in them. To effectively do succession planning in your organization, you must identify the organization's long term goals. You must hire superior staff. You need to identify and understand the developmental needs of your employees. You must ensure that all key employees understand their career paths and the roles they are being developed to fill. You need to focus resources on key employee retention. You need to be aware of employment trends in your area to know the roles you will have a difficult time filling externally. (Heatfield, S.)*

# Succession Planning

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## Introduction

Its nearing the time for the Annual General Meeting of the Group Scout Council and it's been a hectic year. The group were on Annual Camp and it was a great success. Each section over the year had an action packed programme and the Finance Committee worked all sorts of miracles in providing all of the groups finance for the year with some left over. The GSL had been a powerhouse for the past 4 years and it's known within the group that the success is due almost entirely to him. His enthusiasm, his time commitment and his leadership are excellent and as a Group they are "in Clover."

On the night of the AGM, the GSL announces that he is retiring from the position of Group Leader feeling that he has given it his all for the past 4 years and is now standing back to allow "some other leader" take on the role. He advises that he has discussed the decision at home where he is fully supported but declined to tell anyone in the Group until this moment. He makes it clear that the time has come to pass the baton and while he will be available to work in the group he is taking 12 months out.

Silence descends.

Have you been here? As you read the text you knew what the bottom line was going to be. Not only could you see it in the context of the Group but if the story was about the County Commissioner. You would have read the outcome before you ever got there. But yet how often do we fail to see or don't want to see an inevitable outcome until it's too late. The good work carried out by the GSL could well be lost to this group. No one was prepared for the announcement; no one had an eye on the longer term and probably no one is prepared to step into the shoes of the GSL simply because of who is and what he achieved.

But it could have been different. We could have had someone working with the GSL for the past two years. Not a carbon copy of the GSL because each individual is unique but someone we had all identified as having the skills and ability to become GSL at a point in the future. Someone right under our noses but we were too busy to notice.

Imagine now going to the AGM where the GSL announced its time for him to move on and time for his assistant to take over whom the GSL formally proposes. Once we are over the shock and the thanks and congratulations the baton is passed and life carries on. That is what **Succession Planning** is about. The capacities of a Group to plan for the future and ensure key personnel are in training and available when the time is right to take on a key position, with someone else identified to work with the new appointment and in time succeed him or her in the great and noble call of character formation. So let's follow

John Brennan

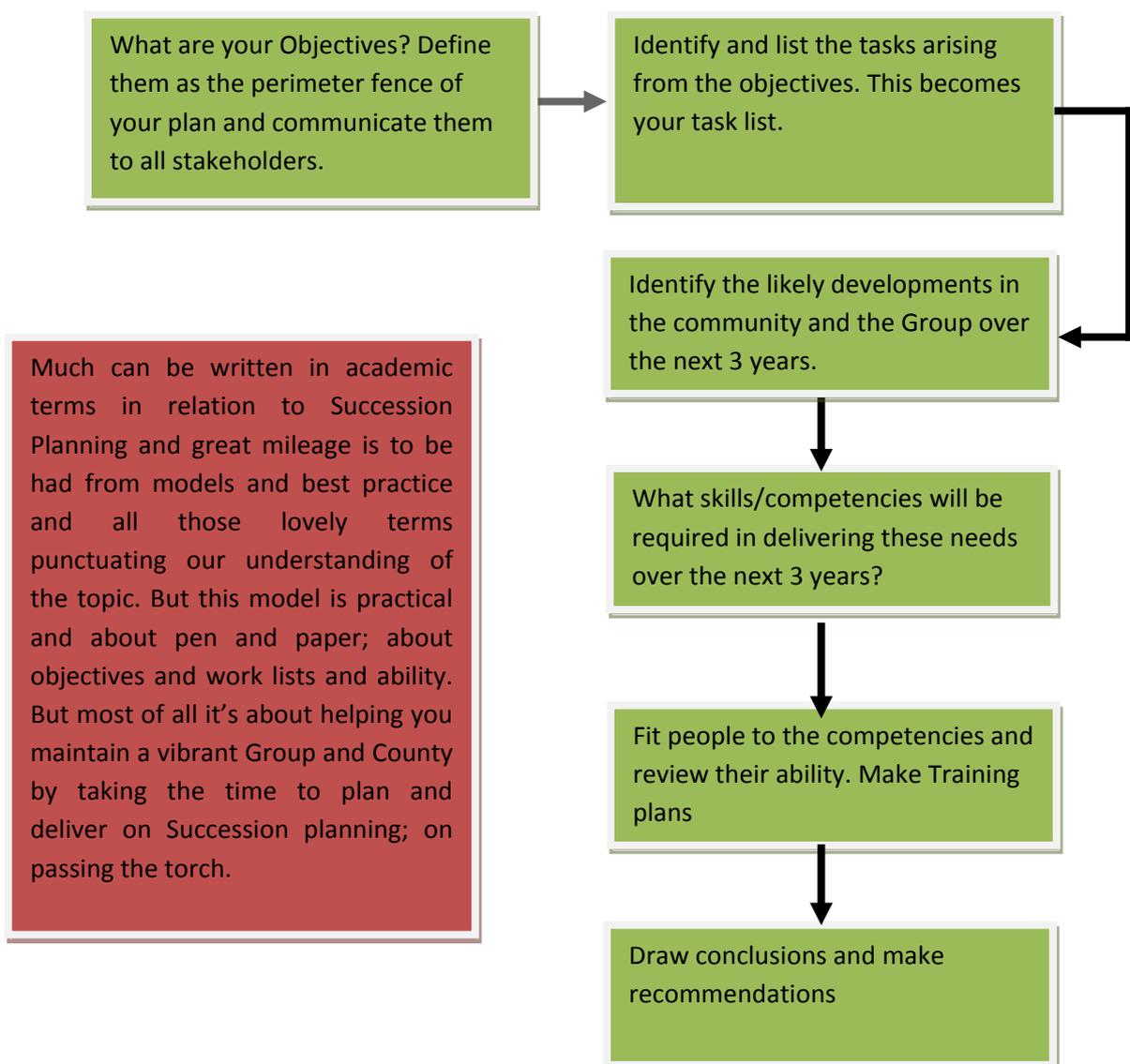
Chief Commissioner Adult Resources

# Succession Planning

## 1. Succession planning Step One

Not all adults think and operate in the same mode so it is important to recognise at an early stage that succession planning is not about replacing a leader with one of similar personality and skills but replacing that leader with someone who has the skill and ability to lead the organisation forward from where the previous leader had brought the organisation assuming that all is well with the direction. There are other variables to consider but the first step is to define a **Succession Planning Process**. In other words how are you going to manage the Succession Process? May I suggest a model for your consideration and possible use?

### Process



# Succession Planning

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**Action Item 1:** Write your objectives:

Sample Objectives might be:

1. Establish a succession planning team within the Group, representative of the Group but not to exceed 4 members in total.
2. Brief the Group on the concept of Succession Planning and focus attention on following the process rather than jumping to conclusions.
3. Identify the Groups needs and place those in the context of where Scouting in the locality is likely to go over the next 3 years.
4. Draw conclusions based on best guess of what is likely to happen over the next 3 years and quantify a competencies matrix.
5. Assess available talent and match it to the matrix to identify candidates. Establish best fit to the competency list including the need for training.
6. Quantify time lines for the Planning Process.

**Action Step 2:** List actions arising from objectives.

1. Move the formation of the Succession Planning Team at the Council or County meeting.
  - Formally propose the setting up of the Team
  - Ensure approval for the activity.
2. Propose members of the team based on scouting experience and knowledge of the needs of the community.
  - It is essential that this is a competent group and can operate almost immediately.
3. Conduct a short introduction on Succession Planning for the Team using this document.
  - Define Succession Planning as on Page 1
  - Outline the process as on page 3
4. Encourage a process rather than arriving at conclusions as being the obvious answer.
  - It is easy to throw people at a project
  - The trick is to throw the correct people!
5. List the needs of the group over the next 3 years.(Examples)
  - Refurbish the den
  - Replace tentage
  - Recruit leaders
  - Maintain public image
  - Expand section numbers etc.
  - Increase Income by 20 %

## Succession Planning

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**6. Describe where the group believes the local community needs will be in 3 years time.**

(Examples)

- No real change or
- Increase in unemployment
- Greater 2<sup>nd</sup> level attendance
- Tight credit controls
- Political and Church apathy
- Worsening standards of Living
- Lack of available cash etc.

**7. What competencies or skills are required in these situations i.e. 5 and 6 above?**

- Effective Communicator
- Motivator
- Public Image
- Planner
- Financial perspective
- Negotiator
- Community Activist
- Strong Scout Knowledge
- Delegator
- Amenable to training etc.

**8. Match talent with competencies.**

How do the existing group compare with the list of competencies?

Matching Talent	Name	Name	Name
<b>Competancies</b>	James	Claire	Pat
• Effective Communicator			
• Motivator			
• Public Image			
• Planner			
• Financial perspective			
• Negotiator			
• Community Activist			
• Strong Scout Knowledge			
• Delegator			
• Amenable to training			

**Questions arising**

- How does each perspective scouter measure up to the competencies?
- What activity would help them build missing competencies?
- How could they operate together to deliver the objectives?
- When would they be ready individually to take on the senior post?

# Succession Planning

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## **Observations on the matching**

1. James appears to be the best fit although lacks delegating ability.
2. Claire has good strengths but lacks some management skills although between them both they have all the skills.
3. Pat has some way to go and is interested in training.
4. James would be ready in 24 months
5. Claire in 25 to 30
6. Pat in about 4 years
7. Develop both James and Claire possibly as Assistant Group Leader
8. Plan Pats exposure to training over the next 3 years

## **Recommendations**

- 1. Both James and Claire should be invited to participate in the management of the Group at assistant GSL level.**
- 2. Both should be advised the James will probably be first to be called to the role of GSL.**
- 3. Pat should be actively encouraged to train for a position and to help him both the GSL and the two Asst GSL's should delegate meaningful work to Pat.**

References: The definition of Succession Planning on the cover of this document is by Susan Heatfield from her book Succession Planning and featured in the Glossary of terms on: [www.humanresources.about.com/od/glossarys/g/successionplan.hmt](http://www.humanresources.about.com/od/glossarys/g/successionplan.hmt)