County of Los Angeles
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE
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Chief Executive Officer

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Fifth District

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES HUMAN RESOURCES STUDY- ASSESSMENT OF FOUR CORE HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEMS: RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, CLASSIFICATION, COMPENSATION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT (ALL DISTRICTS AFFECTED) (3 VOTES)

SUBJECT

Your Board and the Chief Executive Office have identified certain core County human resources functions including classification, compensation, recruitment and selection operations as requiring substantive restructuring, modernization, and improvement in services. To develop and prepare specific recommendations for the attainment of such improvements in operations and services, specialized human resources consultants were engaged to complete a comprehensive study of County operations in these areas. The consultant study has been completed and is being presented to your Board for consideration.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Approve in concept the County of Los Angeles Human Resources Study (Attachment I); and

2. Direct the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director of Personnel to:

    a. Have the CEO Benefits, Compensation Policy, and Employee Relations (BCPER) Division and the Department of Human Resources (DHR) consult with the County's labor groups regarding the study;

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b. Report back by August 31, 2010, and quarterly thereafter, regarding progress on the CEO and DHR implementation plans of the study recommendations (Attachment II) and next steps in areas such as competency-based testing, score and candidate banking, potential civil service rule revisions, class consolidation, centralized and decentralized human resources activities, and human resources staffing allocations countywide; and

c. Report back by November 30, 2010, regarding the results of the pilot project designed to test a streamlined classification, recruitment and examination process and the quality of the candidate pool resulting from the pilot project.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

During the development of the 2009 County Strategic Plan, Board offices and departments identified the need for better customer service by DHR and CEO Classification and Compensation Administration (CCA) Division. The CEO engaged two human resources consultants to review DHR examination and recruitment functions and CEO classification and compensation functions and to identify best practices which the County should implement. As a result of this study, it is recommended that the County move to a competency-based examination and recruitment program and that the classification process also be reformatted to a competency based model which will meet current industry standard. Benefits are anticipated to include:

- Better quality candidates;

- Elimination of duplicative job analysis and testing;

- Reduction in cost and time to hire; and

- Better internal equity with regards to classification of employees.

A competency-based examination, recruitment and classification process, which includes accountability and feedback systems, is also expected to result in improved customer service for both applicants and departments. Implementation of metrics to manage and measure individual and organizational performance will be key to measuring the success of the new approach.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

This project and the recommendations support Goal One – Operational Effectiveness: Strategy Two – Service Excellence and Organizational Effectiveness; and Strategy Four - Workforce Excellence.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The consultant study was funded from Nondepartmental Special Accounts (NDSA) funds budgeted in the fiscal year (FY) 2009-10 Budget. Implementation of the pilot project will be completed using existing departmental resources and NDSA funds identified for consultant studies. Staffing resources needed for full implementation will initially be addressed through collaborative efforts with departmental staff and subject matter experts. Additional resources may be requested in future budgets as funding becomes available.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The consultants, Cheryl Mahaffey of CM Consultants and Sandra Comrie of Reward Strategy Group, Inc., interviewed all Board offices, seven departments, six Departmental Human Resources Managers (who served as a focus panel), and conducted a written survey of all departments who were not interviewed. The consultants worked closely with DHR and CEO staff to assess and evaluate current processes and identify areas for improvement. They researched best practices in the human resources industry and obtained information from large governmental agencies considered to have model functions or programs.

New Strategic Direction, Collaborative Partnership and Performance-Based Approach for Department of Human Resources

The consultants identified several general themes, or directions, where DHR should be headed. They emphasized that DHR "...must have a strategic perspective, anticipating and planning for the organization's long-term leadership, management and staffing requirements and the processes and programs necessary to acquire, retain, motivate and reward agency staff." A key focus area included the best ways "...to infuse new talent into the County workforce." The consultants stressed that DHR "...must see itself as a customer service and consulting services organization" and must "identify mission-critical occupations, and develop plans to place a high priority on developing competency models and streamlined selection processes for these occupations." Another critical theme is that DHR "...programs and systems must be built around and promote accountability for results throughout the organization...use of performance metrics is essential for measuring, assessing and evaluating results." Further, the study emphasized the need for training of human resources staff in the core human resources (HR) disciplines, customer service and account management.

System Streamlining and Plan Consolidation for Classification and Compensation

The primary classification and compensation theme focused on better "...support of line managers by reflecting effective job structures and in acquiring, retaining and deploying

staff resources to meet departments' missions and objectives." This improved support is envisioned through use of an advisory group of departments who would work with CCA to formulate a classification philosophy and plan design which incorporates the competency-based model used in the other HR functions. The classification plan design would be a comprehensive plan over five to seven years which would: streamline classifications, through measures including consolidation of redundant classes and deletion of obsolete classes; establish priorities in the review of job families/class structure to address pressing departmental and central agency needs and ensure the updating of the most critical classes; integrate efforts with DHR in conducting job analyses to minimize duplication of effort, and propose Civil Service rule revisions required to facilitate implementation of classification streamlining initiatives.

The consultant study includes specific best practices in recruitment, examining, classification and compensation as compared to the County's current operations. The study also includes specific short and long-term recommendations for improvement in each of these four areas. DHR and CCA plan to immediately establish an interdepartmental executive advisory committee to ensure that departmental input is obtained each step of the way, through the planning, analysis and implementation phases of the project. BCPER and DHR will consult with the County's labor groups regarding the study and any potential impact the proposed changes in HR business practices may present for their members.

Pilot Project of Key Recommendation

DHR and CCA have worked with the consultants to develop a pilot project to test how key recommendations to streamline the classification, recruitment and examination process can be implemented and to measure the outcome in terms of quality of candidates available for departments to hire. The pilot project will focus on the implementation of the new Contract Analyst series. The general competency-based model for administrative and professional positions will be tested in the development of the class specifications and the examination process used for filling critical vacancies at the entry level and to qualify current incumbents for appointment to these newly-defined positions. Part of this process will include a Contract Analyst Certification program and "test" being developed by DHR that may be used as an alternative for qualification for these positions. Scores for the various components of this program (i.e. general reasoning) will be "banked" and may be used as part of the qualification process of employees for other administrative or professional positions that require the same competencies. As such, the job applicant only has to take an exam once, instead of taking multiple exams which all test for similar competencies and skills. Once the pilot project is completed, departments will be asked to assess the outcome of the pilot project by evaluating the quality of Contract Analyst personnel hired through this new methodology. Departments will also be asked to help assess the new processes and practices identified throughout the pilot.

CEO CCA Strategies

In addition to the pilot project, DHR and CCA have identified implementation plans and schedules for the recommendations. As related to CCA, a five-year strategic plan has been developed which directly addresses recommendations in the HR Study. The plan encompasses improvements to administrative processes, with an emphasis on greater customer service and performance-based management, technical training of both central and line department staff, and systemic programmatic changes that include the consolidation of job specific classifications into a reduced number of classifications grouped into similar job families incorporating the competency-based model. Other jurisdictions implementing civil service reform have moved to reduce the number of classifications. The reduction will have an immediate impact on the streamlining of the recruitment and selection process. It is anticipated that it will take approximately five years to work through the 2,475 County classifications. CCA has already implemented a customized version of the Federal Evaluation System (FES) to use as a technical tool for measuring internal equity and is using material from other agencies such as the federal government O*NET system and the Los Angeles Unified School District competency model. Finally, the strategic plan emphasizes the documentation of new programs and methodologies through extensive written policies and guidelines.

Department of Human Resources Strategies

DHR has completed its new strategic plan, which integrates and emphasizes many of the core improvements recommended in the consultant study and identified through discussions with departments. Key goals include improved communication and collaboration, performance-based management, and providing innovative and timely service delivery through efficient, customer focused HR solutions and processes. More specifically, DHR is engaged in several strategies to improve HR service delivery including:

- Developing the core competencies and examination required for the Contract Analyst competency-based testing pilot;

- Developing a technical competency model and course outline for Human Resources Generalists;

- Utilizing the Learning Net to establish career paths based on the competency models;

- Piloting the use of job specific questionnaires to reduce exam analyst time for reviewing applications to determine whether candidates meet minimum requirements and allow for the immediate scheduling of test dates for qualified applicants;

- Implementing automation to allow for the electronic posting and sharing of promulgated examination lists;

- Conducting a certified exam analyst training program, an 11-week course which all departmental exam analysts will be required to take to increase the skill level within the County's personnel operations;

- Implementing an enhanced countywide succession planning program in collaboration with all line departments, which includes enhanced supervisory training for line supervisors;

- Developing, with the Internal Services Department and Chief Information Officer, a new, user friendly DHR website which will help to establish the County as an employer of choice;

- Enhancing the DHR job information web page with information regarding specific job opportunities and upcoming exams;

- Improving customer focus by obtaining feedback from primary customers, including job applicants, and launching a customer survey process for various stakeholder groups; and

- Promoting the use of commentless Appraisal of Promotability (AP) standards to streamline the AP process.

In addition, DHR has completed several other significant improvements. DHR has developed a core competency model (dictionary) for training and selecting administrative and professional employees. The Department restructured the exam process to encourage more candidates' participation by reviewing peripheral materials later in the process. In addition, DHR has assigned exam analysts a consultative role to various departments to increase their technical support to County departments' recruitment and selection services, fostering greater cooperation and improved communications with departments. DHR recently received a grant from the Productivity Investment Fund to establish a DHR metrics program, PeopleStats, which will collect and monitor performance data to improve DHR's performance and service delivery. DHR will provide initial customer service and account management training to all DHR staff and has selected a vendor to assist the department in training all County HR staff in the basic HR competencies.

DHR has developed a phased implementation plan for the study recommendations (short-term=within six months; mid-range=six months to two years; and long-range=more than two years). Over the next six months, DHR will focus on:

- Strategic partnering with County departments;

- Customer service initiatives such as implementation of an account manager approach;

- Improvements to recruitment and selection through the Contract Analyst pilot project and the eHR Talent Management system;

- Review of Civil Service rules and policies, in conjunction with the Economy and Efficiency Commission; and

- Workforce planning – turnover analysis and identification of significant County issues including pending retirement.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES

Examination, recruitment, and classification and compensation functions in the County are anticipated to be significantly improved through the use of human resources best practices which will promote efficiency and better customer service to all stakeholders.

Respectfully submitted,

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

WTF:BC
EFS:ef

Attachments (2)

c: All Department Heads

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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Human Resources Study

Assessment of Four Core Human Resources Systems:

Recruitment   Selection

Classification   Compensation

And Opportunities for Improvement

November 2009

Prepared by:

Cheryl Mahaffey
CM Consults

and

Sandra M. Comrie
Reward Strategy Group, Inc.

About Cheryl Mahaffey

Ms. Mahaffey works with businesses across the country to design and implement human resource programs that allow them to evaluate and select the best possible employees. She specializes in the development and evaluation of employee selection procedures and training programs.

She has conducted or directed the analysis of more than 400 jobs, with the goal of developing valid selection procedures. Her experience in test construction and validation ranges from the development of licensing and certification examinations to ability tests. She advises clients in both the public and private sector regarding compliance with fair employment and affirmative action requirements, including ADA provisions.

She is the author of numerous publications including the American Bankers Association's *Hiring Guide*, The Credit Union Executive Society's (CUES) *Hire Right Guide*, PSI's *Questions and Answers on Employment Testing*, and *Accommodating Employment Testing to the Needs of Individuals with Disabilities*. She is a frequent guest speaker, and has delivered addresses to organizations such as the Credit Union Executive Society, the Personnel Testing Council of Southern California, the Southern California Personnel Management Association, the International Personnel Management Association Assessment Council, the Personnel Testing Council of San Diego, the Western Regional Personnel Management Association, the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, and the American Bankers Association. She has also served as a consultant to attorneys concerning litigation and EEO related activities.

Ms. Mahaffey has provided training across a wide array of topics including, job analysis, test development, interview techniques, and human resource systems. Recently, she has focused attention on integrated selection systems that mitigate adverse impact and provide valid and cost effective tools that employers can use to develop effective selection systems.

Prior to establishing CM Consults (CMC) in 2002, Ms. Mahaffey served as both the Vice President and Director of Consulting Services for Psychological Services, Inc. (PSI), a well-known test publication and consulting organization. In that capacity, she has consulted with hundreds of companies, helping them establish job-related and defensible selection systems. Before establishing her 20 year relationship with PSI, Ms. Mahaffey evaluated the effectiveness of training programs for GTE (General Telephone Company), and developed and validated selection tests for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She has over 30 years of experience developing valid assessment procedures in industries such as banking, insurance, finance, manufacturing, retail, electric and gas utilities, telecommunications, and the public sector.

Clients include Adecco, Bell South, Venturi Partners, Silgan Containers, Silgan Plastics, Edison Electric Institute, Cost Reduction Technologies, Rockwell, Arthur Anderson, Wells Fargo Bank, Blue Cross of New Jersey, Michigan Law Enforcement Training Council, The Air Quality Management District, Transamerica Life Companies, T. Rowe Price, Homestead Financial Services, Thompson Tractor, Sprint, Citizen Savings, Performance Assessment Network (PAN), the Institute of Professional Environmental Practice, Los Angeles County, Los Angeles City, The Department of Water and Power, the California Board of Landscape Architects, and Union Pacific Railroad.

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About Sandra Comrie

Ms. Comrie has been the Executive Director of Reward Strategy Group, Inc., a management consulting firm, for over 17 years. She has advised and served both large and small clients, with employee populations in the tens of thousands down to staff levels of under 100. Her counsel is valued by pacesetting firms as well as smaller, niche enterprises. Her client projects have involved the disciplines of job analysis and position classification, compensation, strategic planning, organization design, performance management and board governance effectiveness.

Before joining RSG, Ms. Comrie was the Chief Operating Officer for a nationally recognized corporate health care and employee benefits consulting firm. She was recruited into this position from the top human resources executive position in Transamerica Life Companies, where she led a top-to-bottom transformation of the company's HR programs and developed, implemented and managed a full spectrum of HR programs/processes for 5,500 employees.

Before joining Transamerica, Ms. Comrie was with the City of Los Angeles for 22 years, the final seven as their Assistant General Manager–Personnel. During her career with the City, she worked in, managed and led staff assigned to core department functions, including classification, recruitment, selection and EEO/Affirmative action. She led special projects to streamline the City's classification plan. As Assistant General Manager, she served as project leader for the department's leadership and participation in a major civil service reform initiative, resulting in several amendments to the City Charter.

Ms. Comrie is a 1962 graduate of the University of California–Los Angeles, and later completed UCLA's Anderson School Executive Business program. In 1983, she became President-Elect and in 1984 the President of the International Personnel Management Association, providing distinguished leadership of this professional organization. Ms. Comrie has also served on a number of nonprofit boards of directors, including the Los Angeles Urban League and the Foundation for Employment and Disability. She has published several articles on effective human resources management practices, and is the co-author of two books: *Strategic Management—Creating Your Organization's Future* and *Human Resources Policies—Structuring Staff Guidelines for Your Organization.*

Ms. Comrie's clients have included the Superior Courts of Los Angeles and Orange Counties; City of Los Angeles; County of Los Angeles; Cities of Portland, Long Beach, San Bernardino, Moreno Valley, Oxnard and Thousand Oaks; Long Beach Community College District, Antioch University, Orange County Department of Education and numerous California school districts; Southern Nevada Water Authority/Las Vegas Valley Water District; numerous water agencies; Port Authority of San Diego; Regional San Diego Airport Authority; several special districts including transit, housing and wastewater; numerous large-scale credit unions; and non-profit community development organizations.

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HUMAN RESOURCES STUDY

Assessment of Four Core Human Resources Systems

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Acknowledgments

In early 2009, as we began our review of the four core human resources systems addressed in this report, a number of changes were already in motion that would impact ways the Department of Human Resources would function. Personnel transitions had left key vacancies in leadership positions; DHR staff had been working on a series of recommendations — the first of the series, "Streamlining the Central-ized Examination Process: Building a Leaner System" — had just been completed; and staff were gearing up for roll out of the new eHR and online performance evaluation systems.

Lisa Garrett assumed the Acting Director of Personnel position in April, 2009 and immediately took action to improve expectations of service delivery by actively engaging line departments, breaking down silos within the department, assessing departmental strengths and weaknesses and developing a new DHR Vision —"Leading the way to HR excellence through innovation, efficiency and customer service." Managers and staff in DHR have made many significant strides forward in addressing a broad range of DHR functions and operations. Appendix E provides a summary, prepared by Ms. Garrett, of improvements which DHR has accomplished since her appointment.

We appreciate the cooperation and openness to new ideas we have experienced throughout the course of our study. The first steps have been taken within DHR which will transform the core HR systems being studied into strategic, high value functions that will help the County achieve its overall goals of *Opera-tional Effectiveness* and *Workforce Excellence*. The new department strategic plan presents a sound roadmap for DHR's transformation into an organization "focused on providing innovative and efficient HR solutions."

We also want to express our appreciation to managers and staff in the Classification and Compensation division of the Chief Executive Office with whom we worked on this project. Their commitment to high professional standards, openness regarding current challenges and problems in serving their depart-mental customers and eagerness to embrace new solutions and approaches provide the necessary foundation for transformation of classification/compensation programs. They share our optimism about implementing new approaches that will result in timely, responsive, professionally sound classification and compensation support for achieving strategic County and departmental goals.

Finally, we would like to express our special thanks to all the stakeholders — particularly those who served on the Human Resources Focus Group — who willingly made time to answer our questions, respond to our surveys and provide thoughtful feedback and recommendations. We were deeply impressed by their commitment to HR management excellence and eagerness to be a part of solutions which the County adopts to transform the four core HR systems evaluated in this report.

— Cheryl Mahaffey
— Sandra Comrie

November 2009

Section 1: Executive Summary

Purpose for Report

Cheryl Mahaffey, CM Consults, and Sandra Comrie, Reward Strategy Group, Inc., were retained by the Chief Executive Office to conduct an assessment of the County of Los Angeles' core human resources systems, specifically recruitment, selection, classification and compensation. This assessment is intended to evaluate the extent to which these systems are aligned with the County's strategic plan, and to identify opportunities to make improvements that will result in providing better support for the recruitment, selection, retention and utilization of the County's human resources.

Where Are We Now? The Current State of Recruitment, Selection, Classification and Compensation[1]

During the course of our study, we analyzed rules, policies and work processes, reviewed work products and interviewed/obtained input from a wide range of internal stakeholders, managers and staff.

We want to state at the outset our observation that there is sound, and in some cases exemplary, professional work being done in some areas and there are many talented and dedicated staff members working in these functions. Stakeholders made a point in their feedback of acknowledging positive aspects in operations of these core systems and their positive working relationships with managers and staff whom they perceive as striving to provide good service to departments.

However, based on the totality of our assessment, we conclude that:

> These core systems are ineffective and costly. They have very limited credibility among stakeholders who must use the services provided.

Rather than operating as ***strategic partners*** with departments to accomplish the mission and programs of the County, these systems operate, overall, as ***gatekeepers and guardians of past practice***.

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[1] Authors' note: Throughout the report, *DHR* is frequently used for purposes of economy of words when referring to the core systems of recruitment and selection which are the responsibility of that department. Other programs and functions of the department were not evaluated in this study. Many stakeholders commented on the effectiveness of a number of other DHR programs such as the Training Academy.

Specifically, these core systems:

♦ Are not designed or managed, in practice, in a way that supports achievement of the County's strategic plan goals of *Operational Effectiveness* and *Workforce Excellence*. They do not provide effective support to departments in accomplishing their program and service missions.

♦ Rely heavily on work processes and procedures that are inefficient and costly. Staff recommendations regarding process improvements are not acted upon. Requests for services often languish for long periods and results — whether an eligible list or a completed classification study — take far too long to accomplish.

♦ Have not kept up-to-date with human resources best *practice* standards (summarized in subsequent report sections).

All groups of surveyed stakeholders, when asked how well the Core HR functions support the County's goals for organizational effectiveness and workforce excellence, indicated that the core HR functions fell short of being "Adequate."

Figure 1.1

Overall Support of Organizational Effectiveness

Class/Comp: 2.79, 2.5, 2.5
Selection: 2.93, 2.5, 2.31
Recruitment: 2.89, 2.33, 2.5

Legend: Department Survey, HR Focus Panel, Stakeholders
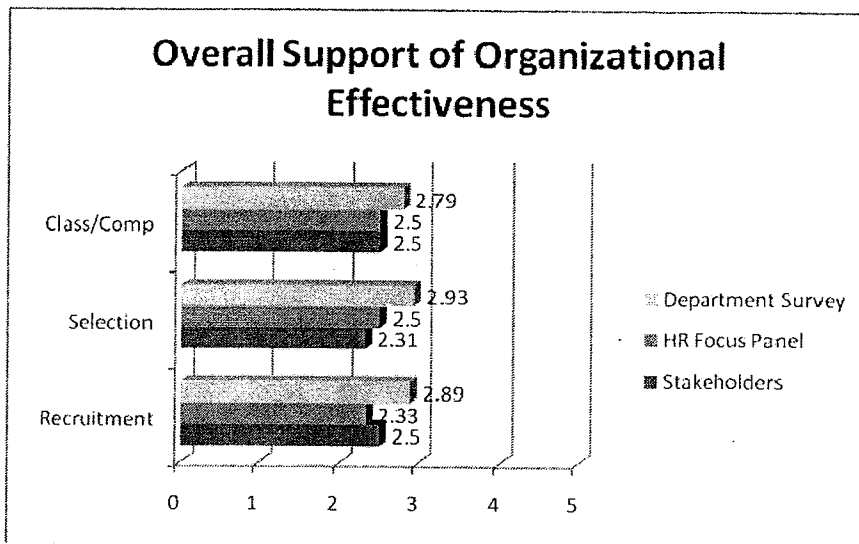
1=Unacceptable 2=Poor 3=Adequate 4=Good 5=Excellent

There are significant costs associated with these programs. The FY 2009–2010 budget for the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the Class/Comp division of the CEO's Office includes the following appropriations for these four core systems:

Program	Gross County Appropriation
Countywide examinations and test research	$5,467,000 / 43 budgeted positions
DHR Department Support (includes monitoring of the Delegated Examination Program, development of Countywide policies, exam appeals and some other functions)	$2,858,000 / 20 budgeted positions

Compensation Policy Division (Classification and Compensation only) $2,550,000 / 25 budgeted positions

Approximate Total $10,875,000 / 88 budgeted positions

We believe there are significant opportunities for improvement in the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of these core functions. Given the size of the program funding involved, redirection in use of these resources could have potentially significant benefits in terms of improvements in the quality of HR products and services to departments and the County.

Because of the lack of data described in later sections of this report, we are not in a position to make recommendations on staffing levels. While we can observe inefficiencies and what we consider to be waste of resources, there are few mechanisms we can use to quantify the opportunity for improved Return on Investment (ROI) or to recommend appropriate staffing changes. It is very likely, however, that additional staffing will be required in order to move forward quickly with the transformation in these core functions envisioned in our recommendations.

How Did We Get To Where We Are?

There is no simple, "if only we had…" answer to how this condition has come to exist in HR systems that are so fundamentally important to effective County operations and so essential to attainment of the organization's strategic goals.

In our professional opinion, the current state of these systems results from a set of complex, inter-connected factors:

- ◆ <u>Lack of effective proactive leadership</u> over many years. Past management practices appear to have been focused on compliance and avoidance of risk, when what was needed was active leadership that was strategic in orientation, customer service focused and collaborative in working with central staff and department management to anticipate and provide HR programs and services that met Countywide short and long-term needs.

- ◆ Stakeholders, when asked where they would place DHR/Class and Comp on a continuum from strategic HR leadership to operational/transaction focus, almost universally agreed that the <u>focus was on transactions, not strategic leadership</u>.

Figure 1.2

Strategic Focus

Bar chart showing Strategic Focus ratings for Class/Comp and DHR by Departments, Focus Panel, and Stakeholders.

Class/Comp: Departments 2.29, Focus Panel 2.6, Stakeholders 1.25

DHR: Departments 2.25, Focus Panel 1.83, Stakeholders 1.43

Legend: Departments, Focus Panel, Stakeholders
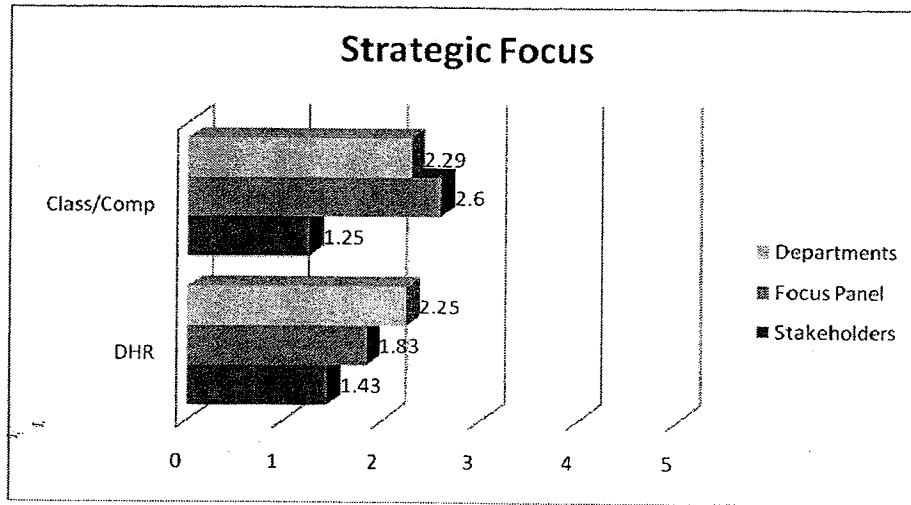
1 = Operational/transactional   5 = Strategic Focus

Several excellent programs and initiatives — which might have had significant strategic impact had they been aggressively implemented — have been completed over the last ten years. Examples of these are the Strategic Workforce Planning program and the Strategic Values Survey. Yet, these initiatives have suffered from implementation problems and lack of follow through, thus wasting the opportunities they presented and wasting or sub-optimizing return on the costs of their development.

♦ <u>Absence of a customer-service orientation</u>. Stakeholders do not believe that managers and staff of the four core HR systems view departments as their valued customers. They are perceived as taking rigid, one-size-fits-all, bureaucratic, reactive approaches when presented with customer needs and challenges.

♦ <u>Lack of a fully coherent human resources architecture</u> that includes clear roles and responsibilities for central HR and departmental HR, cost/charge back mechanisms consistent with defined roles and responsibilities and appropriate accountability indicators and systems.

♦ <u>A proliferation of classes in an out-of-date classification plan</u>. There are too many classes with too few distinctions. Classification staff has not been able to make headway in resolving the many classification and internal equity issues that resulted from the eight years when the function was completely decentralized.

Continuation of a large number of narrow and overlapping classes has a significant cost, not just for the Classification/Compensation function. These classes also place an excessive burden on recruitment and selection processes. Filling even one position in a class that is *unnecessary* requires the use of resources to create a unique exam bulletin, perform a job analysis, conduct recruitment, accept and review applications and prepare and administer tests and other selection devices.

- <u>Labor-intensive recruitment and selection practices</u> that require intensive effort and expense but result in low ROI. Using selection tools with low validity and utility, as the County does quite extensively, reduces the likelihood of hiring or promoting talented individuals who are a best-fit for departments' work needs and requirements. Filling hiring needs with top-quality employees may happen more in spite of the system rather than because of it.

  The burden and cost of using inefficient and ineffective recruitment and selection tools/ processes is further exacerbated by the excessive demand for those services caused by the proliferation of classes in the County's classification plan.

- <u>Lack of *business orientation* in managing work flows and workloads</u> in recruitment, selection, classification and compensation. There are few coherent, consistently applied work management tools and performance metrics in place with which to raise red-flags about and identify process inefficiencies, to evaluate resource utilization and allocation, and to monitor program performance. Many decisions are made without consideration of costs or value-added.

  Organizations cannot manage what they do not measure. The absence of performance metrics for these core HR systems deprives managers of these functions of opportunities to gain insight — into and form judgments about —the effectiveness and efficiency of their programs, processes and people. The result is ineffective use of the limited resources available. Far lower value-added programs and services are delivered than what the assigned resources should be capable of producing.

  This lack of data also makes it virtually impossible to create and institutionalize a sense of urgency in completing work to meet customer needs. Instead, work generally follows the track of past practice and is easily delayed by bureaucratic hurdles, however small.

- <u>Less than fully trained staff who do not possess the competencies to operate in a strategic, consultative and collaborative manner.</u> While there are talented employees working in these core functions, many are relatively new and inexperienced and have not received the level and types of training needed to reach full professional proficiency in the HR disciplines to which they are assigned. Not only is there a tremendous need for professional training in principles and practices, there is a further need for practical learning-in-application through role-modeling, coaching and mentoring by managers and supervisors. Unfortunately, this appears to have been a limited or absent practice all together in some areas.

  Beyond developing proficiencies in the professional disciplines involved in recruitment, selection, classification and compensation, HR analysts need to have demonstrated competencies in a number of domains such as:

  - ➢ Communication, including active listening.
  - ➢ Business fundamentals and analytics.
  - ➢ Internal consulting and change management.
  - ➢ Project management.

> ➢ Interpersonal competencies such as influencing, negotiating, consensus-building, coalition-building and conflict resolution.

A limited set of competencies is needed to simply cite a rule in response to a departmental request for assistance. A much broader set of competencies is required to engage the department in assessing a situation and understanding the business need involved, evaluating alternative courses of action to resolve the issue and their potential consequences, understanding and interpreting the rule in practice, building agreement on the course of action to be taken and following through to ensure timely resolution. The former is what frequently exists; the latter is what is needed for effective individual and organizational performance.

This need for training and competency development applies both to the central HR functions and to staff in line departments performing recruitment, selection and classification functions.

A Note about Workforce Planning

Our study mandate did not include a review of the County's strategic workforce planning/succession planning processes. However, it is such an important program that we would like to highlight workforce planning's central role in high performance organizations and underscore the need for this activity to be given a high priority.

The County's workforce planning efforts began as early as 2001, driven by both HR and CEO strategic plans. At a time when few agencies were actively involved in workforce planning, the County took a leadership role and received a number of awards for the program.

The initial program was very broad in scope and, because of the County's decentralized HR model, the effort required for implementation was left to each department's HR staff. While DHR developed the plans and tools to be used and provided workforce analytical data, it did not take an active role in ensuring follow through by departments. Further, it did not assume responsibility for rolling up department-specific analyses of workforce planning challenges to a strategic level for CEO/Board review and action.

Data included in the 2009 Strategic Workforce Planning Program Overview make the need for action in this area abundantly clear. Based on April 2006 data, 50 percent of executive management were projected to retire over the next 10 years (by 2016), while 32 percent were expected to retire within the next five years (by 2011). Forty-two percent of management employees were projected to retire within 10 years, while 24 percent were projected to retire within the next 5 years.

The current economic downturn has caused some number of these managers to postpone retirement. Assuming economic conditions improve during the next two to three years, the County could well experience a significant outflow of its executive and management staff. The Strategic Workforce Planning Program has not prepared the County to meet the staffing challenges it will face if this occurs.

There appears to be no momentum in the Strategic Workforce Planning Program, except in a small number of departments. As far as we can determine, there is no action occurring at a strategic County-

wide level aimed at developing a pool of well qualified potential successors for County managers and executives who are likely to retire in the coming few years.

Stakeholders expressed the view that DHR should be taking a proactive leadership role in developing strategies to create a pipeline for bringing talented new people into County government and developing those already in County service.

See Section 3, beginning at 16, and Section 5, *Infuse New Talent into the County Workforce*, for more information and recommendations.

Where Do We Need to Get to?

In order to support achievement of the County's strategic goals and internalization of the County's Values as stated in its Strategic Plan (see Section 3, page 37), the County's Human Resource architecture (both central and departmental) must be rebuilt and properly integrated.

From an overarching perspective, the County's human resources program (all DHR functions, including these four core systems) must:

- ♦ Develop a strategic perspective, anticipating and planning for the County's long-term leadership, management and staffing requirements, while developing and managing the processes and programs necessary to acquire, retain, motivate and reward County staff.

- ♦ Develop and implement strategies for building and retaining a highly skilled, productive work-force through professionally sound, merit-based recruitment and selection processes, and other programs and services that promote development of talented employees.

- ♦ See themselves as a *customer service* and *consulting services* organization. HR managers and staff must understand the County's multiple businesses and the needs of their various customer groups and utilize practices that are responsive to these needs. They must operate collabora-tively among themselves and with their customers and stakeholders.

- ♦ Be built around and promote accountability for results throughout the organization. This orientation must be all-encompassing. Use of performance metrics is essential for measuring, assessing and evaluating results.

- ♦ Among their managers and staff, have demonstrated competence as business consultants and problem solvers, innovative and critical thinkers and change agents, as well as professional HR expertise.

- ♦ Be efficient and cost effective in their operations. Performance metrics must be in place and used in continuous evaluation and quality improvement processes to ensure effective service delivery.

Specifically, the following need to be in place:

- ◆ An up-to-date, streamlined classification plan based on consistent and understandable criteria, with sound job content documentation for all classes.

- ◆ Proactive recruitment systems and tools that seek out talented prospects for County positions.

- ◆ Streamlined merit-based selection processes that identify individuals with high performance potential using efficient, competency-based methods and tools.

- ◆ Compensation and reward strategies that position the County to compete for needed talent and reward performance and accountability.

What Actions Should be Taken to Get There?

Just as there are no simple answers for how the current state of these four core HR systems — recruitment, selection, classification and compensation — has come to exist, there are no simple solutions that will quickly resolve the identified deficiencies.

Sixty-six recommendations for change are presented in Sections 3, 4 and 5 of this report. Many of these proposed changes will require committed action over time to resolve significant underlying problems in how these functions operate. Other proposed changes can be acted on quickly to ameliorate and resolve specific problems.

We do not underestimate the effort and commitment required to accomplish what is recommended — essentially an extensive transformation of major functions that are embedded in a powerful cultural environment. These systems have operated as they are today for a significant number of years and some of the staff performing in and/or leading them have learned and internalized the current modas operandi — "this is how we do it in the County." Using a simple analogy, it is far more difficult to reconstruct a house while living in it, than it is to build a new house from the foundation up.

However, we believe the recommendations we are presenting, taken together, *can* transform these core HR systems into the strategic, high value functions needed by the County if it is to achieve its overall goals of *Operational Effectiveness* and *Workforce Excellence*.

We have highlighted below a series of recommendations that we believe are most important for achieving significant improvement in the County's recruitment, selection, classification and compensation systems. Included are recommendations that are both strategic/long-term and tactical/short-term. Section 6 provides a full list of all recommendations included in Sections 3 to 5, including ones that are not highlighted here.

Strategic/Long-term Recommendations

Following are recommendations that are important for rebuilding these four core systems from a strategic perspective. These actions will require implementation efforts over a several year period and thus will require continued executive and Board support to ensure that changes occur as planned. Additional recommendations similar in long-term scope are found in Sections 3 to 5.

1. Become a *strategic business partner* with line departments. Appoint an advisory executive group to work with the Interim Director of Personnel and CEO staff to develop an overall set of change objectives and a strategy for effective change management to accomplish them. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented in this report; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress is made toward goals established. (See Section 3, page 27.)

2. Work directly with departments to identify current and future human resources needs; develop understanding of departments' changing business needs and become knowledgeable about the business goals and challenges of their organizations; consider assigning an experienced DHR staff person to serve as "account manager" for each department. (See Section 3, page 35.)

3. Appoint a high-level, Countywide working group to re-examine the current County HR architecture and its alignment with the County strategic plan and governance model and report back to CEO in six months; deliverables to include: (See Section 3, pages 37 to 38.)

    a. Reexamination of and delineation of appropriate central versus line department responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities.

    b. A conceptual framework and criteria for building required DHR resource support and charge-backs for services provided.

4. Develop and implement initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce, taking advantage of the current interest in public service. Initiatives can be modeled on best practices already in place in certain County departments. Consider:

    a. Recruiting a pre-qualified pool of potential employees before they are needed to fill positions; develop mechanisms to bring outstanding candidates on board immediately while minimizing County costs.

    b. Increase the use of unpaid or partially paid internships to tackle specific projects or work in specific areas.

    c. Develop a special voluntary management training and career rotation program to accelerate preparation for executive and management roles.

    (See Section 4, page 65 and Section 5, page 88.)

5. Transition to the use of a *Competency-Model* methodology for classification and selection to significantly streamline and improve the effectiveness of both systems. (See Section 3, page 40 and Section 5, page 106.)

    a. Move to a Competency-Based Job Analysis System; simplify the WRIPAC job analysis process now in use and integrate it with the new County competency model; evaluate the potential for using multi-purpose job analysis processes for both classification and selection.

b. Develop job classes and families based upon similarity of competencies, resulting in significant consolidation of classes and streamlining of the classification plan.

c. Conduct validation studies in one job family and "transport" validity to other jobs within the family.

d. Develop or lease selection instruments to assess core competencies applicable to multiple classifications; develop methods of "banking" candidate scores for use in subsequent examinations as soon as technologically feasible.

e. Evaluate the quality, validity, and reliability of exam content vis-à-vis its ability to generate talent with core competencies reflective of organizational needs.

6. Streamline the County's classification plan over a five-to-seven-year period. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented in this report; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress toward goals established. (See Section 4 for detailed information.)

a. Appoint a classification advisory committee and, in collaboration with the committee, formulate a *Classification Philosophy* that expresses, at a policy level, the County's objectives regarding classification plan design.

b. Incorporate use of the *Competency-Model* methodology.

c. In collaboration with the classification advisory committee, develop a comprehensive plan to meet this objective, including establishing priorities in the review of job families/class structures that address both pressing department needs and central agency concerns.

d. Establish mechanisms for on-going maintenance of the classification plan, including required information management tools such as coding of classes by service, job family, EEOC and FLSA purposes.

7. Develop and implement a comprehensive five-year plan to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of County recruitment and hiring processes. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented in this report; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress toward goals established. (See Section 5 for detailed information)

a. Utilize a variety of marketing, branding and outreach recruitment techniques to reach high-potential applicants who fit short- and long-term County staffing requirements.

b. Redesign exam bulletins to better present the County as an employer while clearly communicating specific job information.

c. Redesign the County/DHR websites to portray the County as an "employer of choice" and to more effectively attract top quality applicants.

d. Make greater use of assessment processes with high validity and utility, including developed or leased competency tests and pre-packaged selection systems; incorporate innovative techniques such as online prescreening and online testing.

e. Institute a feedback process following the conclusion of recruitment and selection processes to obtain feedback from managers and a sample of applicants on timeliness of the process and quality of the resulting eligible list.

f. Implement process improvements and technology solutions that improve speed to hire, including processes for communicating with applicants via email or the internet.

8. Formulate, with the involvement of line departments, and implement performance metrics for managing, monitoring and evaluating organizational performance. Assign a financial analyst from the CEO's Office to advise on development and use of ROI measures. (See Section 3, 4 and 5 for additional information.)

   a. As a first step, instruct DHR and Class/Comp to develop and implement an initial work management tracking and reporting process.

   b. Following development of organizational performance metrics, formulate performance standards based on these metrics for each of the key tasks performed and utilize these in the staff performance evaluation process.

9. Revitalize the County's Strategic Workforce Planning Program. (See Section 3, page 47).

   a. Identify department needs to achieve effective implementation and provide consultation and additional resources/support to accomplish this.

   b. Integrate department workforce plans; identify **significant Countywide issues**; develop strategies and begin execution of implementation priorities to address strategic workforce needs.

Executive Summary – Tactical/Short-term Recommendations

1. Conduct an assessment, in consultation with the CEO, County Counsel, Auditor-Controller and all County departments, to re-examine the current HR policy framework; review any pending policy development requests; identify need for policy revisions and development of new policies; and establish a schedule and timeline to revise/develop policy drafts for review. (See Section 3, page 35.)

2. Develop and implement, **with a sense of urgency**, intensive training programs to meet critical training and development needs for core HR systems staff in central agencies as well as line department staff performing similar functions. (See discussion in Sections 3, 4 and 5.)

   a. Move forward quickly with final development and implement the Certified Examination Analyst assessment and training program.

   b. Develop and implement a new classification training program; consider establishing a Certified Classification Analyst assessment and training program as a follow-on effort.

c. Include training modules on internal consulting and change management competencies and on business fundamentals and analytics.

d. Include cross-training, rotational assignments and/or other work assignment methods to enhance staff understanding of the businesses and operational needs of the departments they serve.

3. Improve customer focus and communications. Give significant weight to customer service effectiveness by using the performance standard for *Customer Service,* included in the MAPP Performance Evaluation document, and applying it, or a similar behavioral statement to *all* DHR/Class and Comp staff; mandate use of the customer survey process included in the behavioral description or obtain feedback on performance from the managers'/staff members' primary customers. (See Section 3, page 40.)

4. Propose Civil Service Rule changes needed to support and facilitate implementation of various change and improvement initiatives, including:

   a. New rules that allow for streamlining hiring processes and providing "flexibilities" similar to those used by the federal Office of Personnel Management. (See Section 5, page 92.)

   b. Rule change to make Appraisals of Promotability optional.

   c. Use of broad classifications together with selective certification, flex classes and/or any other approaches that are developed consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy.*

   d. Rules and supporting policies regarding reclassification of positions to higher and lower classes following major classification studies.

   e. Rules and supporting policies regarding employee status in positions affected by department reorganizations and restructures.

5. Formulate a strategy for comprehensive implementation of the federal Factor Evaluation System (FES) for conducting job analyses for classification and compensation purposes; ensure integration with use of Competency-Model processes. (See Section 4, page 66.)

6. Design efficient procedures and forms for conducting large-scale studies required to streamline the classification plan; include elements required for Competency-Model processes. (See Section 4, page 72.)

7. Streamline day-to-day work processes in Class/Comp in order to maximize resources assigned to classification plan improvements. Processes to be addressed include: the budget position allocation process and special salary actions. (See Section 4, page 80.)

8. Redesign the County's class specification format, providing for the inclusion of clear classification standards and essential competencies required for proficient job performance; establish methods to improve the relevance and appropriateness of statements of minimum qualifications. (See Section 4, page 71.)

9. Implement a variety of process improvements that will streamline the County hiring process. (See Section 5.)

   a. Streamline the exam bulletin review process. Actions are being taken by DHR and should include developing pre-approved templates and language for department use, and a single-point approval process.

   b. Change the order of certain elements of the application review process to achieve greater cost effectiveness and screening validity.

   c. Develop templates or model procedures that can be used across job families and developed prior to a specific exam request. These "pre-packaged" selection systems should focus on improving the quality of selection, particularly for new hires, and can easily be adapted by departments to meet their individual hiring needs. The selection systems should include recruitment plans, supplemental applications, MQ evaluation criteria, structured interviews, ability tests for foundation skills, "soft skill" assessments, realistic job previews and other selection tools.

   d. Improve the examination pre-planning process to include a strategic consultation with requesting departments regarding hiring needs.

   e. Establish clear expectations and target completion dates with the department at the outset of the examination process and monitor "real time" progress toward goals. Get commitment from the department to supply necessary subject matter experts and provide quick turn around on approvals.

   f. Develop an examination status web page for each recruitment where departments and applicants can find information on examination status.

   g. Develop a searchable database to answer frequently asked questions.

   h. Take immediate action to shape the applicant pool including forecasting the size of list required to fill vacancies and limiting the size of the list, if necessary.

   i. Simplify the WRIPAC job analysis process.

   j. Consider eliminating or revamping the Appraisal of Promotability (AP) process to improve selection and reduce examination completion time.

   k. Incorporate a high-level financial analyst into the DHR team and charge that individual with analysis of the cost/benefit of current processes.

   l. Immediately revisit the many excellent recommendations made by County DHR staff in its report on "Streamlining the Centralized Examination Process: Building a Leaner System" and by the CEO Efficiency Team and implement changes.

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Section 2: Introduction

A Brief History

The County's central Personnel Department was disbanded in the early 1980s and merged with the Chief Administrative Office. In 1986, major HR functions including classification, recruitment, selection and employee development were delegated to line departments. These delegated functions were performed exclusively on a department-by-department basis for about eight years.

In late 1994, the Board of Supervisors re-established the Department of Human Resources to address serious concerns that had been raised both by County departments and the community regarding the effectiveness of the County's HR programs and compliance with the County Code and Charter. The department was recreated with considerable optimism regarding the benefits to the County of:

- ♦ Greater public access to County hiring and recruitment functions through creation of a central job information resource unit;

- ♦ Enhanced overall emphasis on Countywide personnel issues, providing for development and implementation of countywide personnel policy, guidelines, standards and monitoring;

- ♦ Maintenance of updated classification specifications;

- ♦ Enhanced focus on training and professional development;

- ♦ Central monitoring of compliance with legal requirements and County policy; and

- ♦ Proactive approach to human resources legislation and implementation.[2]

The intention was to develop an efficient overall program and effective resource allocation between line and central departments so that both could function adequately. Improved County performance in key functions such as selection and recruitment practices, training and professional development, and classification was the goal of the reorganization. County leaders hoped that a centralized department would enhance uniform implementation of board policy across departments, yet still allow departments appropriate flexibility in the application of personnel policies and guidelines.

The County's Strategic Plan, created in 1999 and updated most recently in 2009, underscores the importance of providing these intended benefits. Strategic Plan Goals focus on achievement of operational effectiveness throughout the organization and on delivery of high-quality public programs and services to improve the quality of life in Los Angeles County, both of which depend on recruitment, selection, development, retention and motivation of employees and managers who possess competencies expressed in the statement of County Values.

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[2] Report to the Board of Supervisors – Creation of Department of Personnel, September 8, 1994, Chief Administrative Office.

Study Components and Methodology

We have compiled information for use in conducting this study from a variety of sources. We conducted extensive research of human resources literature to identify best practices and innovative approaches that have been used by agencies in both the public and private sectors. All employers have grappled with the need for change and transformation — in order to make their management and human resource systems more responsive to a host of contemporary and sometimes competing needs and requirements:

- Financial constraints

- Political and community pressure for improved agency performance

- Changes in demographics of the workforce, ranging from retiring Baby Boomers to tech-savvy Gen Xers

- Advances in the field of public management based on research and practical application

- Legal requirements

Certainly, the County of Los Angeles continues to face these same challenges.

Central HR must provide *leadership* to assist the County in developing innovative approaches to the talent and resource management challenges it faces. This includes formulating Countywide policies, procedures, strategies and standards ... and monitoring and enforcing compliance with these requirements.

Human Resources must provide service and respond to many constituents and customers, as illustrated in Figure 2.1, whose needs, interests and desires are not always in alignment.

Figure 2.1
Centralized Core HR Functions Must Respond to Many Pressures

-CM Consults-
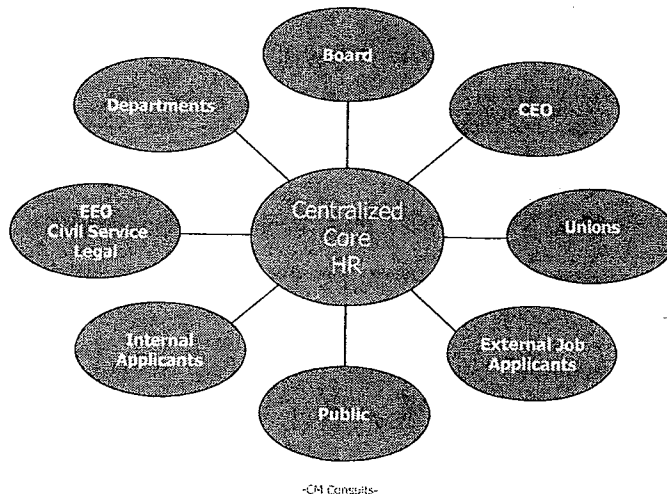
We conducted interviews, surveys and focus panels to engage and obtain feedback from representatives of as many of these constituent groups as possible. The input we obtained provides a clear picture, from a customer perspective, of the overall challenges both DHR and Class/Comp need to overcome to be viewed as valued and respected partners in accomplishing the County's mission, strategic goals and the program/public service objectives set for each department. See Appendix A for a listing of stakeholder input participants.

Finally, we reviewed a wide variety of documents and materials including:

♦ County Strategic Plan

♦ County Charter, County Code, Civil Service Rules and policies applicable to the County's recruitment, selection, classification and compensation programs.

♦ Philosophies, methodologies, standards and guidelines used by central agency and departmental staff in carrying out their responsibilities in these core HR areas.

In addition, for Classification and Compensation, we reviewed and/or discussed:

♦ County classification plan (Schedule A), class specification database, classification methodologies and related materials.

♦ Organization structure, principal work responsibilities and allocation of staff time among staff's principal responsibilities.

♦ Methods for managing and monitoring major studies and on-going work assignments; timeliness of work results; work statistics.

♦ Classification study practices and processes; completed classification studies.

♦ Classification and Compensation training binders.

♦ Agenda and materials for the Classification Network.

♦ Processes for integrating classification analyses with DHR recruitment and selection processes.

♦ Compensation philosophy, survey agencies, salary setting methodologies, methods of maintaining internal equity among classifications.

For Recruitment and Selection, we also reviewed:

♦ Department of Human Resource Strategic Plans (7/07 Draft and 7/09 Draft).

♦ Organizational structure, examination process flowcharts, and timelines, including CEO Efficiency Team analysis and recommendations.

♦ County recruitment and examination practices including job analysis, job bulletin development, interview development and administration, appraisal of promotability, and ratings from record.

♦ Job Analysis Technical Reports, TRAC reports, EASIER, Item Analysis, and Test Statistics.

- Recruitment and Selection Resource Binder.

- County Recruitment and Examination Process Binder.

- County Strategic Values Survey and Strategic Supervisors Survey.

- County Strategic Workforce Planning Program 2/09.

- Examination Streamlining Project reports including Centralized Examination Telephone Call Study and Workload Analysis Study 6/09.

- Streamlining the Centralized Examination Process: Building a Leaner System 1/09 Countywide Turnover Report.

- Legacy recruitment reports; eHR system plan.

- DHR and Department websites for recruitment and selection activities.

- DHR SWOT Analysis 09.

- Personnel Management Program Review 12/08.

Over the course of the study, we met with and interviewed a significant number of managers and staff regarding specific functions, processes and procedures applicable to their areas of responsibility in these functions.

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Section 3: Broad Themes Emerging from the Assessment —
General Areas for Transformation and Improvement

Several general themes became evident in our review of human resources best practices literature. These, together with established principles of professional HR practice, provided the framework for our evaluation of the County's core HR systems — recruitment, selection, classification and compensation — and identification of potential changes and improvements. These themes apply equally to the central Department of Human Resources and the various County departments that perform functions in these areas.

General Themes

1. The overall human resource function must be aligned with and serve as an integral support system for achievement of an organization's strategic plan and business goals.

2. Human Resources must have a strategic perspective, anticipating and planning for the organization's long-term leadership, management and staffing requirements and the processes and programs necessary to acquire, retain, motivate and reward agency staff.[3]

3. Human Resources must focus on strategies for building and retaining a highly skilled, productive workforce through professionally sound, merit-based recruitment and selection processes, and other programs and services that promote development of talented employees. HR must develop and promulgate programs that lead to greater employee engagement, essential to building a highly productive workforce[4].

4. Human Resources must see itself as a *customer service* and *consulting services* organization. HR managers and staff must understand the businesses of their organization and the needs of their various customer groups and utilize practices that are responsive to these needs.

5. HR programs and systems must be built around and promote accountability for results throughout the organization. This orientation must be all-encompassing. Use of performance metrics is essential for measuring, assessing and evaluating results.

   ➤ Recruitment and selection processes must produce the right people, with the right talents at the needed time.

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[3] "Achieving Public Service Excellence by Investing in Human Capital," National Academy of Public Administration, Center for Human Resources Management.

[4] "The Power of Federal Employee Engagement," The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, Office of Policy and Evaluation, 2008.

> Classification and compensation functions must support line managers by reflecting effective job structures and in acquiring, retaining and deploying staff resources to meet departments' missions and objectives.

> Performance planning and management systems must link individual and team performance to the achievement of organization goals; managers and supervisors must have demonstrated competence in their use. Evaluations of managers/supervisors must be based at least as much on their performance in managing their employees as on their achievement of operational and program goals.

> Compensation administration must be performance-based, not longevity-based.

> Training programs must ensure the development of competencies required for organizational performance, short- and long-term.

> HR operations must be highly efficient and cost-effective. Continuous evaluation and quality improvement processes are essential for achieving improved service delivery.

6. HR managers and staff must have demonstrated competence as business consultants and problem solvers, innovative and critical thinkers and change agents, as well as demonstrating professional expertise.

Based on our professional assessment of the four core HR systems, there is a clear need for new DHR leadership and for DHR and Class/Comp to achieve operational excellence in these areas. Stakeholders expressed an urgent need for action to address what they perceive to be serious deficiencies in many of these areas.

General Areas for Transformational Change

There is general agreement on the need for transformational change in six broad areas that are applicable to both classification/compensation and recruitment/selection:

- Become a strategic business partner

- Re-examine design of the Countywide human resources architecture

- Improve customer focus and communication

- Use competency-based models

- Improve the efficiency, quality, transparency and timeliness of services

- Use metrics to manage and measure human resources performance

In Sections 4 and 5, we summarize our assessment of needed improvements in Classification and Compensation and in Recruitment and Selection.

Now Is the Time ...

It is evident from the feedback we received, the level of concern shared and the broadly expressed willingness to collaborate in formulating solutions that now is the time for the County of Los Angeles to create a new human resources foundation for growth —

- ◆ To streamline and modernize the classification system;

- ◆ To rebuild the recruitment and selection system;

- ◆ To retrain and develop the talented County workforce;

- ◆ To develop compensation and reward strategies that position the County to compete for needed talent and to reward performance and accountability; and

- ◆ Re-equip the County with technology and innovation to move forward to meet the challenges of the next era.

Best Practices vs. the County's Current Situation

We believe substantial improvement in the effectiveness of these four HR core systems can be achieved by addressing the opportunities for needed change reflected in the general themes we have identified. For each one, we briefly summarize Best Practices in this area and compare them to a brief summary of the County's current situation, which is based both on our own assessments and on stakeholder input.

Become a Strategic Business Partner

Best Practice	Compared to...	Current County Situation
■ Participates as a strategic member of the business team, supports departments in achieving their overall goals and objectives		■ Focus on rules and process — majority of time spent on administrative/transactional tasks.
■ Plays a key role in setting organization direction and strategy *and* implementing that strategy		■ Strategy is developed but <u>not</u> effectively operationalized and put into action
■ Anticipates and plans for the County's long-term leadership, management and staffing requirements		■ Reactive to problems, rather than providing proactive leadership
■ Receives leadership and support to ensure effective implementation of new programs and initiatives		■ Excellent programs and initiatives have often suffered from implementation problems or from lack of commitment from County leadership to publicize and reinforce project goals
■ Staff demonstrates professional competence and provides clear policies, standards and model programs to assist departments		■ Lack of clarity as to where to obtain information; inconsistent advice/information is often given

When working as a strategic partner, HR has a seat at the executive table and focuses on strategic issues that are of greatest importance to organizational performance, such as:

♦ Identifying, developing and retaining high potential employees.

♦ Developing the leadership skills of managers.

♦ Designing jobs and organizations that provide employees with challenging opportunities.

♦ Managing, improving and rewarding employee performance.

♦ Developing a work environment that demonstrates the core values of the organization.

A strategically focused HR contributes to development and accomplishment of organization-wide business plans and objectives. HR establishes business objectives that support attainment of the organization's overall strategic business plan and objectives. Rather than serving as a bureaucratic administrator and "gatekeeper for past practices," HR is viewed as a critical enterprise asset, providing expertise that business units do not wish to or cannot economically develop internally.

To be credible as a strategic business partner, HR managers and staff must have an expanded set of professional and behavioral competencies, which go beyond professional subject matter expertise. These competencies include, among others: strategy architect, business advisor, change management consultant, organizational designer.

Stakeholders do not view DHR or Classification and Compensation as strategic business partners, who understand their departments' business needs and provide expertise, systems and support to help them achieve their overall strategic goals and objectives.

As part of the Human Resources review, a survey was used to obtain feedback on how well County needs were being met by the HR function. When asked where they would place DHR/Class and Comp on a continuum from strategic HR leadership to operational/transaction focus, there was almost universal agreement that the focus was on transactions, not strategic leadership. Table 3.1 presents a summary of the mean ratings obtained from all stakeholder groups.

Figure 3.1

Where would you place HR practices in the four core functions on a continuum from strategic HR leadership to operational/transactional focus?

Strategic Focus

1 = Operational/transactional   5 = Strategic Focus
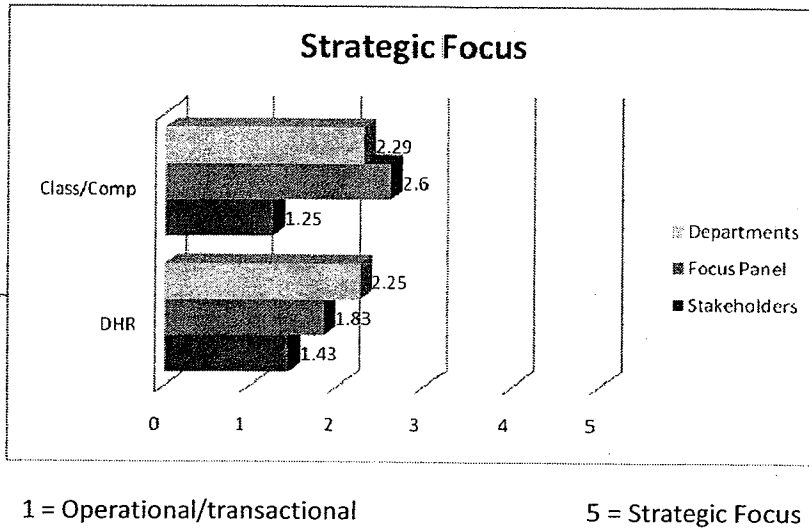
One of the primary purposes for reestablishing DHR in 1994 was to ensure development and consistent implementation of personnel polices Countywide. Stakeholders emphasized the need for DHR to provide leadership and proactively develop and promulgate policies and standards for Countywide HR issues. Stakeholders cited several examples where they believe the failure to do so resulted in significant consequences and expenditure of resources Countywide. They stated that requests for policy guidance and department policy drafts submitted for review go unanswered, sometimes for years, resulting in each department having to "reinvent the wheel."

The County's core HR functions *must* take action to become more strategic in their practice. Becoming a *strategic partner* is at the heart of the needed transformation of the County HR functions. Currently these functions focus on administrative tasks, with little time for forward-thinking, proactive or creative work. The focus on administrative tasks results in HR being reactive and adding little business value outside of performing day-to-day transactional activities. As discussed in the Office of Personnel Management "Human Resources Line of Business" manual:

"Transforming HR implies *inverting* administrative workload with strategic capability. Creating a strategic HR structure enables the HR function to participate as a strategic member tightly connected to the business rather than as a reactive and administrative function, thus delivering best value to the organization."

Figure 3.2

Transforming HR as a Strategic Partner
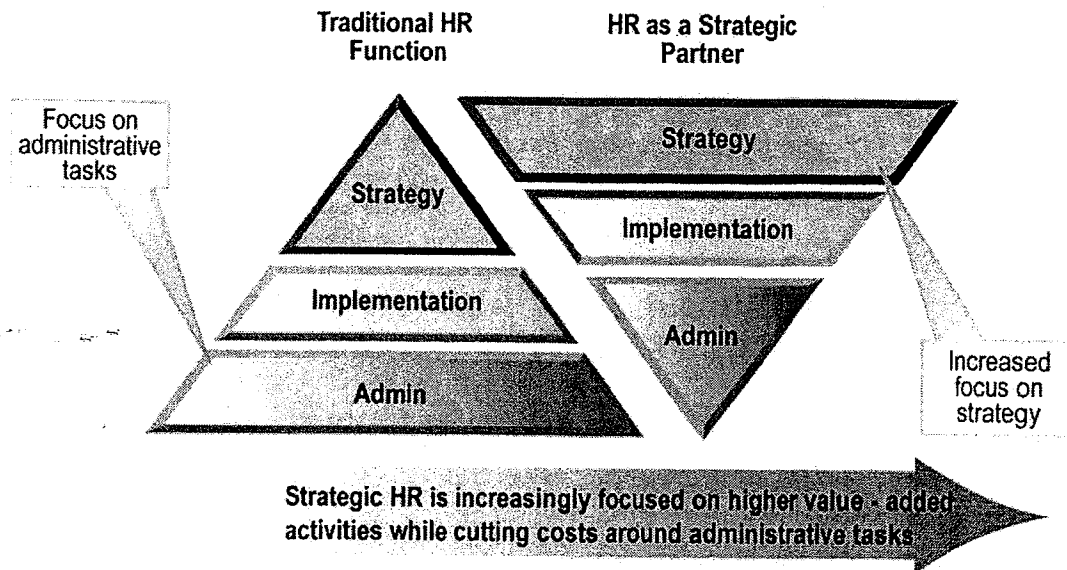
Transactional tasks generally unfold in a rule-based manner and can be scripted or automated, while strategic tasks are more complex interactions, requiring a higher level of judgment. While standardization, automation and consolidation can boost the efficiency of transactional activities, these elements will have only limited impact on strategic activities. Strategic tasks require HR to become a full partner with the leaders and decision-makers in the County organization. HR must play a role in setting organization direction and strategy and implementing that strategy. The overall human resource function must be aligned with and serve as an integral support system for achievement of an organization's strategic plan and business goals.

The County has embarked on many projects that lay the groundwork for HR transformation. As early as 1998, the County began efforts to increase its strategic focus. The County examined its vision and what kind of County organization was desired for the future. The initial strategic plan, developed in 1999, has been updated in 2002, 2005, and 2009.

Goal 1 in the 2009 County Strategic Plan is:

"**Operational Effectiveness**: *Maximize the effectiveness of processes, structure, and operations to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services.*"

The Core HR functions studied in this project must play a key role in supporting achievement of this Strategy. Both Strategy 2 *"Service Excellence and Organizational Effectiveness"* and Strategy 4, *"Workforce Excellence,"* reflect the importance of human resources and classification/compensation in achieving these goals.

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[5] Human Resources Line of Business – A collection of practices for HR shared services and service delivery

The Department of Human Resources has completed many projects in support of the County Strategic Plan. The Strategic Work Life Survey (2003) and the Strategic Values Survey (2006) and the Strategic Workforce Planning Program (2006 and 2009) are examples of these efforts.

Yet despite these efforts, the County's core HR systems are **not** seen as being leaders of transformational change. Instead, when stakeholders were asked how well the Core HR functions support the County's goals for organizational effectiveness and workforce excellence, all groups surveyed indicated that the core HR functions fell just short of being "Adequate."

Figure 3.3

Overall Support of Organizational Effectiveness

Class/Comp — 2.79, 2.5, 2.5
Selection — 2.93, 2.5, 2.31
Recruitment — 2.89, 2.33, 2.5

Department Survey
HR Focus Panel
Stakeholders
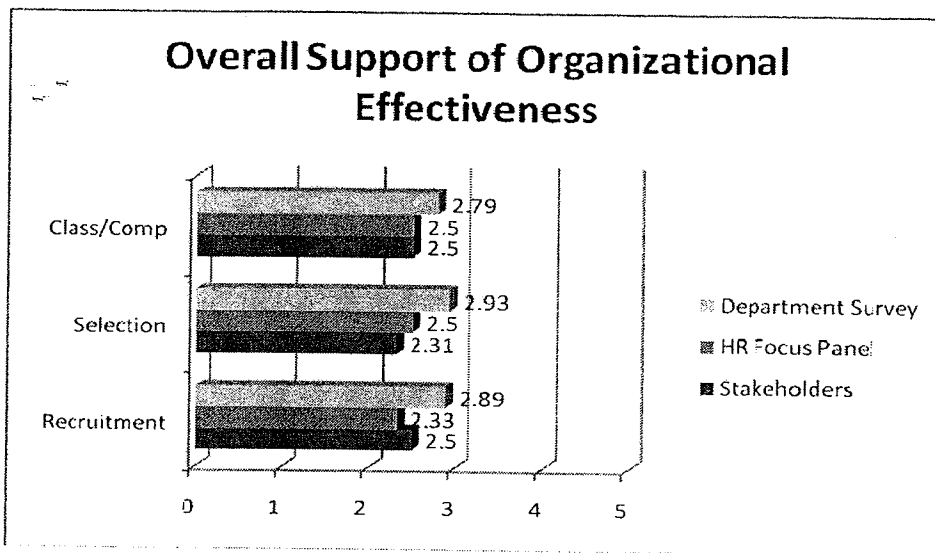
1=Unacceptable 2=Poor 3=Adequate 4=Good 5=Excellent

There is clearly a "disconnect" between the efforts and initiatives developed and implemented by the Core functions and the perceptions of Stakeholders. How are these perceptions formed? How can these perceptions be changed?

Currently, County leaders hear about "problems" or "mistakes" with far more intensity and frequency than successes. As a result, much of the energy of these functions is spent on "appeals" or avoiding risk. HR needs to effectively document its contribution to the County enterprise goals with business metrics. The bottom line impact of wasteful County customs also needs to be documented and, where appropriate, a case made to change current practices to bring them into alignment with County goals. Recommendations made by the core functions need to be results-oriented, emphasize measurable outcomes and be presented with "impact" to County leaders.

County initiatives often propose solutions, but do not provide sufficient guidance or support to help make these solutions a part of actual County practice. Monitoring the effectiveness of programs developed by the core functions will help these functions understand whether they need to modify interventions or make policy changes in the programs provided — either at the departmental or inter-departmental level.

Professional development of current HR staff must be given a high priority. A County examination training work group has been engaged since March, 2009 in developing materials for training and certifying examination analysts. The Class/Comp division has formed a Classification Network to provide improved communication and some training on classification and compensation practices. In addition, there are several HR competency models available for use in evaluating the training and development needs of current managers and staff in the core HR functions to equip them to move toward a more strategic, consultative approach in developing and managing central HR programs and services. It is important that HR staff have a strong professional knowledge base and think and act like consultants and change management experts.

To be successful in making the transformation to a more strategic HR organization/function, the County needs to develop and implement a strategy for managing change. John Kotter, a recognized leader in organization change management and author of *Leading Change*, introduced an eight-stage process for creating major change. The eight stages are:

1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Create a guiding coalition
3. Develop a vision and strategy
4. Communicate the change vision
5. Empower broad-based action
6. Generate short-term wins
7. Consolidate gains and produce more change
8. Anchor new approaches in the culture[6]

While some of these steps have been taken by the County, additional work needs to take place. The following sections highlight some of these needed changes.

Establish a Sense of Urgency

In today's challenging economic environment, the County finds itself with a golden opportunity to capture talent and rebuild its workforce. That opportunity will be lost unless recruiting and hiring systems are upgraded and streamlined. The County's interest in examining its key HR systems has been building for several years. Recent lapses in hiring practices have heightened concern. Every day a new "problem" is featured in the *Los Angeles Times* or the *Daily News*. The "tipping point" has now been reached. It is imperative that the County improve its current systems, providing quality safeguards and more efficient operations. This will allow the County to bring qualified candidates on board more quickly and make the County a more attractive place to work.

The rewards for aligning key HR systems with the County's strategic plan will be significant. Respected research studies over the last 15 years have demonstrated empirically that **business** performance

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[6] Kotter, John P. (1996) Leading Change. Harvard Business School Press

improves significantly in organizations that have highly effective human resource management programs.

Following well-designed, objective, job-related, effective human resources practices have been shown to result in significant cost utility through improved productivity and organizational performance.

Create an Executive "Champion" Group

One of the most important steps in the change process is to secure senior executive support for the change effort. Forming an "Executive Champion Group," with enough **power, influence and shared vision** to lead and support the change effort, is the foundation of a successful change initiative. Executive sponsors need to provide visible, vocal support for the effort, and exercise leadership to make sure that the project stays on target. Within the County, this group should include representatives from the Board Supervisors, the CEO, labor unions, department heads (including the Director of DHR) and the Civil Service Commission. Members must have the willingness and capability to perform change leadership roles.

Note: An excellent example of how this approach can help drive change is currently unfolding within the County, as the Department of Social Services builds support for a plan to shift some general welfare recipients to federal disability assistance. Support for the project is coming from Supervisors, the social services commission and the CEO. And, a solid business case has been presented to justify the effort.

Develop a Vision and Strategy

The County has done an excellent job developing a Vision and Strategy.

Communicate the Change Vision

The County has taken steps to communicate the change vision. However, additional steps must be taken — using every vehicle possible — to communicate the vision and strategies. Kotter states that, "a good rule of thumb in a major change effort is: Never underestimate the magnitude of the forces that reinforce complacency and that help maintain the status quo."[7]

Empower Broad-Based Action

Empowering others to act on the vision may be the most difficult task the County faces. This requires removing obstacles and changing systems or structures that seriously undermine the vision. This is closely connected to the County Culture described in the bullet point below. Sometimes the obstacle is the organizational structure: narrow job categories can seriously undermine efforts to increase productivity and require wasteful use of resources to recruit and select job incumbents. Sometimes compensation or performance-appraisal systems cause people to choose between the new vision and their own self-interest. Sometimes, poor department managers refuse to change or make demands that are inconsistent with the overall effort. Each obstacle to change that is part of current policy (e.g., civil service rule, issue, custom, etc.) needs to be examined, with four questions:

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[7] Kotter, John P. (1996) Leading Change. Harvard Business School Press

1. Why implemented?
2. Still needed?
3. Is there a better way to address?
4. Stakeholder Issues?

Action should be taken to remove obstacles that are no longer serving the County's long-term best interests.

Generate Short-term Wins

Major change takes time and it is therefore necessary to pay serious attention to short-term wins. Short-term wins should be visible, unambiguous and related to the change effort. Short-term wins help to build the necessary momentum for change. The County should look for ways to obtain clear performance improvements and recognize the successes.

Note: The current pilot project to explore a Competency Model is an example of such an effort.

Consolidate Gains and Produce More Change

Resistance to change never fully dissipates and can stall a change process. Therefore, it is essential to success to use the credibility afforded by short-term wins to tackle even bigger problems while continuing to guard against complacency. Systems, structures, and policies that don't fit the vision have to be changed. Employees who can implement the vision, and continually reinvigorate the process have to be hired, promoted and developed.

Anchor New Approaches in the Culture

In the County, as in all large organizations, there are social forces (corporate culture) that affect everyone and all its operations. Corporate cultures have a powerful influence on human behavior, since them are invisible and very resistant to change. John Kotter believes that "culture is powerful for three reasons: (i) because individuals are selected and indoctrinated so well. (ii) Because the culture exerts itself through the actions of hundreds or thousands of people. (iii) Because all of this happens without much conscious intent and thus is difficult to challenge or even discuss.[8]

Change becomes solid when it becomes "the way we do things," when it becomes part of the normative behavior and shared values of an organization. Kotter provides one other important warning: "most cultural change happens in stage 8, not stage 1." Until new behaviors are rooted in social norms and shared values, they are subject to degradation as soon as the pressure for change is removed. The County must develop the leadership necessary to stay the course. [9]

The end result — improving the Countywide strategic management of human capital — will positively impact organizational performance in these specific, measurable areas:

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[8] Kotter, John P. (1996) Leading Change. Harvard Business School Press

[9] Kotter, John P. "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail" Harvard Business Review, Mar/Apr 1995, p. 59

- ◆ Faster decision making
- ◆ More informed policy making
- ◆ More effective workforce management
- ◆ Improved resource alignment with department missions

Recommendations

1. In collaboration with an advisory executive leadership group, utilize the results of this Human Resources Study to develop an overall set of change objectives and a strategy for effective change management. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress is made toward goals established.

2. Critically examine where traditional County practices and "customs" and the interpretation of Civil Service Rules contributes to or hinders the County's ability to achieve its goals for workforce excellence.

3. Work directly with departments to identify current and future human resources needs; develop understanding of departments' changing business needs and become knowledgeable about the business goals and challenges of their organizations; consider assigning an experienced DHR staff person to serve as "account manager" for each department.

4. Conduct an assessment, in consultation with CEO, County Counsel, Auditor-Controller and all County departments, to re-examine the current HR policy framework; review any pending policy development requests; identify need for policy revisions and development of new policies; and establish a schedule and timeline to revise/develop policy drafts for review.

5. As part of succession planning efforts, develop training and mentoring programs to transfer critical skills, expertise, and institutional knowledge from retiring workers to new managers and staff.

6. Revitalize the County Strategic Workforce Planning Program (see *A Note on Workforce Planning*):

    a. Continue turnover analysis and enhancement of workforce planning resources and tools;

    b. Consider whether streamlining the planning process and worksheets would result in broader department participation;

    c. Identify department needs to achieve effective implementation and provide consultation and additional resources and support to accomplish this;

    d. Integrate department workforce plans; identify *significant Countywide issues*; develop strategies and begin execution of implementation priorities to address strategic workforce needs.

7. When implementing new initiatives and projects, conduct project implementation risk assessments and develop project plans to avoid/overcome those risks. Steps may include:

a. Designate a "champion" at the highest organizational level possible to help with project implementation.

b. Find a willing department or work group to pilot the project.

c. Partner with and/or obtain assistance from County departments that have extensive experience with new "rollouts."

8. Select for use a strategic HR management and staff competency model; identify training priorities for the most critical competencies; develop and include in DHR and Class/Comp staff training programs:

a. Training to develop internal consulting skills.

b. Training to develop change management skills.

c. Training to develop knowledge of business fundamentals and the application of business analytics.

d. Cross-training, rotational assignments and/or other work assignment methods to enhance staff understanding of the businesses and operational needs of the departments they serve.

e. Move forward with plans to develop and implement the Certified Examination Analyst assessment and training program. The exam training work group has developed five training modules that should be implemented immediately. As the division of responsibilities between DHR and departments is delineated, this material should be reviewed to ensure that sufficient competency is held by all central and departmental staff responsible for designing, developing and conducting examinations.

It may be desirable to develop levels of expertise within the certification process, for example:

➢ The **Generalist** utilizes knowledge base and scripts to respond to a wide variety of questions and issues.

➢ The **Subject Matter Expert** interprets policy to respond to escalated issues and questions. The subject matter expert usually has a specialized experience or knowledge in a specific topic and is empowered to make low risk decisions.

➢ The **Decision Maker** responds to complex issues, questions and critical incidents. The decision maker interprets policy and has decision-making authority around complex issues, questions, and critical incidents.

f. Pursue design and development of a Certified Classification Analyst assessment and training program similar to those underway for Certified Examination Analyst (see Section 3 for further discussion).

Re-examine Design of the Countywide Human Resources Architecture

Best Practice	Compared to ...	Current County Situation
▪ Structure and organizational placement aligned with Strategic Plan and County governance model ▪ Clear authorities and accountabilities between central and line department HR functions ▪ Costing and charge-back structure consistent with HR philosophy and structural arrangements		▪ DHR's placement in the governance structure may not be consistent with its critical role in achieving Countywide strategic goals ▪ In practice, the role and responsibilities of DHR versus line departments are not clearly articulated and/or followed, particularly in the area of recruitment and selection ▪ Costing structures do not appear to be based on clear definitions of what is a central agency service to departments versus services DHR provides on request

There is considerable agreement among stakeholders that the County's HR architecture needs to be re-examined in the context of County strategic plan requirements and today's financial and labor market realities. Consideration needs to be given, in their view, to the most appropriate organizational assignment of HR responsibilities to ensure a coherent structure that effectively links and integrates all the major HR functional areas.

Following are examples of the types of issues that need re-examination:

◆ What should be the vision for the human resources function in the County? System-wide, what should be its role and purpose?

Note: DHR is currently revising its department Strategic Plan and has developed a DHR Vision and Mission statement as well as Strategic Goals. Goals include Service Excellence, Organizational Structure, Workforce Excellence, Communication and Collaboration and Performance-Based Management. These Strategic Goals are fully supported by our findings.

◆ What roles, responsibilities, programs and services can most appropriately and effectively be performed by DHR/Class and Comp? What cost model, e.g., overhead administrative charges, chargeback for services, etc., is most appropriate and supportive of overall HR system purposes?

◆ What roles, responsibilities, programs and services can most appropriately and effectively be performed on a decentralized basis by each County department?

♦ What audit, compliance and other programs need to be in place to ensure conformance with sound professional practices and applicable legal requirements?

♦ How should core HR services best be provided to small departments in which full-time HR staff is not economically feasible?

Note: The Auditor-Controller's Office currently provides "DHR-type core services" for about 20 smaller departments. What type of shared-services model is most appropriate in the County HR architecture?

♦ What accountabilities should be established for each component of the architecture and what metrics formulated to monitor performance in discharging these accountabilities?

While many, perhaps even most, stakeholders support assignment of Countywide HR functions to the central agencies, they question whether the central agencies (DHR and Class/Comp) can *ever* be adequately staffed or given sufficient resources to meet the needs and requirements of 39 large and small departments in a manner that is timely for those departments. In their view, if staff cannot be added to meet service requirements, then further delegation of responsibility to departments or authorization for department use of consulting resources may be the only answers.

Recommendation

9. Appoint a high-level, Countywide working group to re-examine the current County HR architecture and its alignment with the County strategic plan and governance model and report back to CEO in six months; deliverables to include:

    a) Review of the current DHR Strategic Plan, Strategic Values Study and other documents to determination whether any modification to the Countywide HR philosophy is warranted;

    b) Reexamination of and delineation of appropriate central versus line department responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities;

    c) A conceptual framework and criteria for building required DHR resource support and charge-backs for services provided.

The resulting model can then be used by DHR for its own structural and organizational analysis and transformation, including re-evaluation and establishment of appropriate performance metrics.

Improve Customer Focus and Communication

Best Practice	Compared to ...	Current County Situation
▪ Define HR as a *customer service and consulting services* organization		▪ Operate from a central agency, compliance mind-set
▪ Understand the businesses and needs of department customer groups and utilize practices responsive to those needs		▪ Not a source of consultation to develop solutions to problems and challenges; not proactive
▪ Treat departments as valued customers		▪ Are not viewed as understanding the realities and pressures involved in operating the County's many businesses
▪ Maintain an open flow of two-way communications within DHR/Class and Comp and with departments		▪ Until recent efforts in both DHR and Class/Comp, communication with departments has been limited; internal units historically have operated as silos
▪ Collaborate with stakeholders to develop systems that support County goals		▪ Limited assessment of how policy impacts achievement of County goals.
▪ Use positive "branding" techniques to attract highly talented applicants		▪ Limited use of outreach recruitment, marketing of County career opportunities or communication with desired applicant pools

Good customer service — a customer service orientation — requires actively listening to and striving to understand needs and expectations, *from the customer's point of view.* Stakeholders in our review process do not believe that managers and staff of the four core HR systems view departments as their valued customers. They are perceived as taking rigid, one-size-fits-all, bureaucratic, reactive approaches when presented with customer needs and challenges.

Many stakeholders stated they would appreciate more communication as to the status of projects. Applicants also are frustrated by lack of information as to status. A recent study completed by DHR found that 31 percent of calls received by DHR were inquiries as to the status of applications.[10]

A significant number of stakeholders talked about needing to know the right people and having established relationships with staff in the central functions in order to get questions answered, problems solved or needs addressed. Without that, many said, calls may not be returned and matters go unaddressed for long periods of time.

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[10] Examination Streamlining Project: Centralized Examination Telephone Call Study

While many stakeholders expressed frustration, they also commented on the positive working relationships they enjoyed with many of the managers, and expressed a desire to work collaboratively with the central functions to meet mutual goals.

Recommendations

10. Request DHR and Class/Comp management to convene a working group to advise them on formulation and execution of cost effective, relevant initiatives for addressing and resolving the *customer service* and *communication* concerns of line departments.

11. Operationalize the performance standard for *Customer Service,* included in the MAPP Performance Evaluation document, and apply it, or a similar behavioral statement to all DHR/Class and Comp staff; mandate use of the customer survey process included in the behavioral description or obtain feedback on performance from the managers'/staff members' primary customers.

See also Recommendation 8 regarding staff training and development.

Use Competency-based Models

Best Practice	Compared to ...	Current County Situation
• Competency based system helps to align individual employee behaviors and skills with core County goals for workforce excellence • Occupational information can be applied across jobs, job families or departments; consistent language is used for establishing job requirements, isolating competencies, grouping jobs into similar families and transporting validity • Countywide model enhances communication and ensures consistency, allows many efficiencies in talent management, succession planning, and employee selection		• Classification/compensation, performance management, recruitment/selection, and employee development all require job data to drive their functions — all duplicate efforts in gathering this information • County job analysis and testing program is modeled on "situational specificity" model where each job class must be analyzed, tested, and validated separately. It is difficult to group jobs based on similar competencies. • Analytic methods vary among analysts; efficiencies in the testing program, such as "Banking of Scores" or broad based testing, are more difficult to achieve

A competency model refers to a group of competencies (knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and personal attributes) that drive outstanding performance in a given job, role or function. The number and type of competencies in a model will depend upon the nature and complexity of work along with the culture and values of the organization.

Competency models are used by many consulting firms, such as Psychological Services Inc., Personnel Decisions Inc., Hay, Development Dimensions Inc. and Center for Creative Leadership, as well as federal agencies and other public and private sector employers, as a framework to build programs in a more user-friendly and less labor intensive manner than required for traditional duty- based job analysis processes. Locally, both the Los Angeles Unified School District and the Los Angeles Office of Education use such models.

There are a number of competency models that have been developed. The particular competency model used is less important than use of a consistent model on an organization-wide basis. County DHR staff is in the process of evaluating several competency models that are being used successfully by other agencies. The work team has explored the O*Net, State of Georgia, the Federal "MOSAIC" system, California State Competency Dictionary, The Competency Clearing House and a County hybrid system.

Use of a consistent model enhances communication and allows easy sharing of information. This ensures that similar language is used across job classifications, within job classifications, and among analysts studying similar jobs. A common competency "language" opens the door to a number of workforce initiatives, including using assessments for more than one classification and "banking: scores," development of training courses, performance management, workforce and succession planning, as well as compensation/classification.

A competency model will assist the County in streamlining its employment processes and ensure that the testing program focus on the competencies that differentiate "superior" performance from "typical" performance. It will also avoid the costs of duplicative efforts in performing job analyses for classification/compensation, performance management and employee development, as well as for recruitment and selection.

Recommendations

12. Complete evaluation of available competency models and ultimately develop County of Los Angeles "Competency Models" to help streamline processes.

13. Complete the pilot study, currently underway, of the use a competency model for development of assessment procedures for a County job class. (Associate Contract Analyst class has been selected.) This project will also explore the commonality of competencies between several other job classes with similar characteristics including Human Resources Analyst I, Department Personnel Technician/Program Specialist, Associate Analyst – CEO and Administrative Assistant III.

14. Develop a comprehensive plan to expand use of the competency model across job families on a prioritized, phased-in basis.

Improve the Efficiency, Quality, Transparency and Timeliness of Services

Best Practice	Compared to …	Current County Situation
▪ Operations must be efficient and timely to meet customer needs		▪ Requests for service, whether classification studies or examinations, take far too long to complete
▪ Use technology to streamline the transactional components of work processes		▪ Requesting departments are not generally kept informed on when they can anticipate results
▪ Use continuous evaluation and quality improvement processes to improve service delivery		▪ Some work processes are cumbersome, resource intensive and result in serious delays in meeting customer needs
▪ Educate customers on the bases for requirements and processes		▪ "eHR" system will replace legacy systems (Easier, JBS, TRAC, CDMS, and ParSystem). First phase, KBR, currently being implemented; additional components of new system, KAS, CSR and Item bank, in development
		▪ Focus is on trying to "push work" through current processes/systems, rather than developing process improvements
		▪ Departments are perceived as not understanding what the central agencies need to do, but efforts are not made to build understanding

For example, one of the most common best practices reported in HR literature is use of new technology approaches to streamline employment processes and reduce *time-to-hire* to better meet the changing demands of both candidates and management. Integrated online recruitment, application and testing have produced significant benefits in both the hiring process and attracting highly talented applicants:

- ◆ Increased speed to hire.
- ◆ Simplified and targeted recruitment that is applicant-oriented and "markets" the agency.
- ◆ Prescreening applicants based on minimum qualifications and KSAs.
- ◆ Getting the right candidates at the right time; a larger, more qualified applicant/candidate pool.
- ◆ Reduced costs.

The City of Phoenix was identified in a 2001 IPMA survey as having the fastest time to hire of any agency surveyed. The City has an extremely user friendly website and encourages applicants to file on line, using an electronic application. The City uses "off the shelf" systems to speed the hiring process, for example, an on- line survey to obtain supplemental application data.

The State of Washington has used its integrated online recruitment, application and testing process to reduce their time-to-hire. Almost 40 percent of their agencies report average time to hire of less than 45 days, with 90 percent reporting they were able to hire top quality candidates for their jobs.

Technology is integral to many service delivery models and improvement/streamlining initiatives. Because of the time it takes to acquire, configure and deploy, technology solutions are on the critical path to transformation; however, such improvements in service delivery will NOT address the larger issues in the transformation process.

In the face of lean budgets and continued demand for high levels of service, many agencies also use business process re-engineering and process improvement methodologies to improve the efficiency of their work methods and procedures.

Figure 3.4 presents a summary of the mean ratings obtained from all stakeholder groups when asked how effective managers and staff in these functions were in delivering services and providing needed information.

Figure 3.4

How effective are the managers and staff in these functions in delivering services and providing needed information?

	Departments	Focus Panel	Stakeholders
Class/Comp	3	2.8	2.75
DHR	3.04	2.6	2.88
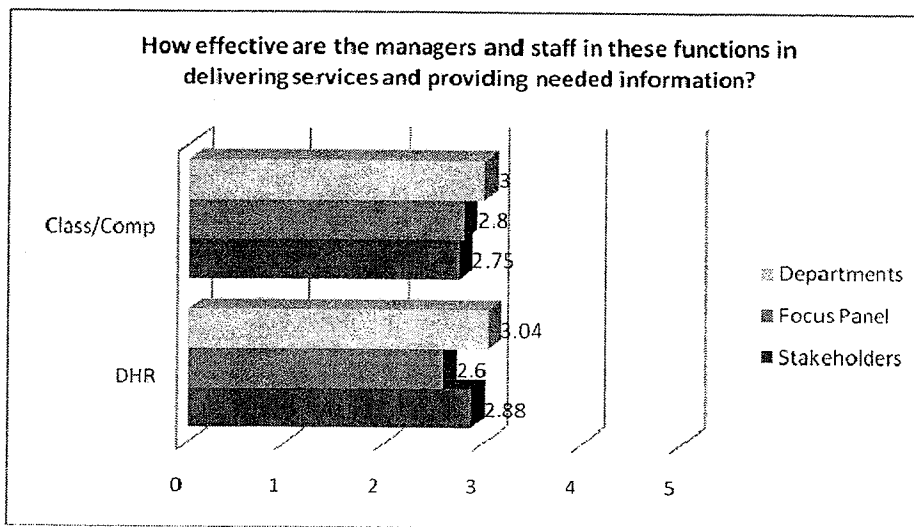
1=Unacceptable 2=Poor 3=Adequate 4=Good 5=Excellent

The departments surveyed rated both Classification/Compensation and DHR slightly higher in delivering services and providing needed information as compared to the other rating groups.

The greatest source of frustration expressed during the stakeholder input process was regarding how long everything takes to get done. Common examples cited include:

♦ The back-and-forth between departments and DHR just to get approval for an examination bulletin.

- The cumbersome, time intensive job analysis process, which is replicated each time an examination is given.

- Examination delays resulting from the Appraisal of Promotability process.

- Classification studies languishing for years.

- Micro-managed salary action approval processes resulting in hiring delays.

The processes themselves, as they are applied, hamper the timely delivery of service. Stakeholders also perceive this situation is exacerbated by staff tendencies toward rigid application of procedures, without a critical assessment of whether they make sense in a specific situation and the preference for force-fitting a *one size fits all* approach.

Both DHR and Class/Comp are limited in their capability to provide departments target dates for completion of work requests and for keeping them informed on the status of requests because they do not use data to manage and monitor their work streams. Unfortunately, not only are they not in a position to respond to their customers' inquiries regarding the status of requests (with something more than "we are working on it"), they are also lacking the information needed to:

- Analyze workflow and work load from either a strategic perspective or from a work process improvement point of view.

- Present a business case for adding additional positions or taking other courses of action to resolve workload problems.

Recommendations

15. Request DHR and Class/Comp to develop and implement an initial work management tracking and reporting process as the first step toward developing metrics for managing, monitoring and evaluating organizational and staff workloads and performance.

16. Request DHR and Class/Comp, in collaboration with internal staff and/or a focus group of department customers, to select a work process that is cumbersome, time intensive and negatively impacts customer service and conduct a business process re-engineering study to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Note: A prime candidate for process improvement in Class/Comp is the budget position allocation process. Stakeholders also suggested several ways in which the examination bulleting approval process could be streamlined.

Use Metrics to Manage and Measure Human Resources Performance

Best Practice	Compared to ...	Current County Situation
▪ Performance metrics are used to manage, monitor and evaluate overall organization/business performance.		▪ Consistent, reliable data is not available to manage, monitor, track and evaluate: ✓ Workload levels ✓ Costs of work processes ✓ Allocation and use of staff ✓ Efficiency of work processes

The use of performance metrics is an established business management practice. Metrics are used at the highest levels to manage, monitor and evaluate overall organization/business performance and are used at all levels of organizations to monitor and oversee the results of specific business processes.

Process engineering/re-engineering and business process improvement methodologies rest on the principle that "what gets measured, gets managed; what gets managed, gets done." Use of metrics and measurement tools are critical to ensure the *efficient* use of organizational resources to produce the products, programs and services expected by both public and private entities.

Performance management dashboards have been used successfully by many organizations. Gathering key performance data and presenting it in an easy-to-grasp fashion on a dashboard can help managers keep better tabs on performance. DHR is currently exploring this concept. It is important that meaning-ful and important data be identified and collected. The biggest mistake is using data because it is on hand or easy to gather, rather than creating useful metrics around important performance indicators. It is also important that dashboards be constantly reviewed, evaluated and strategically adjusted during implementation and on an on-going basis to insure they reflect key operational *and* performance issues.

A significant number of agencies use the "balanced scorecard"[11] method of performance measurement to rate the efficiency and effectiveness of government performance. These include Maricopa County, (AZ), Fulton County Public Schools, Tennessee Valley Authority, Texas State Auditor's Office, U.S. Postal Service, U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Agency and U.S. Department of Defense Finance and Accounting Service.

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[11]The balanced scorecard is a performance management tool used extensively in business and industry, govern-ment and nonprofit organizations world-wide for measuring whether the operational activities of a company or organization are aligned with its larger objectives in terms of vision and strategy. By focusing not only on financial outcomes but also on the operational, marketing and developmental inputs to these, the balanced scorecard helps provide a more comprehensive view of a organization, which in turn helps organizations act in their best long-term interests.

For example, as part of a strategic and business planning process begun in 2000, the City of Charlotte, NC Human Resources department established organizational performance objectives for each of its business units, along with a scorecard of metrics to measure organizational results. Overall metrics include customer satisfaction ratings on eight criteria such as responsiveness, quality, bringing forward new ideas and programs; and a survey of employees who used HR services during the year. As a further example, the Virginia Department of Human Resources Management is evaluated overall on a series of measures, including time-to-hire and the favorable resolution of grievance and EEO issues, as well as on promoting enterprise collaboration and customer satisfaction.

The City of Los Angeles Personnel Department has established performance goals for its employment processes. For example, it has a goal of 120 days from date of examination announcement to establishment of eligible list. According to a recent audit of the City's hiring processes, [12] 73 percent of eligible lists were established within this 120-day goal. The firm conducting the audit reported that other cities with strong civil service systems had established similar goals and timeframes. In addition, the department's Classification Division has established performance standards, metrics and targets for each of its primary work processes, including completion of classification studies. These standards and metrics serve as a basis for training and evaluating performance of division staff, as well as for managing and evaluating division workload and overall performance.

ICMA has established a Center for Performance Management that administers a *Comparative Performance Management Program*. This program facilitates the collection of benchmark data from cities and counties for a wide range of key service delivery areas including human resources.

DHR and Class/Comp collect and maintain data on a significant number of *Performance Measures* that are included in the County budget. However, these data do not appear to be used to manage and monitor the flow and completion of work. Specifically, DHR and Class/Comp do not have a set of comprehensive and reliable management tools to answer the questions:

- "What work is in the pipeline?
- "What is the status of work in the pipeline?
- "When will the work be completed?
- "How much did it cost in staff time/other resources to perform the work?"

Many stakeholders perceive this as representing a lack of accountability for results that add to the frustration regarding delays.

Recommendation: See Recommendation 15 in the preceding section.

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[12] "L.A. City Hiring Process Performance Audit," conducted for the City Controller, March 30, 2009.

A Note on Workforce Planning

A review of the County's strategic workforce planning/succession planning processes was not a part of our study mandate. However, it is such an important program that we would like to highlight workforce planning's central role in high-performance organizations and underscore the need for this activity to be given a high priority.

In light of the dramatic changes in workforce demographics all employers face and the importance being placed by most public and private employers on thinking and planning for the future, renewed strategic priority needs to be given to the County's workforce planning/succession planning program.

Best Practice	Compared to ...	Current County Situation
▪ Forecast the future workforce required to achieve the organization's strategic goals, particularly in executive, management, supervisory, specialized professional occupations such as health care and information technology and hard-to-fill jobs		▪ The County has developed a workforce planning program, with excellent tools and reference materials for use by departments in analyzing future staffing requirements and planning for retirements and other types of turnover. This program has received numerous awards and honors.
▪ Identify gaps between future requirements and the current workforce and develop strategies to meet those needs		▪ Centralized function has limited funding, time, and staff to provide departments with consultation to assist them in completing process; therefore much of the responsibility for workforce planning falls on department staff with limited expertise in this area
▪ Give particular priority to the identification and training of future leaders for the organization		▪ DHR is currently updating the Strategic Workforce Planning program. The new rollout will include succession planning efforts for higher-level classifications (e.g., essentially the top 1,000 employees who are in MAPP)
▪ Executive leadership and accountability management to reiterate the importance of workforce planning and provide resources to assist department management with this effort		▪ The County's Training Academy has been highly respected for quality and training results for its management development programs. The Administrative Internship program is well regarded for bringing highly talented professionals into County service. Unfortunately, the Training Academy has been defunded and the County has not been able to expand the Administrative Internship program.

The County's workforce planning efforts began as early as 2001, driven by both HR and CEO strategic plans. At a time when few agencies were actively involved in workforce planning, the County took a leadership role and received a number of awards for the program.

The initial program was very broad in scope and included every County position. It came on-line at a time when a number of Strategic Planning issues were being addressed by departments, who had limited resources to carry out the plans. The decentralized HR model placed the burden of implementation on each department's HR staff.

The program had a second rollout in 2006, and included a request from the Board to include a goal related to succession planning as part of Department Head's MAPP goals. Recognizing the need for more buy-in, department Administrative Deputies were involved in the training process. The program included a guidebook, workbook and department-specific data reports and reporting back forms. Limited time, staff and funding have constrained program implementation. Additional consultation with departments to help them identify classifications that "needed action" and complete their reporting back forms would have been desirable. It would also be desirable to develop a method to evaluate the effectiveness of department's strategies and obtain feedback to improve processes.

These issues are common to agency workforce planning efforts. In 2009, IPMA's-HR Benchmarking Committee conducted a survey of over 8,000 IPMA-HR members on workforce and succession planning; only a quarter of those responding reported having formal workforce plans. When asked why they did not have a formal workforce plan in place, most respondents said that they lacked resources .... (insufficient staff (67 percent), "preoccupation with short-term activities" (64 percent), lack of funding (42 percent), lack of executive support (32 percent) and restrictive merit system rules (21 percent).[13]

It is clear that the County is not the only agency struggling to make time and money available for long-term planning to meet essential workforce needs in the future. It is doubtful that time and money will be made available if leaders do not see the positive value of planning for future leadership and staffing requirements and understand the potential organizational costs of not doing so.

A number of studies have been conducted at the federal level on the critical importance of workforce planning/succession planning. They have concluded that all U.S. government agencies should implement succession management programs that ensure that:

♦ "A pool of high-potential leaders is identified and developed, rather than rely on a slate of replacements for current positions.

♦ "Leader competencies are identified and regularly reviewed and updated, with candidates assessed and developed against these competencies.

♦ "Reviews are done to identify high-potential candidates and developmental measures, assess progress regularly and involve all levels of the organization.

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[13] IPMA-HR, Workforce and Succession Planning, 2009 Benchmarking Committee Survey

♦ "Leader development uses three complementary means: varied job assignments, education/training and self-development."[14]

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has implemented a series of *Next Generation Initiatives* designed to build and encourage a leadership pipeline for a new generation of managers and leaders in local government. ICMA's 2003 publication, *Preparing the Next Generation: A Guide for Current and Future Local Government Managers,* summarizes best practices and provides case studies of successful programs in local agencies such as: City of Anaheim, City of San Jose, City of Santa Ana and Sarasota County, Florida.

ICMA also launched a local government leadership development program in 2006. *Leadership ICMA,* an intensive two-year university program, is designed to develop competencies required for successful leadership at all levels of local government management. Almost 1,000 ICMA members have become Credentialed Managers by meeting criteria established by ICMA's leadership.

Data included in the 2009 Strategic Workforce Planning Program Overview make the need for action in this area abundantly clear. Based on April 2006 data, 50 percent of executive management were projected to retire over the next 10 years (from 2006), while 32 percent were expected to retire within the next five years (from 2006). 42 percent of management employees were projected to retire within 10 years, while 24 percent were projected to retire within the next 5 years.

Figure 3.5

5- and 10-year Retirement Projections for All County Employees & Key Levels
(Projections based on 5-year baseline retirement averages)
April 17, 2006

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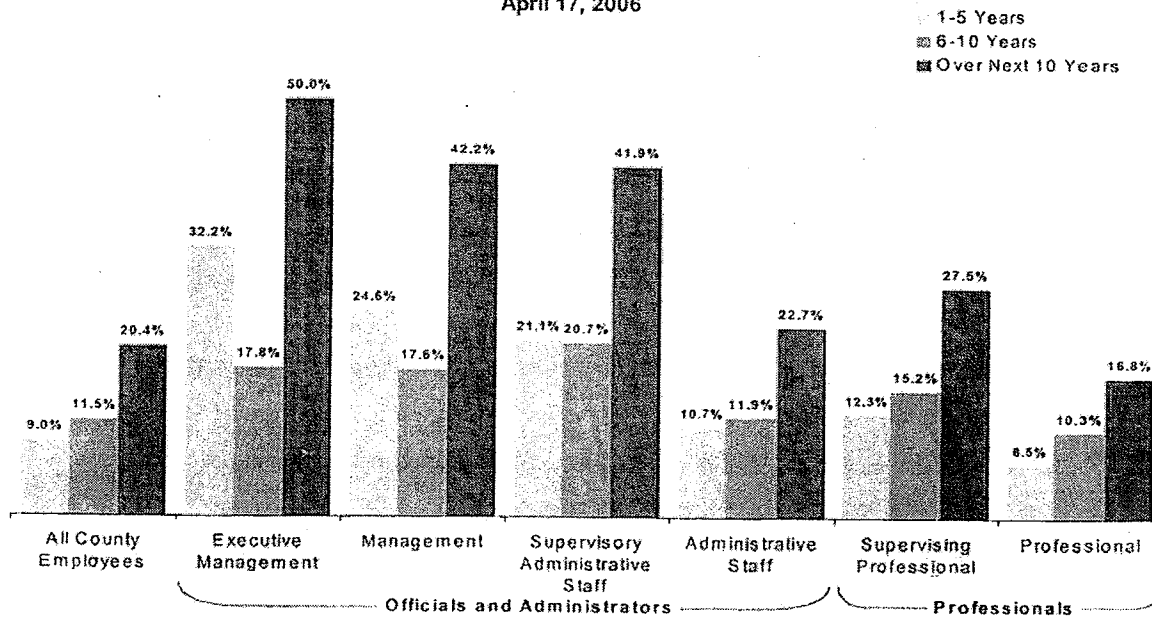
[14] "Summary of Human Resource Management Research for the National Commission on the Public Service," National Academy of Public Administration, July 2002.

A number of stakeholders expressed concern that the Strategic Workforce Planning Program appears no longer to have any momentum or actionable activity underway, except in a small number of departments. They were not aware of action occurring at a strategic Countywide level, particularly in developing a pool of well qualified potential successors for County management and executive positions.

Stakeholders expressed the view that DHR should be taking a proactive leadership role in developing strategies for creating a pipeline for bringing talented new people into County government and developing those already in County service. Over the next few years, they believe the County needs to:

◆ Expand the Administrative Internship Program, using innovative approaches for recruiting new college graduates. The programs being used by the federal General Accounting Office could serve as a role model for this effort.

◆ Implement a rotational program for Interns so that they spend time both in central agencies *and* in departments to round out their knowledge and experience. Most departments would be supportive and it would go a long way toward really preparing these individuals for future management roles.

◆ Invest in training and development to build a strong pool of supervisors and managers for future advancement into leadership roles.

◆ Develop a centralized management training program that includes moving managers among departments to enrich their experience (this has been viewed negatively in the organization).

◆ Institute a mentoring program.

◆ Take succession planning seriously. This needs to be internalized throughout the organization. A Countywide assessment of managerial competencies needs to be performed as a baseline.

◆ Focus on performance and accountability.

◆ Re-fund the Learning Academy, which has provided highly valued programs in the past.

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Section 4: Improvements Specific to Classification and Compensation

Classification as the Foundation for Human Resources

The classification plan and its supporting job content documentation provide the foundation for the County's entire human resources program. All other HR disciplines and systems rely upon the accuracy and currency of the classification plan, ranging from:

- Recruitment and selection processes that result in all the "people decisions" required to staff County positions with talented employees capable of supporting achievement of the County's mission, public service and business operations. (County Charter Article IX, Section 30 (1))

- Compensation programs that are *internally equitable* and externally competitive and financial/non-financial reward systems that motivate, recognize and reward high performance.

- Performance planning and evaluation systems based on appropriate job performance expectations that support both reward systems and progressive discipline processes designed to correct inadequate performance. (County Charter Article IX, Section 30 (2))

- Training and development programs to equip employees to meet high performance expectations and take on new challenges to meet County program mandates and public service objectives.

- Workforce planning programs designed to ensure a strong pool of talented employees to meet future County strategic requirements.

- Compliance with myriad legal requirements, the core of which is making employment decisions on demonstrably job-related grounds, including equal pay mandates and accommodation of the disabled. (County Charter Article IX, Section 30 (3))

The County **cannot** have an effective overall human resources program if classification structure and job content information do not accurately describe work as it is organized and performed and if job analysis processes and results are not fully integrated with other HR programs, particularly recruitment and selection.

Best Practice	Compared to...	Current County Situation
- Classification plans are *up-to-date* and reflect both the reality of how work is organized and assigned and the current knowledge, skill and other requirements for competent performance *Consistent, understandable criteria* are utilized in making determinations regarding the assignment of positions to classes *Sound documentation* is maintained of the concepts of classes; clear standards that distinguish them from other related classes; essential duties and competency requirements; and preferred requirements for entry into the class - Classification structures and processes provide line managers effective tools for properly managing the work of their units and administering pay in a fair and effective fashion - Processes and results of analyses are integrated with and inform all other human resource functions		- The County's classification plan is uniformly described by stakeholders and staff alike as *broken, antiquated and ineffective* - As a result, it is often problematic to properly allocate positions to the right classes; classification staff cannot definitively explain the bases for classification determinations because of ambiguities in class structures - Many class specifications do not provide accurate job documentation; this can result in serious recruitment and selection problems and hiring errors ✓ Do not reflect the work being performed and KSAs required, even though the classifications are correct ✓ Work has changed sufficiently so that the classifications are no longer correct ✓ Distinguishing characteristics/class standards are unclear ✓ Required KSAs[15] are not included in the County's class specifications ✓ Minimum qualifications follow historic County practice and do not necessarily have a sound basis in job analysis - Requests for classification studies languish for extended periods and take far too long to complete, hampering departments in addressing operational and hiring needs - To a significant degree, Class/Comp operates on a stand-alone basis

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[15] Knowledge, skills and abilities required for competent job performance, identified through job analysis.

To provide effective classification and compensation tools to line management, division analysts must integrate and appropriately balance:

- ♦ Understanding of line business operations and genuine needs for support of department mission accomplishment; **with**

- ♦ Professional classification principles and sound job/organization design practices.

One of the most often repeated concerns expressed by stakeholders is that Class/Comp staff does not have sufficient understanding of line department operations and business requirements to fully evaluate department requests and do not generally go out to departments to see situations first-hand. Many stakeholders believe that the division tends to review requests through a "central agency prism" and to apply inflexible standards and procedures without an effort to understand and work with departments to solve their business problems.

While talented, many Class/Comp analysts are relatively new to the function and few have operating department experience. That fact, together with the lack of division training, contributes to stake-holders' perceptions in this area.

To a very large degree, the Classification/Compensation division has operated as a stand-alone function, and as if "standing alone" is appropriate. And, DHR has operates in this fashion also. Stakeholders who participated in this project did not report, during our data gathering process, that they had observed efforts to integrate classification, recruitment, selection and other HR programs. Unfortunately, lack of integration results in duplication of effort: job analyses performed for classification purposes by Class/Comp; job analyses for recruitment and selection purposes by DHR; and job analyses for training and performance management development purposes by other divisions in DHR. Duplication of effort adds to delays in recruitment and selection due to front end time required for job analyses and discussion of exam bulletin provisions.

Managers and staff in the Class/Comp division understand the importance of integrating their work and their decisions with programs administered by DHR. Efforts are now underway to improve communication and collaboration with DHR. An excellent example is the joint work currently being done by DHR and Class/Comp staff on the competency model pilot project discussed in this report.

Review of the County's Classification Plan

Responsibility for classification in the County was completely decentralized from 1986 to the end of 1994 when DHR was recreated. DHR's classification division was subsequently moved in 2006 to the Chief Executive Office and consolidated with the Compensation Policy division, in an effort to address widespread dissatisfaction with the timeliness and quality of its services. While DHR had established a five-year plan to update class specifications, these efforts frequently focused on cosmetic changes rather than resolving underlying classification plan problems.

Class/Comp staff report that it is now easier to complete their work as a result of having both classification and compensation working in a consolidated organization — it is no longer necessary to work across DHR/CEO lines to resolve differences.

And, while stakeholders/customers also report some improvement resulting from the consolidation of classification and compensation policy, there is no disagreement among Class/Comp staff and County-wide stakeholders that limited headway has been made in fixing what is widely described as *a broken system*. There is general agreement that the County has too many classifications and that the distinctions from among them are often unclear. The result is:

♦ Unnecessary work in departments and central staff to try to maintain the current, broken system.

♦ Delays in identifying and resolving classification questions and position allocation issues.

♦ Excessive demand for recruitment and selection processes, leading to delays, hiring problems and high levels of frustration.

Initiatives to Streamline Classification Plans in Other Agencies

For more than two decades, agencies at all levels of government and in the private sector have engaged in efforts to streamline and modernize their classification plans. Primarily at the federal level and in the private sector, the approach has been to use or experiment with broadbanding initiatives. [16] However, for a variety of professional and organization culture reasons, your consultants do not believe broadbanding would be a good fit for the County of Los Angeles.

Several alternatives to broadbanding can be used to accomplish the same objectives – reducing the absolute number of classes and/or reducing the number of classes that require formal, central selection processes.

Method	Brief Description
Deep Classes	A vertical consolidation of classes at multiple job levels within a class series. Positions are budgeted at each level in the class, based on workload requirements for each job level. Formal testing is done at the first level in the deep class; advancement to higher levels in a deep class is through merit-based procedures administered by line departments. Example: Internal Auditor I (entry professional), II (journey-level professional) and III (advanced professional).

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[16] Broadbanding replaces duties-based classes, which are frequently quite narrow, with broad, generic classes. These broad classes are formed through consolidation of classes both vertically (multiple levels within a job family) and horizontally (uniquely titled classes in various agencies performing similar job duties). To facilitate use of this broad class structure, pay schedules are consolidated to create broad ranges of pay, within which individual employee pay is managed and administered.

Method	Brief Description
Flexible Staffing Classes	A vertical consolidation of two classes in a class series – typically an entry/ trainee level and a first working/journey level. All positions are budgeted at the second pay level that represents the scope of work all employees in the class are expected to perform proficiently. Formal testing is done at the first level; advancement to the second level is based on employees demonstrating the capability to satisfactorily perform all the specified job duties at target performance levels. Advancement processes are administered by line departments. Example: Laboratory Assistant I and II, where II represents full proficiency in performing laboratory support functions.
Broad Classes with selective certification	A horizontal consolidation of classes in parallel class series that share common job competencies. Formal testing covers the core competencies. Additional selection methods, i.e., supplementary technical job knowledge assessments, certifications/licenses/degrees, etc., are further used to examine candidates (and/or identify eligibles) for certification to positions requiring specified technical knowledge and skills. Selective certification for bi-lingual skills is a simple application of this principle. Example: consolidation of administrative analyst, financial analyst, human resources analyst and risk management analyst to create a new class of management analyst. Testing covers the competencies common to all positions in the different specialized disciplines; supplemental testing covers the essential job knowledge and skills unique to positions in each of the original classes. The eligible list is banded based on the core competency examination; the list is selectively certified for specific assignments within the class based on the supplementary job knowledge assessment.

This approach is congruent with use of competency-based models discussed elsewhere in this report. |
| *Proficiency or skill-based pay* | Applicable to classes/class series in which performance of the "more complex or specialized work" is based on demonstrated proficiencies or added skills and where these duties cannot necessarily be aggregated into specified positions to form a different class level. Proficiency criteria and methods for evaluating employee proficiency are specified and administered by line departments. Employees who meet (and maintain) the proficiency criteria are assigned to a higher salary range. Example: claims processing employees are authorized to work the most complex cases after meeting proficiency criteria; employees who do not meet these criteria refer such cases to others for action. |

Good practice calls for agencies to review their classification plans on a regular basis to eliminate classes that are no longer in use and do not need to be maintained for the future. Though not necessarily obvious, there are important costs associated with maintaining unnecessary classes. These include analyst staff time required to maintain internal classification/salary equity relationships and the potential for inadvertent use of classes that were intended to be sun-setted.

The overall objectives for streamlining classifications plans are to:

♦ Reduce the number of classifications that have to be maintained and administered to the number actually needed by the organization to meet its strategic and operational goals.

♦ Ensure classes and class levels are clearly distinguished from one another, for ease of central administration and for effective use by departments.

♦ Facilitate maintenance of internal classification and compensation relationships based on job size differences.

♦ Reduce agency recruitment and selection costs and hiring delays resulting from their completion.

♦ Delegate staffing determinations – within parameters of merit-based criteria – to line management where appropriate and cost effective.

♦ Improve management flexibility in staffing their organizations.

State of the County's Current Classification Plan

The scope of this project did not allow for an in-depth, independent analysis of the Plan (Schedule A). However, based on a general review, several observations can be made.

The Plan includes 2,714 classes (excluding LACERA and the Superior Court). Of this number, 249 classes are unclassified:

53	commission classes
44	department head classes
1	employee by contract class
151	other unclassified classes

Therefore, the Classification/Compensation division is responsible for administration and maintenance of a total of 2,465 classes.

Observations Regarding the Plan

1. <u>Approximately 340 classes (14 percent) have no budgeted positions.</u>

As noted earlier, in most agencies, the first step in streamlining a classification plan is reviewing and eliminating classes that are no longer in active use.

However, some of the County's classifications have been maintained for payroll purposes because incumbents in classification studies were not formally placed in the new classes to which their positions were allocated/reallocated. While continuing to hold their original job title, they are budgeted as over/under-hires against positions in the new classification.

The County does not have well-designed rules, policies and processes that <u>facilitate</u> implementation of classification study recommendations in terms of conveying status in new/revised classifications to employees. The Civil Service Rules are not written contemplating the types of actions required following a large-scale classification study. Civil Service Rules 5.05 together with Rule 2.14 require the conduct of competitive reclassification examinations to give status to employees whose positions have been reallocated into new higher level classes. This requirement can extend the already lengthy time to complete classification studies and create employee morale problems because it implies that positions in the new class are available to individuals other than the current job holders.

In some cases, the County uses the reporting out process to confer status in a new class following reclassification. This process is based on a 1986 CAO policy; the criteria for its application are not clear and may not be broadly useful.

The County has ordinance authority to protect employees' salaries when their positions are reclassified and their reclassifications result in a salary reduction, through the use of Y-rates. Apparently, this tool is no longer widely used because of concern regarding union reactions. Employees are allowed to remain in their old classifications at salary ranges higher than warranted <u>and</u> continue to receive annual range adjustments, rather than placing them in classifications that are appropriately paid for the work being performed.

In contrast, both the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Unified School District have more effective tools to implement the results of major classification studies. The City uses transfers under Civil Service Rule 6.10 (with or without seniority transfer) to grant status and find employees "legally employed" in new classes. LAUSD's Rule 545 states in pertinent part:

> *(a) When all the positions in a class are reclassified to a higher class, the incumbents of the positions who have been in the class for two or more years[17] may be reclassified with their positions by the*

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[17] The requirement for two or more years' service in a position is established in the State of California Education Code.

personnel commission. When a portion of the positions within a class are reclassified to a higher class, an incumbent who has a continuous employment record of two or more years in one or more of the positions being reclassified may be reclassified with his or her position as provided by personnel commission rule.

(b) *The basis for reclassification of the position shall be a gradual accretion of duties and not a sudden change occasioned by reorganization or the assignment of completely new duties and responsibilities. Determinations as to gradual accretion shall be on the basis of guidelines provided by personnel commission rules.*

Assuming the Class/Comp division begins an initiative to streamline its classification plan, including class consolidations, Civil Service Rules will need to be modified to provide more effective mechanisms to address the issue of conferring employee status in new classes.

2. There are large numbers of classes with limited incumbents.

Close to 50 percent of County classes have 5 budgeted positions or less[18], including approximately 100 single incumbent, department executive classifications.

While there is a need in every organization for highly specialized classifications, large numbers of single- and small-incumbent classes indicates the need to evaluate the potential for class consolidations.

3. While the County applies broad class concepts in several job families, many of its classes/class structures are quite narrow.

The County's classification categories — basically reflecting job families and class series — are frequently defined narrowly. The division does not have a clearly stated *classification philosophy* that guides staff in making determinations regarding class structure design.

On the one hand, DHR Policy 300, *Classification Program* Administration[19], states that central and line management "will continually identify opportunities to establish broad generic classes, consolidate duplicate and redundant classes, and delete obsolete classes in an effort to reduce the total number of classes in the (Classification) Plan to an optimal level." However, in the division's binder of training materials, preference appears to be expressed for specific, narrowly defined classes rather than general, more broadly defined classes. The following guidance is given:

If the subject position can be adequately described by either class [when comparing to alternative classes] the more specific class is preferable because of its more direct applicability to the position and more targeted recruitment.

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[18] Based on the FY 2008-2009 summary of budgeted and ordinanced positions.

[19] Issued on January 15, 1999, following re-establishment of the Department of Human Resources.

Further, Civil Service Rule 5.01 can be read to construe an orientation toward use of narrow classes, even though that may not have been intended (the language is similar to that of other public agencies that use broad class approaches).

There is nothing inherently wrong with use of narrow classes, in terms of the application of classification principles. Narrow classes have the benefit of facilitating focused recruitment and selection for requisite skills for specific jobs. However, extensive use of narrow classes has several important disadvantages:

- Narrow class structures can restrict competition and limit career development for employees in the organization and impede the organization's utilization of the full growth potential of its internal talent pool.

- Extensive use of narrow classes:
  - Increases costs for administration and management of the classification plan.
  - Increases costs of recruitment and selection to fill a large number of narrowly defined positions.
  - Can increase the difficulty of determining appropriate allocation of positions when there are degrees of overlap in the duties of various classes.

A few simple examples of the narrowness of County classes:

- The separate County classes of Bricklayer, Cement and Concrete Finisher and Concrete and Stone Worker might be combined into a class of Mason in other organizations.

- The separate County classes of Window Washer and Floor Care Specialist might be combined into a higher level Custodian class in other organizations.

- There is considerable overlap in types of duties performed and competencies required for the separate classes of Agricultural Chemical Sprayer and Tree Sprayer.

- Weed and Pest Abatement Worker might be an assignment type within the class of Ground Maintenance Worker I. The two classes are paid the same.

- Similarly, Plant Nursery Worker might be an assignment within the class of Senior Grounds Maintenance Worker. These two classes are also paid the same.

- There are overlaps in the duties within a number of entry/lower level field trades classes such as:

Example	Top Step Salary
Construction and Repair Laborer	$3,140
Public Works Laborer	$3,194
General Maintenance Worker	$3,751
Public Works Maintenance Worker	$3,555
Marina Maintenance Worker	$3,807
Water Service Helper I	$3,411

♦ There are 18 classes in the Laundry Job Family, below the management level. Thirteen of these classes have only 1 to 3 incumbents.

Our review suggests significant streamlining can be achieved by conducting a rigorous analysis of the *whole* County Classification Plan for opportunities to broaden classes. Beyond those evident from these simple examples, some of the County's large job families such as Clerical and Related (approximately 58 classes) and Accounting and Fiscal (approximately 60 classes) may present significant opportunities to broaden classes using competency-model based approaches.

A review of classes in the broad Accounting and Fiscal job family serves to illustrate the possibilities:

Accounting Clerk I, II	Accounting Administration Group (3 classes)
Invoice Clerk	Head, Budget & Management Serv Museum of Art
Operations Specialist, Bank and Remittance Processing	Head, Budget Services Regional Planning
	Expenditure Manager I
Asst Ops Officer, Bank and Remittance Processing	Revenue Manager I, II
Operations Officer, Bank and Remittance Processing	Budget and Financial Services Manager
	Head, Revenue & Financial Accounting
Cashier Clerk	Head, Financial Management County Counsel
Cashier, Intermediate Cashier, Senior Cashier	Asst Chief, Financial Management Fire
Cashiering Services Representative Sheriff I, II	Asst Chief, Fiscal Services Sheriff
Cashiering Services Representative Supv, Sheriff	Director, Fiscal Administration Sheriff
Accounting Technician I, II	Assistant Chief, Budget & Finance PW
Supervising Accounting Technician Assessor	Assistant Chief, Financial Division PW
Accountant I, II, III	Assistant Deputy Director, Finance PW
Senior Accountant Auditor-Controller	Budget Officer MH
Supervising Accountant	Finance Officer MH
Principal Accountant	Chief, Accounting Division MH
Chief Accountant	Chief, Budget Management HS
Accounting Officer I, II, III	Chief, Expenditure Management HS
Fiscal Officer I,II	Financial Manager LAC/USC
Fiscal Officer II HS	Assistant Chief Financial Officer HS
Financial Specialist I, II, III, IV	
Health Care Financial Analyst	
Senior Health Services Analyst	

During the time this study was being conducted, the division developed a structured, systematic plan for updating and revising all class specifications (see page 61 for the age distribution for class specs). This plan gives priority in FY 2010 to forty-four highly populated classes whose specifications have not been updated in many years. Classes in both the Accounting and Fiscal and the Clerical and Related family are planned for inclusion. While the plan was not designed to address the issue of proliferation of classes, it can be reframed to accomplish objectives both to streamline the classification plan and to develop up-to-date class specifications. Work the division has accomplished to date will be very useful to its future transformational initiatives.

4. Other Factors Contribute to Class Proliferation

   a. There appear to be a large number of department-specific classes excluding program-specific (such as public health, mental health, DCFS and DPSS), public safety and legal occupations. Some have department names in the class title, others do not. A cursory review of the Plan suggests at least 135 classes where department specific titles appear to duplicate more general titles.

   The County does not have a stated classification philosophy nor does it have guidelines or a rule of thumb regarding the creation and use of department-specific classes. In fact, division staff reported that, if departments fight to get or keep department-specific classes, the division will generally approve, even if there is limited justification in fact for doing so.

   b. Many classes have not been studied in several years. Based on the Class/Comp division's class specification master database[20], about 70 percent of class specifications are more than six years old; almost 7 percent are over 31 years old.

Time	# Classes	% Total
18 months	125	4.89%
2 - 5 years	628	24.56%
6 - 10 years	1297	50.72%
11 - 15 years	60	2.35%
16 - 20 years	84	3.29%
21 - 25 years	87	3.40%
26 - 30 years	110	4.30%
31 - 35 years	70	2.74%
36 - 40 years	80	3.13%
41 - 45 years	9	0.35%
46 - 49 years	7	0.27%
	2,557	100.00%

   As noted earlier in this report, between approximately 1999 and 2004 DHR updated a significant number of specifications as part of a five year strategic goal. It is reported that many of the changes were cosmetic rather than substantive in nature.

   c. The division does not have up-to-date information for reviewing and evaluating the classification plan. Coding of classes is not current for:

      I. Function and occupation categories.

      II. EEOC categories.

      III. Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) determinations for Exempt and Non-exempt status.

Recommendations

17. Appoint a small working/advisory group made up of departmental human resources managers to serve as a sounding board and collaborator with the Class/Comp division in designing and carrying

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[20] This database as of May 21, 2009 included 104 LACERA classes in the 2,557 classes listed.

out initiatives recommended in this report for improving the County's classification and compensation program.

18. Formulate a *Classification Philosophy* that expresses at a policy level the County's objectives regarding classification plan design, including its preferences for broad vs. narrow classes, department-specific vs. Countywide/multi-department classes and other design questions. In conjunction with this initiative, develop and implement a policy establishing criteria for approval of department-specific classes.

19. Develop, in collaboration with the classification advisory committee, a comprehensive plan, to be implemented over a five to seven year period, to:

   a. Streamline the County's classification plan consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy*;

   b. Establish priorities in the review of job families/class structure that address both pressing central agency and department needs;

   c. Provide mechanisms for on-going maintenance of the classification plan, including required information management tools such as coding of classes for service, job family, EEOC and FLMA purposes; and

   d. Ensure sharing of results and integration of efforts in conducting job analyses with divisions in DHR.

20. Propose Civil Service rule revisions required to facilitate implementation of classification streamlining initiatives:

   a. Use of broad classifications together with selective certification, flex classes and/or any other approaches that are developed consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy*.

   b. Rules and supporting policies regarding reclassification of positions to higher and lower classes following major classification studies.

   c. Rules and supporting policies regarding employee status in positions affected by department reorganizations and restructures.

Classification Methodologies and Processes

Staff Training

The Classification discipline within human resources management incorporates a body of well established principles, concepts and methodologies that have developed from work begun in the mid-20th century at the federal level. Expertise in their use requires both professional training and experience in their application in a variety of job settings.

DHR Policy 300, which provides an overview of administration of the classification program and outlines responsibilities of the central classification division and of the line departments, states that the central

agency — now Class/Comp — is responsible for providing technical classification training both to central staff and to line departments' staff "to ensure uniformity and the ongoing effectiveness of the [classification] program."

Even though many division staff members are reported to be relatively new to the function and without prior classification/compensation experience, time has not been committed in the last two years to providing training on classification principles and practices. Analysts are expected to acquire knowledge and competencies required to do the work through informal means and performing assignments on a supervised basis.

The division is currently in the process of developing a comprehensive, modular classification and compensation training program for both division and departmental staff, similar to that recommended in this report.

Analysts have, as reference, a set of DHR Policies adopted in early 1999 after DHR was re-established as a department. With one exception, these policies have not been updated since they were issued. Policy 305 is intended to establish the framework of concepts and principles to be applied in administering and maintaining the County's classification program. While useful, coverage of the policy is neither as complete nor current as it should be to serve as a guide to new classification analysts or to provide an explanation regarding factors considered in the classification process to build understanding by department managers:

- ◆ No classification philosophy is stated and no guidance is given on such important issues as the County's preference for class structure design, e.g., broad versus narrow classes and use of Countywide versus department-specific classes.

- ◆ The foundation principles and concepts are not as complete and descriptive as they should be to guide classification analysis processes.

- ◆ No guidance is given on use of titles to ensure reasonable consistency, especially for supervisory and management classes.

- ◆ Limited guidance is given on differentiating different levels of work and responsibilities within a class series.

- ◆ The list of terms provided is not organized in a way that differentiates terminology of general use in the classification discipline and those that are relevant in conducting classification analyses and making determinations on differing class levels, such as:
  - ➢ Types and levels of knowledge, skill and ability.
  - ➢ Levels of work responsibility and authority.
  - ➢ Levels of problem-solving and decision-making involved in the work.
  - ➢ Types and degree of supervision received when performing the work.

- No guidance is given on designating a class as exempt or non-exempt for purposes of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). [21]

- The role of the classification analyst in determining the Physical Requirements category for a class or any guidance for doing so. Responsibility more appropriately resides in the CEO's Operational Health unit, rather than with Class/Comp.

Further, as part of the informal training process, Class/Comp analysts have access to binders from training conducted several years ago. While the materials are interesting and useful (for example they include samples from other agencies and other reference documents), they do not provide analysts an integrated set of professional guidance or references they are expected to use in performing their classification analyses.

Training is a critical issue both for central staff and for line department staff that performs classification studies and sends them forward for central review and approval. Class/Comp division managers report these studies frequently do not meet professional standards and have to be re-done by central staff. Not only does this result in waste/inefficient use of resources at both the departmental and the central level, it also creates significant delays and enormous frustration within departments.

The Division has established a Classification Network, comprised of central and departmental classification managers/staff. The purpose is to communicate with departments on studies and projects being performed and to provide a venue for training on classification processes. The Network's composition is not well suited to the type of in-depth training needed to bring Countywide classification staff to the required level of professional competence. Nevertheless, members of the Network have expressed appreciation for the efforts to communicate on important classification topics.

While technically a CEO budget responsibility (see DHR Policy 300), classification analysts are increasingly involved in or asked to lead efforts to design/develop new/revised organization and classification structures to meet new and growing demands for program delivery and organizational efficiency. Division staff often steps into a vacuum and try to help departments design/redesign appropriate work units, hierarchies and jobs, in order to be able to carry out their class/comp responsibilities.

Consulting with line managers on organization/ job design and change/implementation strategies is an appropriate role for classification analysts because it draws on many knowledge and skill sets used in job analysis and classification processes. However, such work should be seen as an advanced job assignment for classification analysts, requiring, in addition to mastery of classification principles and concepts:

- A sound understanding of organization design principles, methodologies and alternatives; and,

- Well developed skills in internal consulting, consensus-building and change management skills.

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[21] While there is no written County policy on making FLSA determinations, Class/Comp staff recently attended training on this issue.

If Class/Comp analysts are expected to carry out these types of assignments as a part of their job responsibilities, additional components must be added to the formal classification training program in order to enable them to provide effective consultation and work products in this area.

Finally, as an adjunct to more formal training, most agencies use staff meetings to share experiences and lessons-learned on the application of classification principles in practice. This information sharing is a very important contributor to agency training processes. However, the Class/Comp division does not hold staff meetings, instead relying on highly informal means for sharing information, e.g., essentially relying on staff to "pass along the information" to other staff. Absence of staff meetings is a "missed opportunity" for facilitating staff learning and development.

Recommendations

21. Design and implement a new comprehensive classification training program (see Section 3, general recommendation 8) that is available to both central and department staff responsible for performing classification analyses:

    a. Incorporate provisions for rotational assignments within the Class/Comp division to provide experience with difference occupational groups and department business requirements.

    b. Consider rotational/training assignments between central and departmental classification units.

    c. Include organization and job design modules to provide exposure to principles and practices in the field of organizational development.

    d. Include modules on interpersonal competencies such as internal consulting, consensus-building and change management.

    e. Consider design and development of a Certified Classification Analyst program similar to the effort underway in development of a Certified Examination Analyst program.

        i. Ensure congruency between the training on job analysis provided in the Certified Examination Analyst program and that used in the classification training program.

        ii. Determine how to integrate proficiency in use of the competency-based methodology into the Certified Classification Analyst program.

    Consider use of unpaid or partially paid interns from local university graduate schools to conduct research and develop modules for the training program.

22. Clarify responsibilities of departments, CEO budget analysts and Class/Comp analysts for assisting departments in conducting organizational analyses and organization/reorganization studies; develop appropriate policies, procedures and standards for efficiently carrying out such studies.

Job Analysis Methodologies

The division uses the *Whole-job Classification Method*[22] of job analysis in carrying out its classification responsibilities. This method is widely used in public sector agencies and is very successful in settings where:

♦ Class structures are well defined, distinctions among classifications are clear and classification n standards provide good guidance on factors to consider in the allocation of jobs.

♦ Classification analysts are well trained and have broad knowledge regarding the work of the organization, in order to be able to identify and describe fine distinctions between jobs clearly and precisely to make supportable judgments regarding differences in job size.

Unfortunately, the County has limitations in both areas.

Quantitative methods can be used to introduce greater rigor and consistency to job analysis processes. These methods permit more precise definition and explanation of job similarities and differences through quantitative evaluation of each job on a weighted set of job content factors, such as technical/professional and managerial knowledge, complexity and impact of problem-solving and decision-making, nature and purpose of interpersonal contacts and other factors. The combined quantitative measurements produce a total evaluation that measures the differences and size of differences between jobs. Not only is this a useful tool to determining the number of class levels in a job series based on total job content differences, it is an essential tool for determining equivalency of job content in classes across job families for internal relationship and salary setting purposes. Use of quantitative methodologies also requires extensive training and experience to achieve consistent, expert application of job measurement tools and the ability to explain evaluation results to non-technical audiences.

Prior to initiation of this study, the Class/Comp division evaluated several options and selected for County use the federal Factor Evaluation System (FES) developed by the Office of Personnel Management for use in evaluating all General Schedule employees in federal agencies. Division staff has been trained in its use and have begun applying it in conducting classification studies.

As with other quantitative job analysis methods, the FES system can provide significant advantages to the County in streamlining the classification plan as well as addressing serious internal equity questions that currently exist. The benefits of using this methodology will be achieved only if it is consistently applied as a core technology by classification analysts as part of a carefully thought out strategy. This is an area division management recognizes it needs to give serious attention.

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[22] The Whole Job Classification method involves comparing jobs/classes on a "whole job" basis. It involves making qualitative judgments on the scope and complexity of work performed and the competencies required for successful job performance.

Implications of Transition to a Competency Model-based Approach to Selection

Highlighted in the Executive Summary and discussed in detail in Section 5 of this report are recommendations to move to use of a competency-model for selection to fill County positions. Principal benefits of using this approach are:

♦ Improved validity and utility of selection processes for competencies that are consistent across classes and job families.

♦ Improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness in selection. When fully implemented, candidates can be tested one time on core competencies and their scores "banked" for use in future examinations, rather than repeated testing for competencies that are common to multiple classes.

There are obvious implications for the classification function in transitioning to a competency-based selection program. In simple terms, methods of job analysis used currently by Class/Comp and those needed to support competency-based selection can be compared as follows:

Current Methodology	Proposed Methodology
Based on duties and responsibilities performed	Based on core competencies required for successful job performance

Use of a competency-based methodology can provide a powerful tool in classification plan streamlining efforts. For example, the State of California, in its HR Modernization Project, was able to consolidate 175 separate scientist classifications covering 3,200 positions into three broad scientist classifications — entry/assistant, journey-level and senior/expert – based on academic, cognitive and behavioral competencies **common to all** scientist positions at the three levels. Unique scientific disciplines can be assessed using selection methods specifically designed for those disciplines. Individuals can be appointed to positions based on both assessments of core competencies and of scientific disciplines specific to positions (selective certification can be used for this purpose in the County).

If the County adopts use of competency-model based selection, the Class/Comp division will need to implement data gathering and analytical processes to integrate use of this methodology.

Recommendations

23. Formulate a strategy for comprehensive implementation of the federal Factor Evaluation System (FES) for conducting job analyses for classification and compensation purposes, including:

a. A pilot project for evaluating its utility and its compatibility with a competency-based model and engaging line department staff and stakeholders in the evaluation process.

b. Conducting job analyses of selected classes/class series to establish benchmarks for creating an internal equity classification hierarchy.

c. Establishing its use as a required component in all class/comp studies.

d. Intensive training and mentoring on the methodology in the new classification training program open to all central and departmental classification staff. See Recommendation 5 above.

24. Incorporate use of competency-based classification methods, assuming successful completion of the pilot study recommended in this report and adoption of competency-based selection methodologies as the County standard.

Policies and Procedures

<u>Policies</u>

The set of policies directing administration of the classification program was adopted in early 1999, shortly after the recreation of DHR.

DHR Policy No.	Title
300	Classification Program Administration
305	Classification Principles, Concepts and Terms
315	Creating a New Class
320	Guidelines for Revising Class Specifications
325	Notification to Local 660 – Offer to Consult
330	Writing a Class Specification
331	Guidelines for Determining Driver License Requirements on Class Specifications
345	Budget Allocation Studies
350	Classification Plan Maintenance Program

These policies have not been updated since they were issued and in many important ways do not reflect the current reality of classification program administration. In addition, the division does not have an internal procedures manual to provide guidance and serve as a reference to staff in carrying out their classification and compensation responsibilities. It is our understanding that staff members follow the practice of collecting various documents they believe are relevant and using them for later reference.

In addition to the issues discussed earlier regarding Policies 300 and 305, there are three other important issues that are evident from reviewing these policies:

1. Shared Classification Program (Policy 300).

    This policy contemplates that certain operational classification activities were to be delegated to line departments. They were to be performed in accordance with procedures and standards promulgated by the central agency. Departments were to be responsible for initiating action to review changes in work responsibilities to keep the classification plan current, conducting studies of individual positions and submitting findings for review and final approval, studying and allocating new budget positions to appropriate classes and submitting for review and approval.

The central agency was to conduct audits of departments' classification activities to ensure compliance with established standards.

Current practice does not appear congruent with what the drafters of this policy provision might have originally had in mind. Instead, practices in place are typical of agencies where departments assemble information and analysis in support of their requests and the central agency reviews, conducts its own analysis and approves or disapproves.

And, it is highly unlikely that a *shared program* approach would emerge and take hold in practice without the development of standards, training and a more collaborative intention between central agency and departmental staff with classification responsibility.

However, it should be noted that the current budget position allocation process does provide for delegation of responsibility to departments to allocate positions to 240 classes that are generally at the entry level.

2. Class specifications (Policies 320 and 330).

Virtually all public agencies document in class specifications the competencies, e.g., knowledge, skills and abilities, which are associated with proficient performance of the essential duties and responsibilities of classifications. This is a long-established best practice in classification.

County class specifications are missing this KSA/competency information that is vital for:

> Comparing classes to each other to ensure appropriate internal equity and allocating individual positions to current or new classifications.

> Establishing appropriate, job related minimum qualifications for a class (a statement of minimum qualifications is considered to be a test under EEOC's Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures).

> Providing foundational information for recruitment and selection processes.

Policy 330 appropriately states that "formal education, training and experience requirements established for a class must be inferred from and justified by KSAs that are required for successful performance on the job." The policy indicates that KSA statements will be written for the major duties of the class. The analyst then translates the KSA statements into education, training and experience requirements that make up the minimum qualifications for the class. These policy provisions are not consistently followed in practice.

Not going through this analytical process, and documenting the results in class specifications, may be an important cause for stakeholders' beliefs that applicants who have relevant qualifications are sometimes excluded from examinations and others who do not have such qualifications are sometimes included in the candidate group.

3. Classification Plan maintenance.

Policy 350 lays out processes that are fundamental to on-going maintenance of a classification plan. In particular, it states that the central agency – now Class/Comp – will work with departments to identify job families, occupational groups and class series to be studied/surveyed during the coming fiscal year. The classes selected are to be based on both central agency and departmental priorities.

Following this process would provide a *proactive* approach to monitoring the classification plan and determining review priorities to resolve systemic classification plan issues and problems. Unfortunately, existing practice is highly reactive, driven by requests from departments to address pressing, often long-present classification and compensation problems and issues. Priorities tend to be set based on department complaints.

However, as noted earlier, the division is currently of setting priorities for updating class specifications, giving priority in FY 2010 to forty-four highly populated classes whose specifications have not been updated in many years. The division plans to provide input regarding the study priorities being set.

Recommendations

25. Re-examine the provisions in Policy 300 regarding a *Shared Classification Program* and determine whether greater delegation of classification responsibilities to departments can be achieved:

    a. What types of transactions/classification determinations might be delegated, provided proficiency among department HR staff is demonstrated.

    b. What policies and standards would have to be developed and what audit processes installed.

    c. At a minimum, consider expanding the list of 240 classes for which allocation authority has been delegated in order to reduce central staff time required during the budget position allocation process.

26. Develop a new set of classification policies that reflect current and new processes and methodologies installed, revised processes and procedures and other changes made to support implementation of recommendations made in this report. Policies should include coverage of the information and factors outlined on page 63.

27. Develop a division manual that describes procedures, steps and considerations to be followed for each key division function:

    a. Work tracking and monitoring processes to be installed.

    b. Requirements for learning the businesses of assigned departments, including field audits during classification studies.

    c. Responsibilities and procedures associated with department organization studies.

d. Processes for keeping departments up-to-date on the status of their work requests.

28. Redesign the County's class specification format, providing for the inclusion of clear classification standards and essential competencies required for proficient job performance. Establish a methodology to the relevance and job-relatedness of statements of minimum qualifications.

<u>Procedures, Processes and Tools</u>

The later section on *Staff Resource Allocation* addresses the cumbersome and time consuming nature of two work procedures/processes that consume significant staff resources:

◆ The budget position allocation process.

◆ Special salary actions.

The division does not have the processes and tools it needs to streamline and minimize costs for data collection for classification studies, especially large-scale ones of the type that would be involved in a classification plan streamlining initiative. The current Position Description Questionnaire is long, cumbersome and time consuming to complete. It is not available in electronic format on the County intranet and cannot be submitted electronically.

In a large-scale study, hundreds of employees would have to complete the current form on County work time; their managers would then need to conduct the review and comment process. In a study begun a few years ago intended to update clerical classes, thousands of staff hours were spent in multiple departments on the forms completion and submission process. Unfortunately, 13,000 forms submitted were filed away and the study process never completed.

Many agencies use simplified questionnaires, have them available online and have the technology tools to permit online review and submittal.

Recommendation

29. Design streamlined procedures and forms for conducting studies required to streamline the classification plan.

   a. Develop a new standard position description questionnaire that:

      i. Simplifies completion by individual or groups of employees.

      ii. Is consistent with the division's job analysis/classification methodology.

      iii. Can be made available and completed electronically.

   b. Consider the development and use of tailored questionnaires when conducting studies of large-incumbent classes.

   c. With the CEO's information technology staff, install systems to allow for online completion and submission of classification requests and position descriptions questionnaires.

d. Research and develop processes that will streamline and minimize job content data collection costs for large-scale studies that may involve thousands of incumbents.

Communication and Feedback Processes

The division does not have methods or consistent practices to keep its customers informed of the status of their work requests. Because the division does not have performance metrics or turn-around targets for most types of work requests, it generally cannot give departments estimated dates by which work is likely to be completed. Because it does not have a work management and monitoring system, it does not have a consistent way to flag work requests that are delayed so that follow up calls can be made to departments. Customer communication and feedback very much depends on the motivation of individual analysts and/or the persistence of departments in following up regularly on the status of their requests. Based on stakeholder feedback, division performance on this essential customer relationship behavior is highly mixed.

Recommendations

30. Based on data collected through the new work management tracking and reporting process recommended in general recommendation 15:

    a. Develop a set of division performance metrics.

    b. Formulate processes for keeping customers informed of the status of their requests.

    c. Consider their eventual use in establishing service level agreements with line department customers.

31. Based on division performance metrics established in recommendation 14, formulate performance standards for each of the key tasks performed by division analysts and utilize these in the staff performance evaluation process.

Compensation

Best Practice	Compared to...	Current County Situation
■ A strategically oriented compensation philosophy that supports the organization in meeting its long-term objectives and balances the three equities — internal, external and individual contribution.		■ While there is no formal compensation philosophy, there is a statement that describes the County's approach to salary setting. The statement is tactical, based on long-standing County practice.
■ Definition of the <u>multiple</u> labor markets within which the		■ The standard labor market is defined as the Southern California/West Coast private sector market, except for government specific occupations. The ten largest California counties

Best Practice	Compared to...	Current County Situation

organization needs to compete effectively to recruit and retain talented individuals.

- A sound structure of internal job relationships with which to ensure internal equity consistent with the Equal Pay Act.

- Salary structures utilizing sound design principles and concepts.

- Pay policies that provide for flexibilities to address recruitment and retention challenges.

- Salary administration programs that link employee pay increases to performance results.

- Mechanisms for ongoing evaluation of agency compensation practices to ensure organizational goals are being met.

plus the City of Los Angeles and, sometimes, the State of California are surveyed for purposes of cross checks.

- The specific labor markets within which the County competes, including specialized health care, information technology, museum/arts and national markets for executive positions have not been described specifically. Published surveys of health care and other data are used when needed to address issues.

- Proliferation of classes and overlapping classes, together with problems/issues from the period of decentralized classification, make it virtually impossible to ensure appropriate internal relationships among classes.

- For most classifications, the County uses a single salary structure, adjusted by use of multiple special notes, rather than separate structures for specific job types/groups. There are a limited number of tailored pay plans, including the MAPP range structure for executive and management classes and plans for certain specialized health care classes such as physician, physician manager, board specialists and nurses.

- Special salary action types, such as manpower shortage differentials and advanced step hiring, provide some flexibilities in hiring for hard-to-fill positions.

- While pay increases are associated with performance appraisals, pervasive "pay-for-performance" practices are not in place.

- County compensation practices do not undergo a periodic strategic evaluation. Reviews occur as needed when issues are raised by County leadership or through the labor relations process.

Compensation is an essential element in design of overall human resources strategies needed to support an organization's achievement of its strategic goals, because of its importance for recruiting, retaining and motivating highly talented managers and employees who must accomplish that work. Defining a compensation strategy or philosophy — in terms of multiple competitive markets, the level of competitiveness of compensation desired and a philosophy about delivery of salaries to employees based on performance results, for example, frames salary program design decisions.

The County does not have a formally adopted compensation philosophy which is strategically focused. The statement drafted by the Guiding Coalition that worked with the CEO's Office in strategic planning efforts in 2002-2003 expresses the County's approach to salary setting, including the factors to be used in making salary determinations. Class/Comp division management has expressed the view that development of a philosophy regarding competitive positioning of compensation is neither feasible nor wise. While we recognize the labor relations implications of formalizing stated intentions regarding competitive positioning of compensation, we believe a formal compensation philosophy regarding the County's approach to Total Compensation and its primary competitive markets is important for guiding staff decision-making on compensation issues.

Defining the Labor Market(s)

The first element in establishing effective compensation programs involves determining how an organization's pay practices compare to those of other employers in the labor market. Ensuring that pay levels are as competitive as they need to be — and the organization can afford them to be — is fundamentally important to ensure the organization's ability to recruit and retain talented managers and employees.

Labor market should be defined as the geographic areas and/or the specialized functional marketplaces in which the organization competes for recruitment and retention purposes. Large, complex employers — such as the County of Los Angeles — rarely, if ever, compete only in a single labor market. While it may be feasible to fill a large proportion of an employer's jobs from individuals in the local community, that market may be too limited for filling specialized and higher level jobs without having jobs open for extended periods. Executive jobs, for example, typically have either a regional or national market. Jobs in specialized functions such as information technology, health care, science and engineering, museums and the arts have specialized functional markets where pay practices may differ from the "standard local market" because of supply/demand and prevailing pay practice issues. The general challenge of competing in these specialized markets is well known. As information technology changes, for example, individuals with competencies in the latest applications/languages/technology solutions are often in short supply and very difficult to recruit with only average salaries. Similar supply/demand issues occur in narrowly specialized occupations. For example, individuals with the requisite skills and certifications to work as water/sewer treatment plant operators are currently in short supply and very difficult to attract.

Organizations must first identify the labor markets from which they need to attract vital staff and then identify within each market a sample of employers that are representative and whose practices influence levels of compensation in that competitive market. They must utilize sound job-matching

processes to collect market compensation data for use in evaluating the organization's competitive positioning vis-à-vis other employers. Once defined, changes in compensation practices in these markets need to be monitored, using consistent sources of data. It is virtually impossible to interpret the meaning of changes in survey market data over time when the sources of data are not consistent.

In health care and other shortage occupations, in particular, design of compensation plans is essential to getting and keeping skilled employees. Marketing the employer, paying at least competitive wages, providing variable pay awards for skill growth, and other work life programs[23] are critical elements of a recruitment and retention strategy.

Many organizations use multiple pay structures tailored to the dimensions and policy requirements for different occupational groups and/or competitive pay challenges. Class/Comp management believes that the use of multiple notes to its general salary schedule (which reflect special pay policies for individual class series) accomplishes the same purpose.

The Class/Comp division follows long-standing County practices in administering compensation. Its articulated standard labor market is the Southern California/West Coast private sector market for all but government-specific occupations. Published surveys of private sector data are purchased primarily for use in preparation for labor negotiations which occur every two to three years. Surveys of other public sector agencies are conducted when needed. Surveys of pay practices in the ten largest counties in the state plus the City of Los Angeles are conducted from time to time primarily for the purpose of cross-checking compensation levels. While the Division receives a variety of requests and complaints regarding competitiveness issues, current practices give greatest weight to: 1) published survey data for entry/lower level classes; and 2) established salary relationships among County classes (see page 76). The implications of turnover/retention rates are also assessed.

The County's practices differ from most other public agencies which utilize public sector data in making labor market compensation comparisons, particularly above entry level general occupations. This is for several reasons:

- A large number of public agency jobs are either not found at all in private companies or, if they exist, do not have the job content size and scope found in public agency jobs in the same disciplines. This is often because of the size of many private employers included in survey databases.

- Published private sector survey data is very difficult to use for purposes of developing equivalent "apples to apples" comparisons to public sector jobs.

While the Class/Comp division from time to time obtains and analyzes additional specialized survey data for the County's unique businesses such as information technology and health care and for its executive and top management/professional classes, it has not established specific survey market definitions for

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[23] Workforce Retention and Pay and Reward Practices in America's Best Hospitals," Patricia Zingheim and Jay Schuster, ACA Journal, Second Quarter, 2008.

these. It is not clear how regularly the division surveys to determine the compensation trends in specialized disciplines.

The Class/Comp division does not have written procedures and guidelines for its staff to follow in carrying out its compensation responsibilities. Materials included in the Classification training manuals regarding compensation are insufficient to ensure sound, consistent practice in this area and certainly provide only limited guidance to relatively inexperienced analysts.

Many stakeholders expressed concern about the competitiveness of compensation for executive and management classes and for hard-to-fill occupations.

Recommendations

32. Define and document for consistent use:

  a. The multiple labor markets in which the County competes to recruit and retain top quality managers and staff.

  b. The sources of compensation data that will be used to evaluate competitiveness of pay within each of those markets.

Internal Equity

The second element in establishing effective compensation programs involves determining internal relationships of job content. Simply put, a job in one department or function that is approximately the same size in terms of job content[24] should be paid approximately the same as a job in another department or function of similar job content size, absent consideration of external pay practice or labor negotiation considerations. This basic precept is consistent with merit principles and the Equal Pay Act.

The Class/Comp division has an established group of approximately 220 classes for which it conducts market surveys every three years for labor negotiations purposes. Management and supervisory classes are not included. A computer program links these 220 classes – both vertically and horizontally – to all other County classes based on long-standing, historical relationships among classes. The program is used to develop "what if" scenarios regarding costs for proposed changes in compensation. While requests for changes in relationships between classes are received and reviewed, the established relationships, i.e., salary differentials between classes, are rarely changed, according to division management.

The current condition of the County's classification plan — a proliferation of classes with limited class distinctions — and the process described above for determining compensation changes – which appears to lock in historical relationships – makes it extraordinarily difficult to establish and maintain sound internal equity relationships among classes in what should be a "living" classification plan. The entry/lower-level field trades classes listed on page 59 can serve to illustrate this point. While it is conceivable that there could be compensable factor differences that explain the differences in salary

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[24] Job content is evaluated on the breadth and depth of work responsibilities and accountabilities and the competencies required for effective performance.

levels shown, review of the class specifications for these classes suggests they are equivalent in job content size.

Given the condition of the classification plan, the job analysis methodology in use — whole job classification — does not provide a very powerful tool to enable classification analysts to begin to identify and address perceived internal equity problems. As the division expands use of the FES job evaluation methodology, the rigor of that quantitative method should enable the division to begin to do so.

Until that occurs, there will continue to be credibility questions about the division's compensation decisions. Many stakeholders reported they believe the division simply "backs into" its determinations and cannot fully explain the job content basis for decisions made.

Recommendation

33. In conjunction with initiatives to streamline the County classification plan, using competency-based and FES job evaluation processes and with input from the classification advisory committee (see Recommendations 19, 23 and 24 of this section), initiate efforts to establish a hierarchy of internal job relationships based on similarity in job content.

    a. Utilize that process to identify serious internal equity issues and work collaboratively with CEO and department staff to develop appropriate strategies for resolving them.

    b. Develop and implement procedures and guidelines for the analytical processes involved in establishing and maintaining internally equitable relationships of pay.

    c. Incorporate modules in the new comprehensive classification training program. Determine how to integrate proficiency in these processes into the Certified Classification Analyst program.

Pay-for-Performance

Programs to tie increases in employee salaries to their performance results are so established in practice as to no longer be considered innovative.

◆ The USC Center for Effective Organizations has tracked pay practices among large private sector employers since 1987. In a 2002 survey, it found that 72 percent of companies surveyed had one to three pay-for-performance practices in place.

◆ In our Human Resource Best Practices Review report, pages 37-39, we describe a sample of the practices in place among public employers.

It is indisputable that effective pay-for-performance programs produce positive results for their organizations, in terms of improved individual and organizational performance. However, they do not work effectively *unless*:

1. There are strong performance management and evaluation systems designed to focus employee accomplishment on organizational goals and objectives.

2. Managers and supervisors are trained and skilled in setting clear targets for performance, explaining to employees what they need to do to excel, while coaching and providing developmental feedback.

3. There is confidence that managers and supervisors will provide fair assessments of performance.

4. Organizational goals and benefits of the rewards program are widely communicated, and the ways in which goals will be evaluated are clear and understandable.

5. Sufficient pay rewards are available to differentiate exceptional from average performance.

The County is in the early stages of development and implementation of a new performance evaluation system/program. Once that program has been fully implemented, managers and supervisors are trained and become proficient it is use *and* utilization of the system gains credibility, the stage could be right for the County to consider development of a pay-for-performance program for employees assigned to salary ranges. Introduction of such a program would be the subject of labor negotiations and would no doubt face serious challenges.

Other Issues

Many stakeholders interviewed in the course of this study expressed concern about two additional matters:

♦ **Timeliness.** Requests for compensation reviews are seen to take far too long, often producing serious hardships for the departments involved. This problem has been addressed at length in other sections of this report.

♦ **Micromanagement.** This concern was primarily focused on review processes associated with special salary actions. This concern is addressed below under *Division Resource Allocation*.

Division Structure, Responsibilities and Resource Requirements

The Compensation Policy Division, with which DHR's Classification division was combined, has not officially been renamed to reflect the importance of its additional responsibilities. While perhaps not intended, failure to formally rename the division implies a lack of importance and priority placed on the classification program and activities for which it is responsible.

The division is organized in three sections, one of which has responsibility for benefits and other policy research. The two sections that are accountable for the primary functions of the division are organized broadly around department clusters, with one or more analysts assigned to individual departments. In order to facilitate building and maintaining staff knowledge and understanding of assigned departments and their classes/class series, staff members are generally not rotated among department assignments. The objective for following this approach is both positive and important. However, there are potential problems that can result and need to be addressed through other means:

♦ It can inadvertently create a bias towards continuation of narrow/department-specific classes and result in lack of insight regarding issues with maintenance of Countywide classifications,

because no analysts have responsibility for learning and overseeing maintenance of County-wide/multi-department classifications.

♦ It inhibits development of broadly experienced classification analysts, especially when coupled with lack of staff training on classification and compensation principles and practices.

Division Staffing

It seems intuitively obvious that the division is understaffed to meet the significant challenges it faces in updating and streamlining the County's classification plan. Arguably, its current staffing would be more appropriate for on-going maintenance of a plan that was in reasonably good order. However, without workload/work flow data, it is difficult to establish *on a factual basis* whether the division is staffed appropriately to achieve its overall mission. And, unfortunately, we were unable to find any data in the human resources literature on typical staffing ratios for a classification function that could provide us a rule of thumb in this analysis.

The division has a total of 25 staff members performing classification and compensation functions, supplemented by three retirees and other Administrative Interns. This includes three division/section managers, three supervisors and 20 analysts who together have overall responsibility for development and maintenance of the County's classification plan (including 2,465 classes in the classified service[25]) and compensation systems.

Assuming 23 full-time analysts, the County has a ratio of 107 classes per classification analyst. Only for purposes of reference, the City of Los Angeles has a ratio of 119 classes for each of its seven classification analysts (1,300 City classes, 836 of which are examined for[26]).

It is important to note that human resources employees assigned to line departments also perform classification and compensation study work, which ultimately comes to the division for review and approval. While there is no hard data, the best estimate of the number of staff involved is 45 FTEs with only five departments having five or more staff assigned to perform classification work, on either a full-time or primary basis.

Lack of Management Information and Work Management Tools

As reported in Section 3, the Class/Comp division does not have established performance metrics, nor does it have established management tools for use in managing, prioritizing, tracking and reporting on its workload. There is no complete and reliable way to quickly answer the questions: "what work is in the division pipeline, what is the status of pending work and when will the pending work be completed?"

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[25] Countywide Classification Profile as of January 2009: 2,714 classes excluding Court and LACERA classes, minus 249 commission, department head, employee-by-contract and other unclassified classes.

[26] Classes not examined for include classes exempt from Civil Service provisions as well first-level classes in deep class series.

Logs and spreadsheets are used to track some assignments but tend not to be kept up-to-date or used to document large-scale classification studies awaiting action. There is no readily available listing of studies or projects that represent the division's actual classification backlog.

Generally, requested studies move to a high priority based on high level calls/complaints, not through active management of priorities in the backlog. The need to respond to urgent day-to-day issues drives out commitment of time to analyzing and resolving systemic issues.

Recommendations have been presented in other sections of this report to address this critical need.

Division Resource Allocation

The division does not have a sound means for identifying and evaluating whether the actual allocation and utilization of its staff resources among key functions reflects the preferred or most effective use of those resources, from either a policy or a customer service perspective.

Below the section manager level, the division has three supervisors and twenty staff assigned to classification and compensation functions. The two managers *estimate* their staff resources are utilized as follows:

Function	% of Total Staff Time	Estimated FTEs
Budget position allocation process	30% – 50%	7 – 12
Special salary actions	20% – 25%	5 – 6
Small studies, reclass requests, spec revisions	25% – 10%	6 – 2
Large studies/advising and consulting	25% – 15%	6 – 3

Given the current state of the County's classification plan and the high level of departmental frustration regarding completion of classification studies, there is an obvious question whether this allocation of resources best serves the County's needs.

Special Salary Actions

The Classification/Compensation division commits approximately 5 to 6 analyst FTEs to the review of departmental requests for special salary actions. We reviewed the log maintained for all these requests for the dates January 2008 to March 2009. On the following page is a summary of the data.

Primary Salary Action Type	Total	Approved	Denied	Returned to Dept for Further Info/ Withdrawn by Dept	Other Action Taken	Pending
Additional Responsibilities Pay Requests (1 or more employees)	155	122	17	3	3*	10
Special Step Placement Requests	390	329	2	5	36**	18
Superior-Subordinate Pay Requests	51	42	2	1	–	6
Temporary Assignment Bonus Requests	14	12	0	1	–	1
Y-Rate Requests	16	16	–	–	–	–
Retro Out-of-Class Requests	14	11	3	–	–	–

*Out-of-class pay approved instead.

**Approval for a different step that requested.

The overall approval ratio for these special pay requests is 83 percent (or 88 percent if the pending requests are deleted from the total).

Despite the high approval rate, the division managers believe it is important to continue review of these department requests. They believe that continuing a central review provides a deterrent to departments that otherwise would take actions contrary to policy.

From the stakeholder viewpoint, this salary action review process largely results in frustrating and unnecessary delays and inefficient use of resources. They would like to see approval of these requests delegated to departments, subject to Class/Comp monitoring and oversight.

An obvious question is whether it is cost effective to invest 5-6 FTEs in order to achieve the presumed deterrent effect. Or, whether there are further policy parameters and after-the-fact audit processes that would achieve compliance at a lower cost.

Recommendations

34. Develop a policy governing special pay requests, including their purpose, eligibility, criteria and considerations for approval and alternative options.

35. Define roles and responsibilities for delegation of this responsibility to departments, including audit processes that will be followed by Class/Comp to ensure policy compliance.

Cumbersome Procedures – the Annual Position Budget Allocation Process

Ensuring the appropriate allocation of new and modified positions approved in the budget is very important to updating and maintaining the classification plan. However, utilizing such a significant portion of the division's staff on this process, when the plan itself requires serious overhaul, seems misplaced.

The process needs to be re-engineered to achieve its purposes more efficiently and cost effectively. In normal years, 4,000 to 6,000 positions are reviewed and allocated in three different rounds of the budget process – Proposed, Final and Supplemental. The process is heavily forms-based; much of the work, including reconciliation of ordinanced positions, is acknowledged to be largely clerical even though it is performed by highly compensated analysts. Work is currently underway to automate completion of forms that will reduce the amount of clerical work. Even with that, a detailed business process analysis needs to be performed to further streamline the work — from line department development of budget requests that involve new positions, revised/modified positions and organization structure changes, to the CEO budget review process, to Class/Comp review and through to reporting out processes, including the process/time required for County Counsel review.

According to the Class/Comp managers, issues that contribute to problems with this process include:

- ◆ Departments do not initially provide the information needed to make position allocation decisions. All new and transferred positions require a fairly comprehensive duties statement (except for approximately 240 classes for which only a brief duties statement is necessary) and an organization chart. These may not be submitted with a department's budget request.

- ◆ While departments are not supposed to submit reorganization requests as part of their budget submittal, requests often entail some restructuring, issues regarding which cannot be resolved quickly.

- ◆ Review processes shared by CEO budget and Class/Comp analysts are not well coordinated.

- ◆ The process for reconciling ordinanced and budgeted positions is a time consuming, manual clerical task.

From the point of view of many stakeholders, this process is overly burdensome because Class/Comp treats even basic allocations and transfers as "national security matters" and requires the production and scrutiny of large amounts of data. Even position deletions have to be justified. If class structures were modernized and allocation standards for classes were clearer, many of the classification problems and disagreements between Class/Comp and departments would be eliminated.

Recommendations

36. Re-examine DHR Budget Allocation Studies policy, Policy 345 with regard to:

   a. Working directly with line department management and HR staff on requests for allocating and reallocating positions.

   b. Determining the most appropriate type/level of documentation required for new or modified positions, positions being transferred to new units, title changes, deletion of classes and organization structure changes.

   c. Coordination points and processes in the CEO budget review between the budget analyst and the classification analyst.

37. Conduct a business process re-engineering study of the County's new position budget allocation process to streamline and improve its effectiveness.

a. Once the business process re-engineering study is completed, re-write and re-promulgate the policy consistent with the re-engineered process.

b. Develop an internal division procedure documenting the steps and considerations involved.

Implications of Division Structure and Resource Allocation

The governance structure and financial and workplace realities, indeed even workforce expectations, which existed in 1994 when the Department of Human Resources was recreated and classification responsibilities were re-centralized, have changed dramatically. The broad question of the roles and responsibilities of a central Classification/Compensation division versus those of operating departments may not have been fully examined and clarified at that time and certainly have not been re-examined since then.

In smaller organizations, there is generally no issue around maintaining a central classification function — in order to avoid problems such as those the County has experienced as a result of decentralization. However, many state agencies — and LA County is more comparable to them in size and complexity than to most other counties and cities — have decentralized day-to-day classification functions subject to central policy direction.

For Los Angeles County, there are both practical and policy questions:

Is it feasible for a central staff of approximately 23 to 25 (or a larger number that the County can budget) to scrutinize and control the classification of about 100,000 positions in 2,465 classifications?

If it is not economically feasible to add all the necessary staff resources to the Class/Comp division to bring classification plan, documentation and service levels up to an acceptable standard, then:

- ♦ *What alternatives exist for resolving the systemic problems?*

- ♦ *Can some responsibilities be delegated to departments?*

- ♦ *What policy and review constraints would have to be put in place for any delegated responsibilities?*

- ♦ *What supporting mechanisms, e.g., tracking systems, staff training, changes in budget development processes, reporting to the Board, etc., would be necessary for the changes to meet established objectives.*

Courses of Action

Initiatives currently underway and recommended in this report will place even more demands on division staff over the next several years. Initiatives to streamline the classification plan and transition to a competency-based model <u>cannot</u> be achieved following a *business as usual* approach. Dramatic, intensely focused action is required.

1. Work processes need to be streamlined and responsibilities delegated to the greatest extent feasible in order to make optimal use of the currently available staff resources. Everything the division does needs to be examined from a quality/process improvement perspective.

2. On an urgent, intensive basis, both Class/Comp division and department HR staff need to be up-skilled on classification and compensation principles, methodologies and procedures in order to improve efficiency of operations.

3. Work management and monitoring systems need to be put in place.

4. Collaborative relationships with department managers and HR staff need to be dramatically improved.

These actions, together with action on the technical recommendations made in this report, will produce significant positive change but will not give the division the full complement of resources it needs through the transformation period.

We believe certain organizational changes are needed:

1. The benefits and research unit should be separated from Class/Comp and established as a Total Compensation Policy and Research division. This will facilitate focusing the Class/Comp division on its primary mission. In establishing the new division's charter and primary roles and responsibilities, clarity about any compensation-related functions it may retain versus those performed by the Classification and Compensation division needs to be ensured.

2. A third section — Major Studies and Research — should be established in the Classification and Compensation division.

    a. This unit should be assigned core staff responsible for large-scale Countywide classification studies and for spearheading other major division initiatives.

    b. Staff in the other two sections should be assigned on study teams led by this section.

    c. Section staff should be supplemented by staff resources loaned from line departments to work on specific studies and initiatives.

If at all feasible, given the County's budget and fiscal situation, additional staff positions should be assigned to the division, even if for only a two to three year period, to ramp up for and accelerate the transformation efforts. Consideration should also be given to use of unpaid or partially paid interns from local graduate schools, including schools of industrial psychology, for special projects and to support large scale studies.

In the longer term, action may still need to be taken to ensure maintenance and consistent application of professional standards on a Countywide basis, while eliminating to the maximum extent possible duplication of effort between the central agency and staff in line departments engaged in conducting classification studies. An alternative organizational approach which might be considered is restructuring the function on a Countywide basis, so that departmental classification staff have:

d. A solid line reporting relationship to management of the Classification and Compensation division; and,

e. A dotted line reporting relationship to their department management.

In this scenario, staff would continue to be physically located within line departments and responsible for maintaining effective relationships as part of the line department HR team, but would operate under the administrative and policy oversight of the Classification and Compensation division.

Further, we believe the County should re-integrate the Classification and Compensation division with DHR at a future point when that department is able to take on this significant additional responsibility. As we have discussed throughout this report, the classification function serves as the fundamental underpinning for all other HR programs, particularly recruitment and selection. Functional integration of these programs is essential to an effective and efficiently administered HR structure. While integration of a function across departmental lines is not impossible, it is significantly more difficult than if they were part of the same departmental organization.

Recommendation

38. Take action on the short-term recommendations regarding the organizational structure and staffing of the Classification/Compensation division.

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Section 5: Improvements Specific to Recruitment and Selection

Summary

The County is engaged in a thorough examination of key HR systems in order to ensure alignment of these systems with the County's strategic plan, and to evaluate how these systems can be improved to support the recruitment, selection, retention, and utilization of its human resources.

The Department of Human Resources (DHR) continually struggles to achieve its mission: "Provide innovative and efficient HR solutions to support public service by recruiting, developing, and retaining a highly qualified, diverse workforce." [27] DHR's systems related to recruiting, processing applications, conducting examinations, and creating eligibility lists, are manual and labor-intensive. The current process does not take advantage of the most valid selection processes, and does a poor job differentiating levels of competence in the applicant pool. The rule-bound selection system makes it difficult for DHR representatives to respond to departments with a customer service perspective.

These are issues that need to be addressed, particularly since current economic conditions are providing the County with a golden opportunity to capture talent and rebuild its workforce. According to a recent Rasmussen Reports, a government job remains "the top employment choice in today's economic environment" (8/26/09)[28]. The County is in a unique position to capture top talent. This opportunity will be lost unless recruiting and hiring systems are upgraded and streamlined. The County should actively develop and pursue initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce.

It is also vital that the HR staff increase its skill level. Poorly performing human resources organizations operate in a vicious cycle, where under-skilled staff focuses on low-value roles, making little contribution to the organization. In contrast, high-performing human resources organizations are marked by highly skilled staff focused on setting the organization's strategy, creating true business impact and making the function a magnet for top talent.

The County has a great deal of talent amongst the HR staff; however, that talent is not spread throughout the organization. Many HR analysts do not have the skill set or experience necessary to perform at a strategic level.

Following well-designed, objective, job-related, and effective human resources practices have been shown to result in significant cost utility through improved productivity and organizational performance.

County DHR work groups have made many excellent recommendations regarding process redesign, and overall strategy. Frequently, their recommendations are not acted upon. For example, "The Strategic

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[27] County Department of Human Resources Strategic Plan, Draft 2009

[28] Rasmussen Reports (8/28/09) retrieved on the web 9/1/09
http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/business/jobs_employment/august_2009/americans_rate_go
vernment_self_employment_as_top_job_choices

Values Survey and Strategic Supervisor Survey," which was completed in June 2007, contained the following recommendations for staffing:

- ◆ Improve the quality of employee selection procedures, particularly those for new hires.

- ◆ Enhance the ability of the County to recruit by actively marketing and projecting the County's public service image.

- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of recruitment efforts for major examinations that serve as entry points to the organization.

- ◆ Assess the effectiveness of major examinations in assessing the competencies that are most critical and most difficult to develop after hire.

- ◆ Conduct a study to determine where there may be retention issues and where turnover is dysfunctional.

- ◆ Conduct an assessment to determine whether changes in the classification structure, e.g., additional ways to qualify for examinations, would facilitate enhancing overall capability of the workforce and identify recommendations for specific changes.[29]

These recommendations are as relevant today as when they were made two years ago. Some of these recommendations have been acted upon, but others remain stalled by inertia. Likewise, in a series of reports, the Examination Streamlining Project has made insightful suggestions for process improvements. The call for change has been building, yet as John Kotter, a recognized leader in organization change management, states, "Never underestimate the magnitude of the forces that reinforce complacency and that help maintain the status quo."

The County's interest in examining its key HR systems has been building for several years. Recent lapses in hiring practices have heightened concern. Every day a new "problem" is featured in the *Los Angeles Times* or the *Daily News*. The "tipping point" has now been reached. It is imperative that the County improve its current systems, providing quality safeguards and more efficient operations. This will allow the County to bring qualified candidates on board more quickly and make the County a more attractive place to work.

The reward for aligning key HR systems with the County's strategic plan will be significant. Respected research studies over the last 15 years have demonstrated empirically that *business* performance improves significantly in organizations that have highly effective human resource management programs.

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[29] Strategic Values Survey and Strategic Supervisor Survey, June 2007

Best Practice	Compared to ...	Current County Situation
▪ Selection procedures with high validity and utility are used to identify top talent.		▪ The County's uses many selection procedures with low validity and utility. The hiring process does not ensure that the most qualified applicants are selected.
▪ *All* selection procedures have current supporting validity documentation.		▪ A number of examinations do not have current job analysis or technical reports to support the validity of the process. Minimum qualifications are not supported by job analysis. Technical reports indicate weights to be assigned to examination parts—then use weights as dictated by civil service rules.
▪ The central agency works closely with line departments to solve operational problems and to identify future needs.		
▪ Care is taken to shape the applicant pool to guarantee the right number of qualified candidates is available		▪ Internal customers view DHR as bureaucratic "gatekeepers," focusing on rules and processes rather than the business needs of the organization.
▪ Staff are well trained and well versed in HR solutions. HR serves as a consulting services organization to help line department achieve their business goals.		▪ Limited shaping of applicant pool results in excessive numbers of unqualified applicants.
▪ Central agency provides effective, state- of- the art selection tools.		▪ Many staff members lack the experience and training to serve as a valuable resource to line organizations. Checklists are used to document compliance, without an understanding of the purpose or reason for requirements. Little critical analysis of processes.
▪ Career development and mentoring programs focus on identifying new managers and leaders.		▪ Very little data is available to determine the cost effectiveness of selection tools or how well the tools differentiate top performers.
▪ Performance measures are easily accessed to evaluate the effectiveness of systems and processes		▪ Learning Academy defunded. Workforce planning efforts are not give adequate support.
		▪ Obtaining necessary data to analyze processes is manual, labor intensive, and almost impossible.

Infuse New Talent into the County Workforce

The County must act quickly to take advantage of the current interest in public service by developing initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce. The weak domestic employment outlook[30], coupled with the interest in government jobs, makes it possible for the County to attract qualified applicants that might have been out of the County's reach just a few years ago.

To bring top talent on board, the County's current selection systems must be adapted to properly assess and recruit top performers quickly. Several initiatives have been considered that would help to bring such talent on board immediately:

- ◆ Consider ways to bring outstanding candidates on board immediately
- ◆ Recruit a pre-qualified pool of potential employees before they are needed to fill a job
- ◆ Increase the use of student internships to tackle specific projects
- ◆ Develop student internship programs for specific specialties (HR, IT, Legal, Financial)

Several County departments have programs that could serve as models for this effort. The Auditor-Controller, for example, conducts active college recruiting and has built relationships with potential applicants prior to needing to fill a specific vacancy. Searching for "Best Practices" within the County and sharing results should be encouraged.

The rewards for hiring top employees are well documented. Research has shown that top employees produce about twice as much as average workers. At first, this may sound like an exaggeration, but if you consider the employees within your own work group, you will have a clear image of the difference increased productivity can bring to the County. Think for a moment about your top performers, and contrast the performance of those individuals to an employee who is just adequate. Now imagine if all of your employees were performing at that top level. Imagine the impact that an infusion of individuals, who perform like your top employees, could have on the County's ability to meet its strategic goals. The prospect of adding new talent to the County who are adept at solving problems, making things happen, influencing others, overcoming challenges, making decisions, and getting results consistently is exciting and should be acted upon before the opportunity is lost.

Recommendations

39. Develop initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce; recruit a pre-qualified pool of potential employees before they are needed to fill a job; consider ways to bring outstanding candidates on board immediately.

40. Search for Best Practices within the County Departments and use successful programs as a model to formulate targeted Countywide programs.

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[30] " Manpower Employment Outlook Survey Projects a Weak Hiring Pace for Q4 2009
Majority of Employers Plan to Maintain Staff Levels Through Year-End," September 8, 2009

41. Identify mission-critical occupations, and develop plans to place a high priority on developing competency models and streamlined selection processes for these occupations. Once the County eHR system is online, it will be possible to instantly screen applications that are filled out through the County website, so that viable candidates for mission critical occupations can be contacted before they get swept up by other organizations.

42. Increase the use of student internships to tackle specific projects or work in specific areas. The student internship delivers a chance for the County to solve problems that might not otherwise be possible to tackle, while providing a learning experience for participants. A short internship, typically 4-6 months, structured to provide value to both the student and the County is the goal.

43. Develop a special career rotation program. Employees would be selected to participate in the program based upon a competitive selection procedure designed to identify future leaders. The program could be modeled after the highly successful Administrative Intern program, but focus on the development of current employees. Participants would be given management and systems training and "rotated" through several departments within the County. They would be charged with developing solutions to real-world problems, and utilize the support network of the group to make connections throughout the County. The experience should include coursework, developmental assignments, coaching, rotational and shadowing assignments. Such a program was a very successful part of the Hughes Aircraft talent management initiative. Each year the Career Rotation participants would connect, not only with their "class," but with participants that had recently completed the program. As a result, when the "rotation" participants reached higher levels of management within the company, they had a network of contacts and close ties to others throughout the organization.

44. Develop a management mentoring program modeled after the program developed by the Auditor-Controller.

Improving and Streamlining the Hiring Process

Improving and streamlining the hiring process will help the County select top talent. "Individuals who want to perform public service are a special breed, and we must respect them as skilled and intelligent individuals who likely have other professional options," said OPM Director Kay Coles James. The County can improve its processes to show appreciation and respect for job candidates by shortening the time it takes to complete the hiring process and by sharpening the procedures it uses to select the best candidate for the job. Improving the hiring process will help to meet the expectations of applicants, hiring managers, and stakeholders.

Advanced Preparation

Many steps in the hiring process can occur before a vacancy occurs. The department should develop a set of templates or model procedures that can be used across job families. That way, when a specific vacancy needs to be filled, large parts of the hiring process will be in place. It is much easier to modify and adapt a process than it is to "reinvent the wheel" every time. The use of Competency Models will allow the County to more easily group jobs and share appropriate recruitment and selection techniques among job classifications. Development of these templates is clearly a task that should be performed by the Centralized HR function. The focus should be on job classifications that share a large number of competencies. The new test for Clerical job classes is an example of this approach. The Recruitment, Development, & Retention Toolkit is a start.[31] See Competency Modeling, page 106, for further discussion.

Strategic Consultation with Departments

One of the most common complaints we heard from departments was that the initial process for getting examination bulletins approved was frustrating, time-consuming and resulted in significant delays. This process needs to be completely revised. The Kenexa Recruiter BrassRing (KRB) component should help in bulletin development and posting, but separating the shaping of the initial job bulletin from the actual recruitment and selection process is not effective. When a job vacancy occurs, it can signal an opportunity for the DHR and the Department to form a strategic partnership that will result in hiring top talent. Whether the DHR or the Department administers the examination, this consultation can result in improved performance and more targeted selection.

During this critical front-end period, collaboration between the DHR and the hiring manager is vital. The HR team elicits important details about the job's requirements and the hiring manager communicates his or her expectations about the ideal candidate. Together, they discuss how to best market the position beyond the job posting, especially for hard-to-fill positions. These kinds of coordinated efforts direct the success of an agency's recruiting efforts and, ultimately, the quality of candidates hired.[32] The County Job Analysis/Job Review form does NOT go far enough in establishing this dialog or creating a collaborative recruitment plan.

The Office of Personnel Management has developed a suggested outline to help their HR managers engage in a "Strategic Conversation" with the hiring manager. Such a tool can be developed to assist DHR analysts in interviewing hiring managers about their particular job openings. Much of this work can be "filled in" prior to the actual interview by reviewing the department website, mission statement, and other documents, such as the department's workforce plan. The document can be shared with other DHR analysts when similar jobs are found in many departments. (See Appendix A for a copy of the strategic interview developed by OPM that can be adapted to County needs.)

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[31] County of Los Angeles Strategic Workforce :Planning Program, February 2009 (Recruitment plans have been developed for 51 classifications, however, even these plans fail to inject the dynamic elements that may be needed to discover top talent).

[32] Office of Personnel Management

When analysts are busy, this is a step that is often cut out, or delegated to an inexperienced analyst. DON'T DO IT! This is the step that will ensure that problems are identified early, solutions identified, and quality of outcome is achieved.

During its hiring process makeover, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) found that a strategic conversation between managers and HR representatives at the outset of a hiring action can:

- Speed the process

- Eliminate redundancy

- Guarantee improved quality of outcomes[33]

This strategic consultation can also provide an opportunity for staff development within DHR. If experienced analysts are "shadowed" by less-experienced analysts when this strategic conversation takes place, consulting skills can be learned and modeled in a "real world" practical situation, rather than a classroom setting. It is also an opportunity for staff to repair frayed relations with line staff and help to incorporate their suggestions into the hiring process.

Establish Expectations

Another common complaint from department representatives was the lack of information as to where in the process things stood. It is important to establish expectations at the outset of the hiring action. Letting department know the game plan and target dates will help to keep DHR and the departments on the same page. Getting commitment from the department to supply Subject Matter Experts, and providing quick turn around on approvals is important. This step will also provide reasonable expectations as to project timelines. An example of the type of information OPM includes is shown in Appendix B. The County should create an online examination status web page to convey examination status. At the conclusion of each recruitment, an evaluation should be made as to how well expectations were met and what could be done to improve the process in the future. Ideally, this evaluation will be collaborative with both the Department and DHR contributing to the findings.

Modernize Civil Service Rules

Most agencies are reforming and making their systems more flexible. For example, the Office of Personnel Management has a number "hiring flexibilities" that have dramatically improved the agency's ability to get the "right people" in the "right job" at the "right time." For each "flexibility" they have developed detailed a policy as to how it should be used that includes the reason to use it, what it provides, when to use it, who is eligible, any statutes and regulations tied to the process, implementation guidelines, and an example of its use in practice.

The County's time-consuming application process may be eliminating well-qualified applicants. Top applicants in today's economy are searching the Internet for jobs that are available now. They aren't interested in taking a civil service exam and sitting on eligibility lists for months.

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[33] Office of Personnel Management

The County functions in a rigid "rules-based" manner. Often these rules or customs have outlived their usefulness and should be examined critically to evaluate if they are helping the County achieve its strategic goals. Some examples of these include:

Hire from within — but without proper evaluation of the competencies required for successful performance at the next level.

Heavy reliance on the Appraisal of Promotability (AP) to assess readiness for promotions — yet the AP does a very poor job of differentiating among candidates, with almost all receiving scores of 95 or more.

Burdensome interview panels — the more panels, the lower the validity of the interview process.

There is a need to critically examine whether County rules, and their interpretation, contribute to or hinder the County's ability to achieve its goals for workforce excellence.

The County should modernize its civil service rules to recognize the changes that have taken place in the way information is shared in the modern world. Many of the rules[34] regarding job posting, for example, were developed prior to the internet, not to mention new even faster information sharing through such systems as Twitter. The County should develop a set of hiring flexibilities and seek approval for this process. These flexibilities can be written, similar to the OPM standards, so as to preserve Merit principles.

Recommendations

45. Use an "account manager" approach to facilitate discussion with departments. This would include a yearly meeting to define and understand the department's current and future human resources needs; to share best practices with the department HR staff; and to identify upcoming recruitment requirements. When specific vacancies occur, additional consultation should occur to define the specific parameters for the recruitment effort. A form cannot substitute for this consultation.

46. Modernize the County civil service rules. Develop a set of hiring "flexibilities, that include specific guidance as to how it should be used, what it provides, when to use it, who is eligible, any statues and regulations tied to the process, implementation guidelines, and an example of its use in practice.

Improve Selection

Assessing and selecting the right candidates for a position is a critical part of the hiring process. Identifying the person who is the best fit is key to satisfying hiring managers and ensuring top talent is recruited for the County. Hiring decisions have long-term consequences for the County's productivity and performance. Quality — not speed — should be the primary measure of the success of hiring decisions and the underlying hiring process.

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[34] Civil Service Rule 2.47 Recruitment bulletin board and 7.03 Notice of examination

Currently the County utilizes hiring practices with low validity and utility. In some cases, random selection of job applicants would be just as effective as current practice. In many examinations, the bulk of the selection process is taking place at the application review stage. A review of 15 recent examinations revealed that in 7 of these examinations over 50 percent of the applications were rejected during application review. (Refer to page 100 for a detailed analysis.) This process is:

♦ Labor intensive

♦ Provides no shaping of applicant pool

♦ Massive effort and expense, yet departments don't feel they get qualified candidates

The County does not use the most effective selection tools. Figure 5.1 provides information on the relative validity of common selection procedures. These statistics are based on articles that summarize the results of hundreds of studies based on tens of thousands of employees.

Figure 5.1
Effectiveness of Pre-Employment Selection Tools
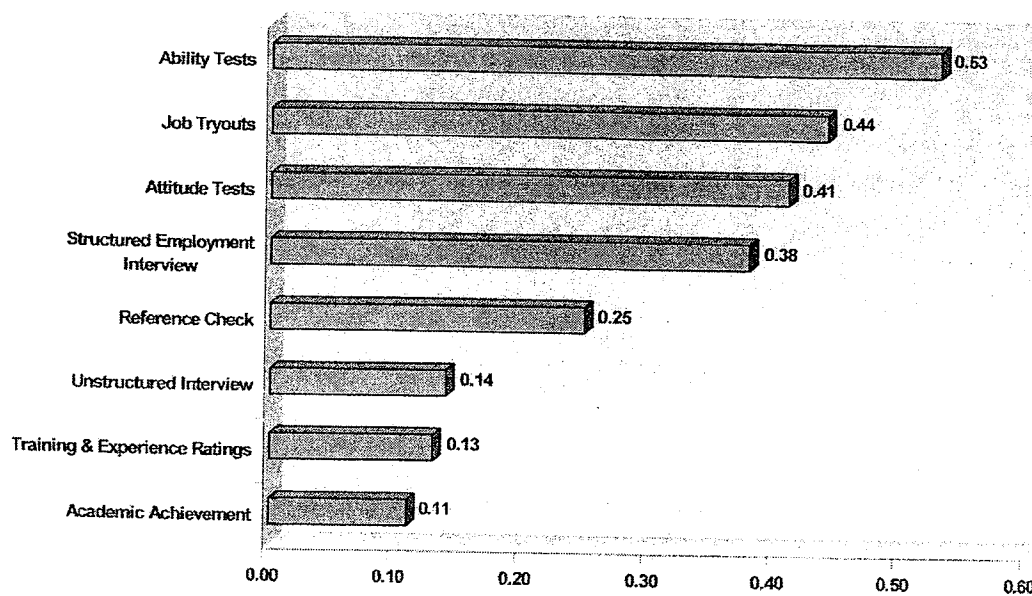
Sources: Hunter & Hunter (1984); Ones, Viswesvaran, & Schmidt (1993);McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, (1994); Schmidt & Hunter (1998).

Whenever possible, the most valid tools should be used in the selection system. A review of County practices revealed that the bulk of selection is taking place utilizing procedures with the lowest relative validity. Indeed, one of the most striking observations is that the County rejects a large percentage of applications using one of the least valid procedures. See Stemming the Application Tsunami, page 98, for detailed discussion.

The DHR Examination Streamlining Project report reaches the same conclusion. "The County is expending a considerable amount of time and money scrutinizing details of applications that yield very little result." [35]

Development of Templates or Model Selection Procedures

The County of Los Angeles should develop templates or model procedures that can be used across job families and developed prior to a specific vacancy. These "pre-packaged" selection systems, could easily be adapted by departments to meet their individual needs. These "pre-packaged" selection systems should focus on improving the quality of selection, particularly those for new hires. The selection systems will include recruitment plans, supplemental applications, MQ evaluation criteria, structured interviews, ability tests for foundation skills, "soft skill" assessments, realistic job previews, and other selection tools. The pre-packaged solutions will enable the county to deploy the most relevant assessments for a particular job category quickly.

Development of Entry Ability Test for County Occupations

The County of Los Angeles should develop a Countywide Entry ability test that can be used for selection of personnel entering entry pipeline occupations in supervisory, technical, and professional occupations. The test should assess abilities important for the successful performance of work behaviors comprising many professional occupations and could be used across the board. The County DHR research unit is working on such a concept, however the lack of item banking software is impeding this effort. There is no reason for this effort to wait unit the e-HR system is fully functional to proceed. There are many tools available to use on an interim bases to allow this effort to move forward.

The test should be:

♦ Practical to administer and score — ideally available to applicants online or at a proctored test site.

♦ Job-related content. Test items should be based on language and situations that are commonly encountered in County employment settings; in this sense the test will be face valid, and can be supported by content validity.

♦ Empirical validity. Criterion related validity and validity generalization should also be used to support the test that is developed.

♦ Transportability. The test development and validation strategy should be designed so that empirical validity evidence developed to support the examination can be transported in accordance with federal agency guidelines to other job families and jobs within the County.

♦ Test fairness. Analysis of test fairness should be conducted.

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[35] EXAMINATION STREAMLINING PROJECT: Workload Analysis Study June 2009

Three major cognitive abilities should be included in the examination:

♦ Verbal ability

♦ Problem-solving/data interpretation

♦ Reasoning

These abilities were identified based on cumulate research that has shown that these item types are consistently the strongest in predicting validity across a wide range of occupations. This research dates back to work performed by the Office of Personnel Management that reviewed literally hundreds of test item types across their many GSA level jobs and identified test items that were the strongest and most robust.

These three areas map directly to the Skill Areas that were identified by County OEDD staff in the comparison of task statements for positions to be studied in the Competency Pilot Project.[36] Review of task statements for Principal Personnel Asst, HRA 1, and ASM III revealed that these classifications shared common generalized tasks, and general competencies in three key areas:

♦ Communication/consultation/instruction

♦ Formatting, and writing reports

♦ Analysis

Additional analysis is planned to focus on the shared abilities and competencies.

The identification of "foundation competencies" that are applicable across many County jobs will allow the development of test components that can be used across many job families. Test components should be developed to provide accurate measurement across a wide range of ability so that its use is appropriate in a wide variety of settings. There should be no ceiling or floor effects. The resulting test can be supported by a variety of validity options.

This will ultimately allow the County to develop a process to "bank" competency evaluations, and use the results to qualify applicants for positions in job classes demonstrated to require the same competencies.

Lease or Develop "Soft Skill" Assessments

The County should expand its use of "soft skill assessments" by either developing or leasing such assessments. While ability tests measure the "can do" aspect of human performance, the use of "soft skill" assessments, such as customer service, conscientiousness, integrity/honesty, and situational judgment (handling conflict, engaging difficult people, etc.) measure the "will do" aspects of performance.

The use of such measures can add to the quality of assessment and have been shown to moderate adverse impact when combined with ability or knowledge assessments. It is also possible to use these measures early in the selection process to help shape the applicant pool. The popularity of these

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[36] A pilot study to develop a competency model for entry "pipeline" analyst job classifications

assessments has dramatically increased over the last few years, as has the quality of the tools. The County has used such measures in the past for job classes such as, juvenile corrections officers, probation officers, and firefighter.

Initially, the County can lease such measures, and gain experience with the types of assessments that work best. Ultimately, it would be desirable for the County to develop its own tool, anchored by the County Values. Such an assessment would be tailored to the County Values as stated in the Strategic Plan:

- ◆ Accountability — we accept responsibility for the decisions we make *and* the actions we take.

- ◆ A Can-Do Attitude — *we approach* each challenge believing that, together, *a* solution can be achieved.

- ◆ Compassion — we treat those we serve *and each* other in *a* kind *and* caring manner.

- ◆ Customer Orientation — we place the highest priority on meeting our customers' needs with accessible, responsive quality services, *and* treating them with respect *and* dignity.

- ◆ Integrity — we act consistent with our values *and* the highest ethical standards.

- ◆ Leadership — we engage, motivate *and* inspire others to collaboratively achieve common goals through example, vision *and* commitment.

- ◆ Professionalism — we perform to *a high standard* of excellence. We take pride in our employees *and invest* in their job satisfaction *and* development.

- ◆ Respect for Diversity — we value the uniqueness of every individual *and* their perspective.

- ◆ Responsiveness — we take the action needed in *a* timely manner.

Essentially, the County Strategic Plan, and the values endorsed by County leaders, can become the test outline for this assessment.

Realistic Job Preview

One of the most effective tools to shape the applicant pool and reduce turnover is the Realistic Job Preview. Realistic Job Previews (RJPs) are designed to give applicants a clear picture of job requirements and prevent applicants from taking jobs that they have little knowledge of, or are not suited to perform. As a recruiting tool, the RJP is designed to reduce "early" turnover by communicating both the desirable and the undesirable aspects of a job before applicants accept a job offer or proceed to the next steps of the application process.

RJPs can be in the form of verbal descriptions, videos, testimonials, interest inventories, or brochures. Particularly in jobs with high turnover, the website can provide this preview allowing individuals who would not fit within job demands or within the organizational culture, to exclude themselves from employment considerations, thus saving human resource time and effort.

The County Department of Health Services uses such a video on their department website. Another excellent example can be found at NOWCAP services, a group that provides support services for people with developmental disabilities. NOWCAP uses their video to provide information to help people decide if working with people who have mental and physical disabilities could be the right job for them. Although NOWCAP is a small organization, their work in describing job requirements is outstanding. RJPs need not be expensive, yet they can be one of the most effective strategies to shape the applicant pool. Some other excellent examples of video RJPs include Home Depot, and Pet Smart.

Shell has an interesting realistic job preview that matches candidates interests to Shell's corporate culture. Using a series of scenarios that cover a range of topics, such as diversity, ethics and standards, and career aspirations, applicants respond to various questions, and their responses are benchmarked to Shell's ideal candidate. This allows applicants to explore whether they are the sort of employee Shell is seeking.

Stemming the Application Tsunami

The number of applications received by the County has increased by almost 100 percent over last two fiscal years, yet many do not feel that the County is attracting high quality applicants. Many recruiters feel the BEST candidates are "passive" (not actively looking to change jobs) and must be attracted to the organization. Clearly, the *quantity* of applications does not equal *quality*. The number of applications will only increase as the new online application system improves. The City of Phoenix, for example, saw over a five-time increase in the number of application after installing their online application system.

The County must improve the way that it shapes the applicant pool and processes applications. The County needs to **attract** applicants it would like to employ, and streamline the application review process for all applicants. The current application screening process is manual and labor-intensive. Until recently, continuous exams were rarely closed, resulting in large numbers of eligible candidates, even when few vacancies existed.[37] A recent study conducted by DHR estimated that 81.3 percent of the total available analyst time is being spent on application processing.[38]

The cost to the County to review the excessive numbers of applications is substantial. The number of applications received for the Intermediate Typist Clerk/Typist Clerk alone has cost the County well over $200,000. (See page 99 for analysis.) The DHR study team conducting the Workload Analysis study reached similar conclusions, "the County is expending a considerable amount of time and money scrutinizing details of applications that yield very little result."[39] As they report, 70 percent of the total application workload is explained by 25 examinations. The top 25 examinations with respect to candidate volume cost the County between $733,859-1,099,754, depending on the amount of analyst

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[37] Departmental Promotional exams are now seen countywide— and department are bracing for an increased number of Appeals on this issue.

[38] EXAMINATION STREAMLINING PROJECT: Workload Analysis Study June 2009

[39] EXAMINATION STREAMLINING PROJECT: Workload Analysis Study June 2009

time (10-15 minutes) required to review applications.[40] This is a conservative estimate as only exam analyst time has been considered, and not the other time involved to support this process. Not only is this process time consuming and costly, but this process can have a negative impact on the County's ability to attract top talent due to negative "word-of-mouth" publicity surrounding applicants experience with the application process. Van Hoye and Lievens (2009)[41] found that receiving positive word-of-mouth employment information early in the recruitment process led to improved perceptions of the organization and contributed to better application decisions. This is important not only for application intake and review, but also for design of the County website. (See page 102 for further discussion.)

Additionally, time is spent processing and accepting applications for candidates who do not show up for the next stages of the examination process. For example, according to the Workload Analysis Report[42], a total of 305 hours was spent processing Typist Clerk applications and 182 hours in processing ITC applicants who did not show up for testing. That is a waste of $36,062.35 for these two job classes alone.

Clearly, any money targeted to help shape the applicant pool will be well spent. Many hope that the e-HR system will transform this inefficient process, but changes must be made in the County recruitment philosophy for this to be successful. The County must balance outreach recruitment efforts that target top talent with the current philosophy of accepting all potential applicants.

Not only is the current process wasteful of resources, but it does not contribute to the County's strategy for Workforce Excellence. The review of applications, at best, is adding very little to the selection process, and may be eliminating qualified candidates from consideration. The low predictive validity[43] for this effort means that the County is spending a great deal of its resources on a process that does not contribute to improved selection. [44]

A review of 15 recent examination indicated that large numbers of candidates are rejected based upon application review, a process with low validity and utility. The percent of applicants rejected ranged from a low of 2 percent to a high of 93 percent, with seven of the examinations rejecting over 50 percent of the applications received. Table 5.1 displays the percent of applications rejected for the examinations surveyed.

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[40] 59406 applications received (number of applications*minutes per application)/60minutes)*hourly rate

[41] Van Hoye, G., & Lievens, F. (2009). Tapping the grapevine: A closer look at word-of-mouth as a recruitment source. Journal of Applied Psychology, 94(2), 341-352.

[42] 305 hours ((1,832*10 minutes)/60 minutes) is spent processing unnecessary work for Typist Clerk and 182 ((1,092*10 minutes)/60 minutes) hours are devoted to applicants who don't test for ITC

[43] Job experience and years of experience demonstrate a very weak relationship with job performance, see Figure 5.1 on page 93.

[44] The high rejection rate indicates a problem in establishing MQs that are clearly understood by applicants/and or the analysts reviewing the applications.

Percent of Candidates Rejected Based Upon Application Review

Exam Title	% Rejected Based on Application
Intermediate Clerk	84%
Dept'l HR Manager III	82%
Dept'l Civil Serv. Rep	67%
Senior Clerk	19%
Accounting Officer II	24%
Procurement Asst III	43%
Sup. Children's Social Wkr	4%
Sup. Welfare Fraud Invstgtr	7%
Community Worker	66%
Contract Prog Auditor	93%
Agri Wts & Measure Ins III	78%
Programming Sup II	68%
Eligibility Supervisor	80%
Adoption Assistant	33%
Division Chief, DCFS	2%

This is a crisis that demands immediate attention. The current County philosophy regarding recruitment needs to be changed. Wasteful customs must be revisited, and a new approach developed that will support the County Strategy for workforce excellence.

The County should immediately consider changes to help shape the applicant pool including:

- Forecast the size of list required to fill vacancies and limit list size accordingly.

- Use of "Open until Filled" application acceptance.

- Change Job Specifications to Focus on Competencies.

- Use of Supplemental Applications – Targeted Questions to screen applicants,[45] The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation has developed excellent online supplemental applications for their nursing series. The form translates job requirements into yes or no questions, for example, are you willing to "job requirement"? Experience is documented by "Frequency," and "Level of Skill." This approach would simplify the task of application review, and could easily be automated. (Examples of these forms are included in auxiliary material that may be useful for DHR to consider as models.)

- Use a Realistic Job Preview to shape applicant pool.

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[45] KRB will incorporate supplemental questions, but these focus on experience, this feature can be more robust

- Use an online "pre-assessment" to limit application pool (this can be unscored).

- Move the Test Forward in Process (for examinations that the County "owns," this could be done online, with little administrative cost. Verify results with final candidates.

- Encourage applicants to apply online[46].

- Verifying later in process.

- Consider use of Civil Service Rule 6.06, Random Selection, to assist in controlling the size of application pool to be evaluated,

- Identify critical job classes that should be part of outreach recruitment efforts.

Improve Bulletins

Consideration should be given to streamlining the bulletin process, and making the resulting bulletin more effective in attracting applicants with the desired skill set. The OPM has issued suggestions to their staff concerning development of job bulletins. Their suggestions are shown below:

Common Flaw	Suggested Solution
Information is presented in a manner that is not intuitive for applicants.	Make it easier for job-seekers to find the details they are looking for by organizing information according to these headings: • Overview • Duties • Qualifications and Evaluation • How to Apply • Benefits and Other Information
Introduction is not welcoming and contains excessive jargon.	The overview is the initial introduction to the vacancy announcement for job seekers. Use this area to market the agency and the position. Refer to the Career Patterns Guide for attractors and other features to highlight including policy, programs and work environmental features to draw attention to your job posting with a concise, appealing summary that conveys an immediate sense of the position and entices job-seekers to keep reading.

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[46] Phoenix strongly encourages applicants to apply online, and has not experienced a situation where an applicant has insisted on filing a paper application.

Common Flaw	Suggested Solution
Description of job requirements and duties looks too dense and uninviting to read.	Use bullet points and white space to break up extended paragraphs and run-on sentences. It's more pleasing to the eye and easier for job-seekers to follow.
Instructions for submitting an application are complex and off-putting.	Provide clear, step-by-step application instructions and describe what an applicant can expect throughout the hiring process.
Essential information is cluttered with supplementary content.	Link externally to information that is not directly related to the job or agency, such as CTAP/ICTAP and other legally mandated information.

The Job bulletin should be an effective communication tool providing information that:

♦ Presents the benefits of County employment.

♦ Clearly communicates County vision and how the job fits within the big picture.

♦ Sets clear expectations for what the County expects from its people.

♦ Covers all legal bases.

♦ Tells the candidate exactly what the hiring department wants in the selected person.

♦ Helps departments select their preferred candidates.

Create a More Applicant Friendly Website — Develop Templates for Departments

The County of Los Angeles should create a more applicant friendly website to help qualified individuals discover and take advantage of employment opportunities with the County. The website should be engaging and make applicants aware of the many opportunities for employment, growth, training and advancement within the County.

While the current updates to the County portal are a significant improvement, the new website does not go far enough in selling the County as an "Employer of Choice," or providing applicants with an easy way to interact with the system. Currently, when you visit the primary County web portal and then click on the "view job opportunities" tab you are transported to the job search page that gives no information concerning the benefits of working for the County. If you then click on "job search" you are given a welcome screen that says "The County of Los Angeles is a great place to start a path to your career," but no specifics are given. The job match section is an improvement on the old system but could be made more interesting and engaging for applicants.

The DHR website, provides an announcement regarding current job opportunities, but does not provide information to "sell" applicants on County opportunities or to actively engage candidates. Some of the content on the DHR website is dated (the HR Report, for example, is dated 2007). Each of the 39 County

department websites provides information on employment opportunities, generally in the form of a job bulletin. As the centralized HR function, the DHR could provide each department with a pre-packaged element that can be used by all of the County agencies to brand the County as an "Employer of Choice." The department is taking steps to implement a more user-friendly website including a "splash page."

Some County departments have increased the appeal of their websites. The Department of Health Services (DHS), for example, has an effective and attractive web page with employment opportunities front and center. The Department's employment page clearly lists the benefits and opportunities for working with the County, featuring nursing positions, pharmacist, and executive positions with brochures for each of the major recruiting efforts. The website also features a video clip that highlights the benefits of working for DHS. The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) also has an engaging site, which features the gain/grow program, la link, and refugee employment programs, youth jobs volunteer services and a wide range of additional services. DPSS uses a RSS feed to make web content available. The Treasurer and Tax Collector also has an attractive webpage with the stated purpose of the website, "to provide timely and useful information with online access to services and publications." There is a somewhat hidden link to employment opportunities that takes you to the generalized job search page for the County. It appears that this department is more dependent on DHR for services then DHS or DPSS. Clearly, there is opportunity for the County to improve recruitment websites, and DHR should take an active role in providing assistance in this regard.

Research into website aesthetics indicates that individuals can be turned off to an organization because of a bad website. Design and utility are both important. The research indicated that reactions were formed in the first 15 seconds, so the County should pay attention to the initial pages of their websites to attract qualified job seekers. If the applicants can find important information, such as job qualifications quickly, they can determine if they are right for the job. Failure to do so may mean the County is losing really qualified people, and attracting applicants with few other choices.

Evaluate Whether the AP Should be Revised or Eliminated — Particularly for Interdepartmental Exams

The AP is an important component of the County promotional examination process, yet it does not effectively distinguish levels of performance.[47] In the 15 exams reviewed in detail, AP's were used in nine. Mean scores ranged from 85.4 to 97.7, with many candidates receiving scores above 95. All of the AP's observed had a negatively skewed distribution, with most candidates receiving very high APs, and a few candidates doing very poorly. The process seems to do a good job identifying those that should NOT be considered, but does not add to the process of differentiating among the qualified candidates.

Because the AP is not an excellent differentiator, many key skills are not being assessed in the promotional process. If these skills have been properly screened at the entry level, this will not be a problem. If the competency has not been assessed at entry, there may be skill gaps at the promotional level.

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[47] The Civil Service Rule 7.13 C.1. specifies that promotional examinations shall include an appraisal based on evaluation of records and of efficiency and character in relation to the class for which the examination is being given. It does NOT mandate the current process.

The test research unit has developed a new and improved "CAP" program (Comment-less AP) that is currently being used by some departments. The new program is designed to expedite the promotional examination process and provide clear guidelines to assist raters in completing a fair, objective, and accurate assessment. This program incorporates information from a job analysis to help focus raters' attention to the important job duties required in the new position, and strives to obtain more discrimination as to level of candidate readiness for the new position.

While these improvements are substantial, the difficulty of the rating task remains onerous, particularly for interdepartmental examinations, where the rater is asked to evaluate a candidate's job readiness for a job that he or she may not be familiar. Even with the incorporation of a job analysis, this is daunting challenge.

The rating task may be manageable in department promotional examinations where the rater has a clear understanding of the promotional job requirements, and has an opportunity to observe and compare the job candidates. Because the results of the process will have immediate impact on the department, raters are more motivated to do an accurate job and be more careful in application of the evaluation procedure.

The interdepartmental AP on the other hand, asks raters to take responsibility for making a judgment on the promise of future performance without intimate knowledge of the requirements of the organizational unit where the candidate will be placed. This increases the likelihood that common rating errors such as rater leniency/severity and halo will distort ratings. Inflated ratings and the failure to complete appraisals quickly are symptoms of the problem.

The DHR staff has considered a number of ways to improve this process. One recommendation involves using the scores maintained in the new online performance evaluation system (EPS) and the learning management system (LMS) to develop AP scores. When fully implemented, these systems will provide an ongoing assessment of a worker's "readiness for promotion". These systems will be updated at least annually, within a timeframe that is already set aside for careful evaluation of employee performance. This will eliminate the lag time in obtaining AP scores and supporting documentation because the necessary information will be continuously updated and stored on the performance management and learning management systems.

Process Improvements to Speed Time to Hire

County Streamlining Project

A number of recommendations were made in the staff report, "Streamlining the Centralized Examination Process: Building a Leaner System." These suggestions should be seriously considered in any plan to improve speed to hire in the County. A complete set of these recommendations are included in Appendix C.

Some of the most important are highlighted below:

- Online application review and supplemental applications this is a critical issue. The time spent reviewing applications for MQ's is far and away greater that its usefulness, accuracy, or validity. The new e-HR system is hoped to solve this issue. It seems doubtful that the new system will be able to address this issue. Improvements should be made in the PROCESS first; otherwise you will just automate "problems."

  An example of how an online supplemental application can be used to pre-screen candidates is the work being done at the California Prison System. They have partnered with Hodes to develop an effective Online Supplemental Application that allows meaningful review of MQ's. See supplemental material for examples.

- Review of peripheral materials (e.g., transcripts, certificates, etc.) later in the process. This makes a great deal of sense and should be implemented immediately.

- Structured phone screens and/or email to further explore candidate qualifications. In today's tech-savvy world, top candidates expect streamlined systems. This would fit candidate expectations and speed time to hire, as well as provide a cost effective solution. The use of e-mail and the website to keep candidates and departments informed of project status is cost-effective and should be implemented immediately.[48] There is no need to wait until a complete eHR system is in place to move in this direction. Each examination could have its own URL that could easily be updated by the Analyst and a "batch e-mail" sent to interested parties when the URL has new status information.

- Computerized testing and self scheduling. A number of agencies are moving to a computerized initial screen and a conformational proctored test for final candidates-This process would save the County time and money, as well as shorten the selection timeframe.

- Restructuring or elimination of Appraisal of Promotability (AP) for Interdepartmental Promotion (IP) examinations due to limited variability in selection method — a great deal of effort is expended on a system that adds little to the selection process.

- Expedited bulletin reviews by Human Resources Departmental Support (HRDS)-provide model bulletins, and train department staff. Make this part of the initial discussion with departments.

- Generic testing. For further information, see pages 95 and 106.

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[48] The use of e-mail to communicate with candidates is common in public agencies. The 2006 IPMA Benchmarking Study indicated that 82 percent of the agencies surveyed used e-mail to communicate with candidates.

CEO Efficiency Team

A number of recommendations have been made by the County CEO Efficiency Team, relating to the Central Exams Administration Division's workflow processes. These recommendations are an important part of shaping the way work is carried out by the examination administration division.[49]

Recommendations

47. Improve the quality of selection by using assessment processes with high validity and utility.

48. Shape the applicant pool to target competencies and reduce the number of applicants. Avoid having the labor intensive and unreliable application screening process be the primary selection tool.

49. Streamline and improve the hiring process:

   a. Develop templates or model procedures that can be used across job families and developed prior to a specific vacancy. These "pre-packaged" selection systems should focus on improving the quality of selection, particularly those for new hires. The "pre-packaged" selection systems could easily be adapted by department to meet their individual needs. The selection systems will include recruitment plans (see page 131) supplemental applications, MQ evaluation criteria, structured interviews, ability tests for foundation skills, "soft skill" assessments, realistic job previews, and other selection tools.

   b. Improve the pre-planning process to include a strategic consultation with departments regarding hiring needs.

   c. Establish clear expectations with the department at the outset of the hiring action, and monitor "real time" progress toward goals.

   d. Modernize Civil Service Rules to allow flexibility in the way the merit system is applied.

   e. Develop and validate Countywide ability test for "pipeline" analyst positions, and for supervisory, technical, and professional occupations. The test will focus on foundation competencies that are most critical and most difficult to develop after hire.

   f. Develop or lease "soft skill" measures (customer service orientation, conscientiousness and other personality variables) that will add incremental validity to the selection process, and can be used as an initial prescreening tool.

   g. Consider ways to streamline the bulletin process, and make the resulting bulletin more effective in attracting applicants with the desired skill set.

   h. Consider ways to streamline and make the AP process an effective selection tool.

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[49] Recommendations for Central Exams Administration Division, 9/23/2009. As this report is Confidential comments are not included in this report. Currently approximately 80% of the recommendations have been implemented.

i.   Monitor hiring manager satisfaction after each appointment.

j.   Immediately revisit the many excellent recommendations made by County DHR staff regarding process redesign, and implement changes. Pair the "thinkers and dreamers" with the "doers and the connecters."

Competency Modeling

The County of Los Angeles should move to a competency-based system to drive recruitment, selection, classification and compensation, and talent management. A competency model refers to a group of competencies (knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and personal attributes) that drive outstanding performance in a given job, role or function. The number and type of competencies in a model will depend upon the nature and complexity of work along with the culture and values of the organization.

The theory behind development of competency models and competency-based systems is to align individual employee behaviors and skills with business strategy and core organizational requirements.

Some of the benefits of using competency models include the following:

- ♦   Easily linked to the strategic plan of the organization
- ♦   Create a common vocabulary
- ♦   Identify critical capabilities
- ♦   Differentiate between "average" and "superior performance"
- ♦   Promote performance-based focus
- ♦   Applicable to a wide range of occupations and organizational levels

Competency models are used by many consulting firms, such as Psychological Services Inc., Personnel Decisions Inc., Hay, Development Dimensions Inc. and Center for Creative Leadership, as well as federal agencies, as a framework to build programs in a more user-friendly and less labor-intensive manner than required for traditional duty-based job analysis processes.

The County should develop a competency-based job analysis system, linked to the strategic plan. The goal is to build a common set of competencies for the County of Los Angles that is closely tied to the strategic goals and can be used to hire, measure performance and plan for succession.

WRIPAC vs. Multi-purpose Job Analysis or Competency Modeling

It is feasible to cover a large number of classes in a single study that has classification and selection/workforce planning applications. The current WRIPAC job analysis model focuses on each job class as a separate entity; it is difficult to combine jobs for selection purposes with this approach. Development of a Competency-based job analysis program does not preclude the continued use of the WRIPAC model when appropriate. For example, the current WRIPAC model can continue to be used to develop content valid written examinations, or ratings for record, but the process should be revamped to eliminate

needless calculation of examination weights that are not statistically meaningful in designating exam content. [50]

Development of County Competency Model

There are a number of competency models that have been developed. The competency model used is less important than use of a consistent model on an organization-wide basis. Use of a consistent model enhances communication and allows easy sharing of information. This ensures that similar language is used across job classifications, within job classifications and among analysts studying similar jobs. The common language of the competency model will impact classification and compensation, performance management, recruitment and selection and employee development. The County is currently developing such an approach, using material that has been developed in a number of initiatives including:

O*NET

O*NET serves as the nation's primary source of occupational information, providing comprehensive information on key attributes and characteristics of workers and occupations. It is one of the most promising tools to help shape competency models. The O*NET database houses this data and O*NET Online provides easy access to that information

The O*NET is being developed under the sponsorship of the US Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration (USDOL/ETA) through a grant to the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. A number of leading research organizations have been involved in the development of the O*NET, and have endorsed the use of the O*NET, this will add to its strength as a supporting vehicle to establish competency models (see auxiliary material).

The O*NET system supersedes the 70-year-old Dictionary of Occupational Titles. Central to the project is the O*NET database, containing information on hundreds of standardized and occupation-specific descriptors. The database, which is available to the public at no cost, makes it a cost-effective instrument for use in a wide variety of HR related tasks. The database is continually updated by surveying a broad range of workers from each occupation to maintain currency. The fact that the US Government strongly supports O*NET makes it a robust instrument that will be easy to defend if challenged in court.

*O*NET Content Model*

The conceptual foundation of the O*NET is referred to as the Content Model and is illustrated below:

Figure 5.2
O*NET CONTENT MODEL

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[50] At a very minimum the WRIPAC calculations should be automated using devices, such as the State of Ohio's Excel spreadsheet shown in the auxiliary materials.

Worker-oriented

Worker Characteristics	Worker Requirements	Experience Requirements
Abilities Occupational Interests Work Values Work Styles	Skills • Knowledge Education	Experience and Training Skills - Entry Requirement Licensing

Cross Occupation — O*net — **Occupation Specific**

Occupational Requirements	Workforce Characteristics	Occupation-Specific Information
Generalized Work Activities Detailed Work Activities Organizational Context Work Context	Labor Market Information Occupational Outlook	Tasks Tools and Technology

Job-oriented

It includes both worker-oriented and job-oriented dimensions. The Content Model provides a framework that identifies the most important types of information about work and integrates them into a theoretically and empirically sound system.

The Content Model also allows occupational information to be applied across jobs, sectors, or industries (cross-occupational descriptors) and within occupations (occupational-specific descriptors). This makes it the ideal vehicle for establishing job requirements, isolating competencies, grouping jobs into similar families and transporting validity.

A detailed description of the Content Model can be found online at
http://www.onetcenter.org/content.html

O*NET Job Analysis Questionnaires

The O*NET has developed a series of Job Analysis Questionnaires (JAQs) to capture relevant job information. Separate generic questionnaires are available for the following:

Abilities
Background
Education and Training
Generalized Work Activities
Knowledge
Skills
Work Context
Work Styles

These questionnaires can be used as a starting point to collect occupational data in support of a wide range of economic/workforce investment activities and human resource management functions. The questionnaires may be completed by job incumbents, job analysts or other subject matter experts (SMEs).

The O*NET allows these questionnaires to be downloaded and customized to reflect the user's organization, free of charge. Complete questionnaires can be viewed at the O*NET website (http://www.onetcenter.org/).

The O*NET database identifies, defines, describes, and classifies occupations. O*NET provides users with the following types of occupational information:

♦ Experience Requirements — Training, Experience, Licensing

♦ Worker Requirements — Basic and Cross-Functional Skills, General Knowledges, Education

♦ Occupation Requirements — Generalized Work Activities, Work Context, Organizational Context

♦ Worker Characteristics — Abilities, Interests, Work Styles

♦ Occupation Specific Information — Occupational Knowledges, Occupational Skills, Tasks

♦ Occupation Characteristics — Labor Market Information, Occupational Outlook, Wages

O*NET classifies data into these domains, giving you six "windows" to look into all aspects of the workplace.

The O*NET resource center provides many helpful links to important information for HR professionals http://www.onetcenter.org/hr.html

Los Angeles Unified School District

The Los Angeles Unified School district uses a Competency model to streamline their employment process and ensure that their testing program focuses on the competencies that differentiate "Superior" performance from "Typical" performance.

The system has reduced the variability in analytic methods among analysts and has resulted in better overall quality. The use of simple computer tools (e.g., Excel) to assist the analyst in exam documentation and planning has decreased training time for new analysts, as well as time-to-completion of analysis. Most importantly, it has eased the process of working with experienced SMEs. The

program has been well accepted by clients, SMEs, candidates and analysts. It has been adopted for use by a number of agencies.

The competency framework has seven major groupings as shown below:

1. REASONING- needed for learning, using information and data, and intelligent performance.

2. OCCUPATIONAL- knowledge and skills of an occupational group acquired through training and experience.

3. PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS- enables the effective application of one's skills and abilities.

4. COMMUNICATION- facilitates the give and take of information.

5. INTERPERSONAL- establishes and maintains effective working relationships.

6. GROUP- helps make teams, workgroups, and units effective.

7. ORGANIZATION- helps make whole organizations and systems effective.

Los Angeles Office of Education

The competency model developed at the LAUSD has continued to evolve at the Los Angeles Office of Education, where the competency model drives selection and workforce planning. Easy to use forms allow the capture of information and examination design. A common competency "language" opens the door to a number of workforce initiatives, including using assessments for more than one classification and "banking" scores, development of training courses, performance management and planning, and compensation classification.

A list of the competencies in the LAUSD/LACOE model is shown below:[51]

Competency List

Reasoning	Flexibility	**Group**
Analysis and Problem Solving	Handling Stress	Assessing Talent
Decision Making	Initiative and Innovativeness	Delegating
Fact Finding	Integrity	Developing Others
Math Skill	Self Management	Group Facilitation
Reading Comprehension	**Communication**	Involving Others
Occupational	Bilingual/Bicultural Facility	Leadership
Continuous Learning	Informing	Managing Performance
Industry Knowledge	Listening	Teamwork
Physical Skills	Oral Communication	Valuing Diversity
Professional/ Technical Expertise	Presentation Skill	**Organizational**
Safety Focus	Writing	Budget Savvy
Sensory Perception Skills	**Interpersonal**	Managing Change
Using Technology	Conflict Management	Organizational Savvy
Personal Effectiveness	Influencing	Planning and Organizing
Action & Results Focus	Negotiating	Process Improvement
Dependability	Relationship Building	Project Management
Attention to Detail	Customer Focus	Strategic Focus

17

Office of Personnel Management

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is in the process of developing a database of information on federal jobs using Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory-Closed Ended (MOSAIC). The MOSAIC model is a questionnaire technique of job analysis used to collect information from incumbents and supervisors. It contains 151 job tasks rated in terms of importance for effective job performance and 22 competencies rated in terms of importance, and needed proficiency at entry.

OPM has conducted several occupational analysis projects, each project handling a different set of occupations (e.g., clerical, managerial, etc.).

Competency Model Clearing House

CareerOneStop has developed an interesting Competency Model Clearing House. One feature is a new tool that allows you to build your own competency model and career ladder. You can build your model using a "generic" structure or use one of the industry competency models that have been generated by

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[51] Competency list courtesy of Rod Freudenberg, PhD, LACOE Personnel Commission

industry groups. This model uses information from O*Net to complete the Competency definitions. An example of the "generic" model is shown below.

Figure 5.3

Generic Competency Model
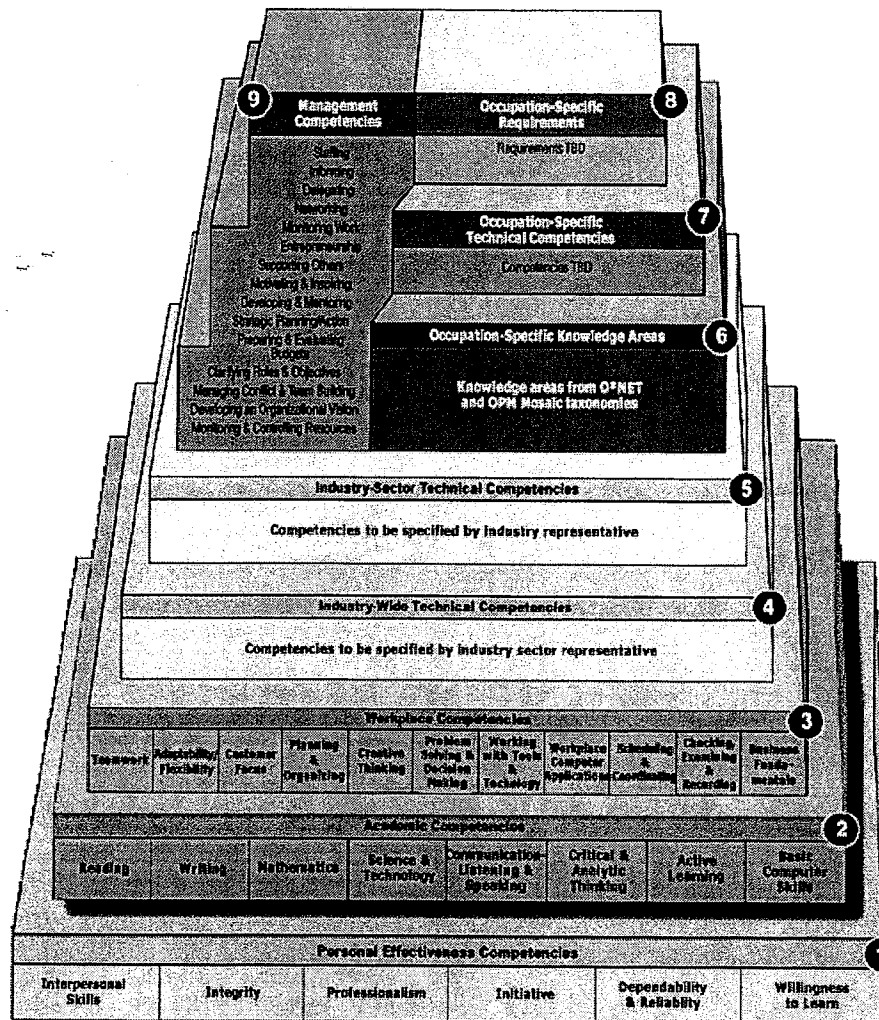
This model will allow evaluation of individual components and the "banking" of scores, so that repeated testing for common competencies would not be necessary. One of the biggest challenges the County DHR faces is ensuring validation of selection procedures for all positions. With so many classifications, it is extremely difficult for the test research unit to keep up with validation, particularly when a new "test" must be developed for each classification. A "Countywide" Model would find many of the foundation competencies applicable "across the board." Job families could be developed, based upon similarity of competencies, and a validation study conducted in one job family and the validity "transported" to other jobs within the family.

Once these "foundation" competencies are evaluated there would be no need to reassess these skills, instead attention could be focused on the competencies that were required for the new job. Competencies could be demonstrated in a number of ways, including testing, completion of training or certification programs, or demonstrating performance.

This approach is the single most important process improvement that can be made in County Selection.

County Competency Modeling Pilot Project

Competency modeling is being explored by the County in a project involving a selection of entry "pipeline" Analyst classifications, including the Contracts, Human Resources/CEO, and Administrative Generalists families. The study team's initial review of Competency Frameworks including the O*NET data base, MOSAIC, the California State Competency dictionary, the Georgia study, the Competency Clearing house, and Los Angeles County Job Analysis Reports, indicates that there is sufficient overlap among the competencies found in many County job classifications to achieve this goal. OEDD team members have already begun work on a Competency Dictionary, and a comparison of task statements. The results of the Competency Model will be utilized to develop a selection plan for the new Associate Contract Analyst class. Recommendations based upon the results of the pilot study will be made to expand the use of a competency model for other County jobs on a phased basis.

Recommendations

50. Move to a Competency-Based Job Analysis System; simplify the WRIPAC job analysis process, and combine with the new competency model.

51. Develop job families based upon similarity of competencies, and conduct validation study in one job family and "transport" validity to other jobs within the family.

52. Evaluate the quality, validity, and reliability of exam content to generate talent with core competencies reflective of organizational needs.

Improve Customer Service, Communication and Consulting Services

The new vision for the County Department of Human Resources is, *"Leading the way to HR excellence through innovation, efficiency and customer service."* To achieve this vision, HR must see itself as a *customer service* and *consulting services* organization. HR managers and staff must understand the goals of the various County departments and the needs of their various customer groups and utilize practices that are responsive to these needs. These requirements are clearly recognized in the stated strategies in the plan.

With this orientation, County HR professionals contribute to the development of and the accomplishment of the organization-wide plan and objectives. Rather than serving as a bureaucratic enforcer of executive management, HR business objectives are established to support the attainment of the overall strategic business plan and objectives. The HR professional is viewed as an asset, providing expertise that the business units do not wish to develop internally.

In order to accomplish this, HR representatives must be knowledgeable about the business goals of the organization, as well as the design and development of work systems in which people succeed and contribute. The HR professional must become an asset that departments can rely on for correct and insightful information and advice—making contributions to the organizations success in a timely manner — before and during important decision points, not after.

Getting a Seat at the Executive Table

County HR officers should strive to get a seat at the executive table and be in a position to influence business strategy. There are a few County departments where the personnel officer does have a seat at the executive table, but more often than not this is not the case. In order for HR to contribute to the full extent in helping to set County departments direction, it is important to be seen as a strategic partner to the business and to be a valued resource who is working with management to achieve business goals.

It is important that the department representative spends time understanding the day-to-day problems and issues impacting the organization. The HR staff that are embedded in the departments have the greatest opportunity to become partners, however the original design of the current HR architecture conceived of department HR staff as being "technicians." Therefore, in some cases, the department HR representatives lack the skill set to achieve this strategic goal.

HR representatives need to learn to talk in business terms and use results measurements, not process measures to describe and demonstrate HR success — the success that will land them at the executive table.

Communication with Line Departments

County departments rely on HR representatives for correct and insightful information and advice. This advice must be reliable, credible, trustworthy, and knowledgeable. When department HR staff turns to DHR for assistance, they often report mixed results. A significant number of stakeholders talked about needing to know the right people and having established relationships with staff in the central functions in order to get questions answered, problems solved or needs addressed. Without that, many said, calls may not be returned and matters go unaddressed for long periods of time.

When technical questions come up regarding specific HR, personnel or discipline issues, it is difficult to identify the subject-matter expert for the specific topic within DHR. Even when an expert is found, it is very difficult to get a definitive answer to specific questions. It would be helpful for departments to have a guide or directory identifying which DHR managers could respond to questions on various areas of expertise, and to develop some mechanism for providing a clear, succinct and direct answer to departmental requests for assistance or information. Consideration should also be given to establishing customer service hotlines for DHRMs, and the development of a searchable database.

Because of inconsistency with regard to advice given to departments, many department representatives have lost faith and confidence in the answers they are given by DHR staff. In many cases, DHR employees have told operating departments that needed information was not possible to obtain, some-times upon probing by the department, it is discovered that such information is possible to obtain.

When DHR fails to provide management needed information-- quickly, conveniently, correctly, and in useful formats — it detracts from DHR's position as a strong business supporter.

Consider the Impact of Central Policy Decisions on Operating Departments

Departments also expressed concern that DHR staff does not understand, or consider the effect of DHR decisions and policy on department workflow. They report that when a new program is mandated, monitoring reports are required though no additional resources are provided to handle the additional workload. They also express concern that the continuing need for required reports is not evaluated. Until recently, communication within DHR was not coordinated; as a result many "requests" from DHR would hit the departments simultaneously.

Cement Positive Relationships/Exercise Control

While many stakeholders expressed frustration, they also commented on the positive working relationships they enjoyed with many of the DHR managers, and expressed a desire to work collaboratively with the central functions to meet mutual goals.

A positive working relationship does not mean that the DHR representative acquiesces to department demands. Managers and operating departments are often anxious to implement pre-hire assessments prior to validation, or to shortcut important safeguards in the selection process. The HR professional must understand the reasons for safeguards, be flexible when issues are not of importance, yet hold his or her ground when necessary to ensure that all such practices are legally defensible.

Checklists do not substitute for judgment, knowledge, and experience. It is not possible to have a checklist or sign off in place for every possible policy breach--that is why it is so important to improve the HR analyst's understanding as to the "why" behind the requirement. No matter how many checkpoints you place in the system, problems will still occur. If enough checks are in place no action will be taken. The County needs to spend more time educating and less time regulating.

"The only man who never makes a mistake is the one who never does anything." — Theodore Roosevelt

Improve Information Dissemination

DHR Staff are frustrated when their policies are not followed by line staff. When working with line departments, it is important that DHR recognizes the difference between Training—Learning—and Doing. Because line department staff have received a Memo, or attended training, does not mean that they have learned and retained the information presented. It is quite easy to learn to do something in a classroom setting; it is entirely a different situation when faced with a complex, fast-paced, real-life problem. Knowing what to do, and the ability and confidence to act on that knowledge is yet another issue.

Figure 5.4

Training is not Learning, Learning is not Doing
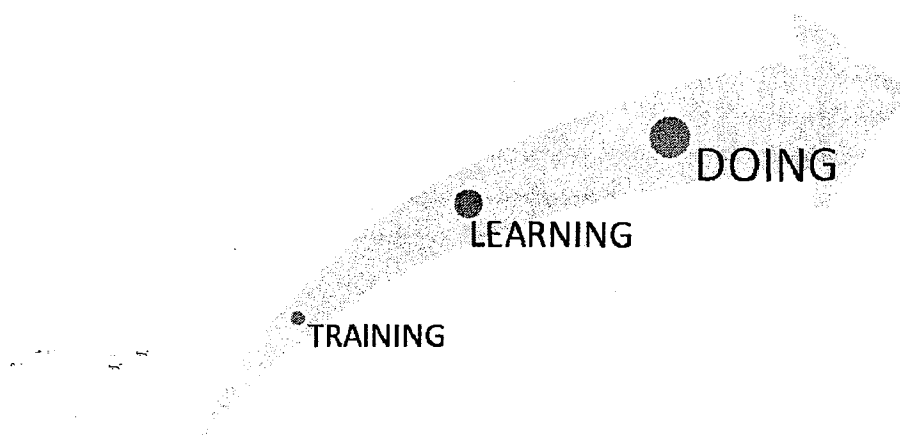
Unless line department representatives understand the ramifications of action (or failure to act), it is likely that continual breeches will be made in DHR policy directives. It is critical that staff understand the "why" behind policy and not depend upon "checklists" rather than critical thinking and analysis of problems.

Recommendations

53. Improve communication with line departments; get feedback from the "customer "on a regular basis.

54. Consider how the DHR can better connect to decision makers at the top, and increase the visibility of the many excellent programs that have been developed. Provide needed resources to insure that project implementation has the support needed for success.

55. Improve communication with candidates by utilizing e-mail or website.

56. Improve the HR DERM meetings, make content relevant, have top leadership from DHR present at the meetings, address critical County issues.

Measures of HR Performance

Critical measures of HR performance are difficult to establish. The County needs to look beyond the simple measures of number, time and speed. Instead, more complex and important measures such as ROI, quality and long-term workplace planning criteria should be used. Measures of service, quality, cost and productivity need to be established. Currently, these measures are difficult to obtain, and without such data it is difficult to make good decisions and impossible to show top management how HR services add tangible value to the County.

Many decisions regarding County hiring policies are made without consideration as to the cost of such policies or the value added. An example of this is the open continuous examination policy that has

resulted in far more eligible candidates than vacancies, and requires a tremendous expenditure of effort for little added value. The policy was originally developed at a time when the County was struggling to maintain sufficient candidates on lists, but the policy has continued to be applied without analysis as to its relevance to current conditions.

Use Performance Measures including ROI

One of the hallmarks of leading-edge organizations — be they public or private — has been the successful application of performance measurement to gain insight into, and make judgments about, the effectiveness and efficiency of its programs, processes and people.

Performance measurement can take place on many levels as shown below.

Figure 5.5

Performance Measures

Input	• Measures input such as volume and efficiencies (time to hire)
Reaction	• Measures stakeholder reaction and captures planned actions
Knowledge Change	• Measures changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes
Behavior Change	• Measures changes in on-the job behavior
Business Impact	• Captures changes in business impact measures
ROI	• Compares program benefits to program costs

Performance data can translate into action and help to evaluate improvements or interventions that have been made. In developing performance metrics it is important to:

1. Have agreed-upon measures that managers understand
2. Balance financial and non-financial measurements of performance
3. Link strategic measures to operational ones
4. Update assessments regularly; and
5. Clearly communicate measures and progress

Although improving the hiring process often focuses only on shortening the time to hire, it's equally important to assure the quality of hires. Meaningful metrics can help measure how well new hires fit their jobs over the long run.

The DHR needs to establish better performance-based measurement tools to gauge the effectiveness of their programs and services. This should include results-based performance measures, customer-oriented service evaluation tools, and financial analysis of business impact and ROI. The department is currently working to establish a department-wide metrics program (PeopleStats).

A discussion of business analytics was included in the general observation applicable to all HR functions. (See Section 3, page 45, for more detailed information.) Some items that are specific to recruitment and selection are included here.

Monitor Hiring Manager Satisfaction

After every recruitment, feedback should be obtained from the operating department as to the quality and timeliness of the process. Some of the questions that should be asked include:

1. Did you receive the list in a timely manner?
2. How satisfied were you with the quality of candidates?
3. Did you receive an appropriate number of qualified applicants from the job posting?
4. Did the selection procedures focus on important job success factors?

Additionally, stakeholder reaction can be obtained regarding overall department performance including customer satisfaction ratings on criteria such as responsiveness, quality, bringing forward new ideas and programs, and a survey of employees who used HR services during the year. This data can be used to target improvement and to help to secure additional funding for areas that need assistance. Progress can be tracked by reviewing changes in satisfaction metrics.

Communication with Candidates

County practice involves communication with candidate by written letter. This practice should be updated to allow communication with candidates by e-mail or website.

It is important to get feedback from applicants as to their experience with the system so that improvements can be made to enhance this process. Some of the questions to ask applicants include:

1. How easy was it for you to complete the application process?
2. Were you able to demonstrate your qualification?
3. Did you receive timely information from the recruitment staff?

Financial Implications of Current Processes

The financial implications of current hiring processes are difficult to track or evaluate, as there are few performance metrics in place. DHR is currently exploring performance management dashboards to help monitor performance. It is important that the metrics include indicators of performance (time to hire, volume), quality and cost effectiveness. A top-level financial analyst should be added to the DHR team to assist in developing processes to evaluate the effectiveness of current processes and identify opportunities for more efficient delivery of services. Information to analyze relating to employee acquisition costs include:

♦ Cost per hire, broken down by:

1) Organizational level (clerical, entry professional, managerial)

2) Selection technique (written, interview, AP)

3) Step in the process (exam bulletin, job analysis, interview—including SME time)

♦ Cost of "productivity loss" based upon time to fill vacancies

♦ Financial impact of bad hire/benefit of top performer

This analysis can also be expanded to include evaluation of employee maintenance, development and retention. [52]

Figure 5.6
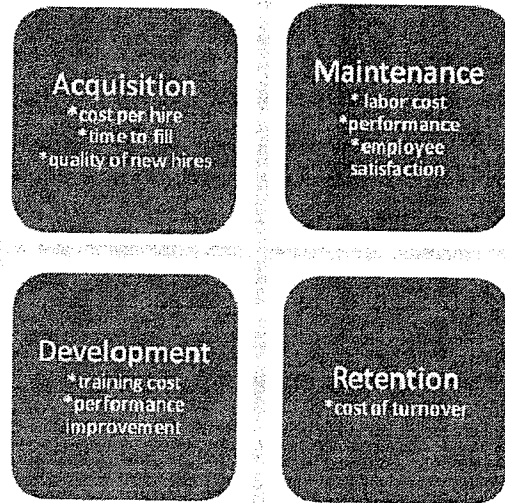
Tracking performance will allow DHR to make improved staffing decisions, such as where to send specialists, and can help to spot struggling analysts and offer coaching, professional development and other support.

Whenever possible, it is desirable to obtain ROI (return on investment) data. Each process that the department uses should be evaluated in this manner.

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[52] Whenever possible these measures should reflect performance—for example, for turnover evaluate the percent of **key County** employees hired who remain employed and received a top performance appraisal rating.

Figure 5.7

Collecting Data to Determine ROI
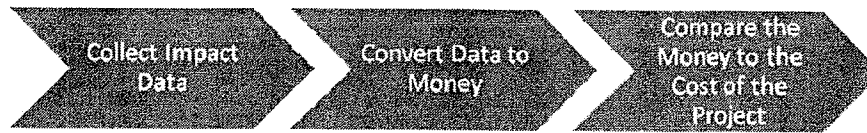
It is particularly important to evaluate new programs early and often in the implementation cycle.

Recommendations

57. Develop management tools and tracking systems to ensure accountability; include measures of HR Performance that are based on ROI, quality and long-term workforce planning criteria.

58. Research the financial implications of current processes, and rediscover the value added "Vision" that DHR promised.

59. Evaluate new programs early and often in the implementation cycle. Review policies with operating departments early in the development process. Determine how policies will impact department operations. Coordinate the timing of requests to departments so department staff are not over-whelmed with multiple requests at the same time.

60. Incorporate a high-level financial analyst into the DHR team and charge that individual with analysis of the cost/benefit of current processes.

61. Ensure that the "dashboard" includes reports that reflect strategic goals.

62. Review policies with operating departments early in the development process, determine how policies will impact department operations. Coordinate the timing of requests to departments so department staff is not "overwhelmed" with multiple requests at the same time.

Training and Development of HR Staff

Poorly performing human resources organizations operate in a vicious cycle, where under-skilled staff focuses on low-value roles, making little contribution to the business. In contrast, high-performing human resources organizations are marked by highly skilled staff focused on setting the organization's strategy, creating true business impact and making the function a magnet for top talent.

The County has a great deal of talent amongst the HR staff; however, that talent is not spread through-out the organization. Many HR analysts do not have the skill set or experience necessary to perform at a strategic level. Steps are underway to improve the skill level of HR staff. In September 2008, the Chief Executive Officer, William Fujioka, called for the development of a program for training and certifying examination analysts in both the Department of Human Resources and line departments.

Initial training materials were developed but were thought to be too technical for immediate deployment. An examination work group began meeting in March 2009 to review the proposed Examination Analyst Certification Program and make recommendations. The group identified three separate training courses to be developed, targeting (1) managers (2) journey/exam analysts and (3) support staff.

The journey-level training program currently has five modules and covers technical and legal background information; job analysis and examination planning; assessments currently used by the County such as Appraisal of Promotability, Interview, and Rating from Record (written test development is not covered as current plans are to have all written test development handled by the centralized test research unit); examination administration and recording keeping; and post exam review, appeals and evaluation. The classroom training should be linked to practical "on-the-job" application. For example, as examination analysts complete the training program, they would actually develop an examination using the procedures covered in the training program.

How Can DHR Staff Grow?

Training programs are only one way that the knowledge and professionalism of the HR staff can be improved. The County should consider formalizing other avenues for knowledge transfer and development. For example, The Corporate Leadership Council has proposed fourteen different skill-building methods for HR staff development. These include:

Recruiting Methods:

1. Systematic screening of HR staff candidates for critical skills
2. Recruiting HR staff from outside the organization
3. Recruiting HR staff from other parts of your organization

On-the-Job Development:

4. Designing stretch HR roles to provide greater business exposure and personal risk
5. Rotations for HR staff in different areas of HR
6. Rotations for HR staff outside the HR function

Peer and Mentor Relationship:

7. Formal mentoring and coaching of HR staff
8. Internal network building (e.g., connecting managers possessing skill strengths with staff deficient in those skills)
9. External network building — connect staff with skill deficiencies with peers in other companies with skill strength

Formal Training:

10. Cross-functional programs that include HR and staff from other functions
11. Conferences and seminars (Note: recommend not only professional HR conferences and events, but executive leadership and management conferences.)

12. Executive education programs at accredited institutions

13. Self-managed courses

14. Internally developed custom training[53]

Focus on Practical Application

Learning by doing is a key principle for adult learning, and the training program that is developed should have practical application of the principles covered. It is important to include the "Why" in training, and make sure that there is not overreliance on "checklists" rather than thinking and analyzing. Mentoring, shadowing, and the development of "stretch roles and assignments" all have an important role in developing the skills of HR staff. Many organizations require a specific number of hours of training and education every year. The topics to include in training should be broader than the traditional HR knowledge domains and include Interpersonal Skills (influencing others, effective communication, leadership skills), Project Implementation Skills (managing projects, managing change), and Business Skills (business fundamentals, business analytics etc.).

Recommendation

63. Improve training/mentoring of DHR Staff. Include traditional HR Knowledge domains as well as Interpersonal Skills (influencing others, effective communication, leadership skills), Project Implementation Skills (managing projects, managing change), and Business Skills (business fundamentals, business analytics etc.).

Information Technology for Recruiting and Staffing

The County's current systems related to recruiting, processing applications, conducting examinations, and creating eligible lists are antiquated and labor-intensive. The most common reaction to the information challenge is to invest in technology. Investing in technology is necessary, but by itself, will not add value until we think about the solutions we require, and draw out the potential that improved systems can make in our process. The new Talent Management System that is being developed will replace legacy systems as shown below:

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[53] Corporate Leadership Council. "Defining Critical Skills of Human Resources Staff." 2006.

Talent Management Component	Legacy System	Business Function	Status
KRB Kenexa Recruiter BrassRing	Job Bulletin System (JBS)	Manages bulletin information. Allows users to store, edit, and post bulletin information.	Customizing the off-the-shelf system. In use by some departments.
	Easier	Accepts job applications online. Allows candidate to create a profile and request e-mail updates on job openings.	Customizing the off-the-shelf system. In use by some departments.
	Transfer Opportunity (TOW)	Manages transfer opportunities	Customizing the off-the-shelf system. In use by some departments.
KAS Kenexa Assessment System	TRAC	Schedules and tracks candidates, scores exams and applies cut score criteria, provides statistics and reports outcomes, collects EEO reporting data and generates candidate correspondence for the testing process.	In Development
CSR Kenexa Civil Service Registry	Certification Desk Management System (CDMS)	Electronically distributes and controls the use of Certification Lists and referral lists (applies Civil Service Rules).	In Development
IB Kenexa Item Bank	ParSystem	Highly specialized research tool that stores test questions and collects statistics on those questions.	In Development

Currently, information that is necessary to evaluate performance resides in separate systems that do no interface with each other, leaving the County with limited ability to obtain the information needed to evaluate the function of its systems. As the new system is made operational, it is important for the County to consider the types of Performance Management Reports it needs to create a more strategic HR function, and make sure that the system will provide these reports. Replacing legacy reports is not enough.

Coordination of Countywide Recruitment

DHR should create a model countywide recruitment plan that individual departments can adapt to suit their specific needs. This would include marketing materials (website, tabletop exhibits, posters, brochures, CD-ROM 'business cards,' and other recruitment materials) using one consistent message.

Marketing and Branding

Marketing an organization begins with developing a brand vision and overall brand message. The County has gone to a great effort to develop its "brand." However, these efforts are not utilized effectively across the board in recruitment efforts. Enhancing the ability of the County to recruit by actively marketing and projecting the County's public service image, was one of the recommendations made in the Strategic Values Study. The County can differentiate itself from private employers and non-profits by emphasizing the County mission and showcasing the County's strengths as an employer — its community service mission, the work challenges and career opportunities the County offers, together with salary and benefits packages that make the County appealing to the types of people being sought. The goal is to develop an applicant pool that will culturally fit with the County and share a passion for the County's mission. Branding is only successful if it is an accurate reflection of the agency's culture or the culture the agency is transitioning toward.

Recruitment and selection processes must be streamlined and exemplify a consistent brand message.

- All marketing, application materials and employment -related communications reflect the brand vision and message and is targeted toward relevant applicant groups. What is important to a college graduate or entry trades applicant is different than what is important to a mid-career professional; different messages and recruiting techniques should be used for each group.

- Proactive recruitment strategies seek out sources of talented prospects, rather than passive approaches that depend on waiting for applicants to express job interest.

- Easy to use, responsive job site, with rich content (blogs, videos, and podcasts) engage the applicant and encourage them to register to receive content in the form of newsletters and job announcements.

- Personalized touches throughout the application process rather than auto-replies create a "customer relationship marketing" approach and open dialogue with prospects. Once highly qualified candidates are identified, they must be engaged in finding the right position.

- The recruiting and assessment process must be continuous and open for specialized and hard-to-fill jobs. With the increased sophistication of technology, it is possible to filter, screen and rank applicants on an ongoing basis so that hiring managers always have an updated list with the most qualified candidates.

- Use of non-traditional public sector recruiting tools such employee referral programs, internships/temp-to-hire programs and tuition reimbursement/forgiveness programs supplement marketing efforts.

Developing a strong *internal* candidate pool further contributes to the workforce brand and becomes part of the agency's "story to tell" in attracting external applicants. Development of a database of skills and training, succession planning and flexible work arrangements to retain employees with different career or lifestyle interests are vital components of a talent management program. They breed a culture of employee commitment that spreads to the external community.

Living up to the brand promise is both an HR and a management responsibility. The brand message must be evident throughout the hiring and employment process. Testing and interview processes need to overcome the primary concerns of most candidates that the government is too bureaucratic and takes too long to get through the hiring process. Hiring managers also need to embrace the brand message so that hiring interviews and on-boarding processes reinforce the image of the agency that is set during the recruitment process.

Outreach Recruitment

According to many recruiting experts, 70 percent of employable people are "passive" candidates, meaning they are not actively seeking a new job. This is a high-potential candidate pool that the County may not be tapping.

Employee Referrals

One way the County could proactively recruit such talent is by tapping into existing employee networks and established professional relationships. "Word of mouth" recruiting is entering a new world with social networks, and rapid communication of information. The use of new media, including audio and video opportunities, is just some of the ways the County can expand its recruitment efforts.

Take Advantage of Industry Contacts, Association Memberships and Trade Groups for Recruiting Candidates

It is important for County employees to participate and network in industry groups, and conferences for their own personal development, but these groups also representative a potential master list of industry leaders and potential employees. Target individuals who you would like to see in key County positions and contact these people systematically and regularly. Post positions on professional association web sites, including local chapter websites. (This is an excellent method for finding local talent.) The County can develop relationships with potential candidates long before they are needed. This will help the County to target a highly qualified pool of candidates, and when a key position becomes available, recruit top talent. This will become even more important as retirements leave gaps in the organization.

Leverage Relationship with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board

The Los Angeles County has formed a partnership with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board to use Federal stimulus funds to create temporary work assignments for 10,000 jobs. As workers complete their work assignments, it may be possible for the County to take advantage of the screening and work experience gained by the participants to place them directly onto County eligibility lists.

Leverage the Internet

According to the *Pew Internet and American Life Project* [54], 61 percent of 18–29 year olds surveyed had used the Internet to look for a job. Indeed, online job search is quickly becoming the only way young talented applicants obtain job information. In order to stay in step with younger workers, the County

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[54] Pew Internet and American Life Project, 2002-2009

needs to consider some of the findings from the New Voices Project[55] that quantify how younger workers gather information, and respond to the world of work. This information must be considered when developing recruitment plans and designing work environments. Some highlights include:

- ◆ 89 percent visit a social networking site (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn) at least once a week

- ◆ Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) prefer to apply to jobs by emailing their resume directly to the organization

- ◆ The most important factors cited when considering working for a new employer are compensation (59 percent), the work itself (38 percent), and work/life balance (31 percent)

A recent study by Anderson Analytics found that 36 percent of Americans are regular users of online social network. The study found that Micro-blogging services such as Twitter (17 million users) and the business-oriented LinkedIn (11 million users) are increasing in popularity. The most popular sites are Facebook (78 million) and My-Space (67 million).

Failure to utilize these communication tools means that the County may not be reaching or competing for top talent.

Use Innovative Job Boards

The website, United We Work, for example, went online July 14, 2009. The site is sponsored by a number of corporate clients, including AT&T, Sears Holding Corp., Hewitt Associates, Allstate Corp, Data Processing Inc., Office Depot, 7-Eleven, Inc., Global Hyatt Corp., and Starbucks Coffee Co. These corporate groups are known to have outstanding Human Resource Departments and top level HR Staff. This website is an adaption of a job board know as, QuietAgent.[56] QuietAgent uses O*Net related information to create job roles. Review of this job board revealed a number of excellent features. This site is state of the art and can provide a number of ideas for County use. It might also be an excellent resource to use for hard-to-fill positions.

The initial job match focuses on education and experience MQs, but also uses key words from O*Net and the applicant's resume to identify job matches. The site also has a "benchmarking" tool that can be used to identify work preferences. QuietAgent, asks job seekers to answer a few questions about themselves and their career interests, upload a resume and then get matched with available jobs that meet those criteria. Because QuietAgent does the searching work for both job hunters and employers, it is believed that QuietAgent will cut recruitment costs for firms while removing the burden of searching job listings from people looking for work. Employers can upload profiles of interests and work styles that are desirable for the position and applicants are matched to the profile.

Another feature is the "Employee Benchmark" that helps to match workplace preferences. This feature is based upon O*NET data and profiles the degree to which each attribute suits the way in which a job

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[55] Hodes Group, "New Voices Project," 2009

[56] http://info.quietagent.com/employers/ to try benchmark visit
http://employer.quietagent.com/StarProfile.aspx?q=RDVCJWjNa8MV7ukrH3OSxw%3d%3d

candidate likes to work and interact with things, objects and others. Twelve Scenarios are given. For each scenario opposite ends of the spectrum are given, for example, "Clarity" in performing work as opposed to "Ambiguity" in job tasks. Applicants indicate how much they like an attribute, and how they would like to balance their time between them. Based upon responses a statement regarding their preference is displayed, and candidates confirm the statement or are given an opportunity to change it. This information is used to match candidate preferences in their work environment with job requirements.

County Website as a Recruiting Tool

Organizational use of Internet recruiting has dramatically increased in recent years. Many companies in the private sector see their corporate website as the primary vehicle to attract qualified applicants to their organizations. The County should consider focusing more energy on developing their employment website to supplement other recruiting activities. Although the technology behind the current County website may be technologically sophisticated, little attention has been focused on how potential applicants react to the website and respond to the available information. The full potential of this medium cannot be realized by simply publishing recruitment-related information on the Internet.

Effective use of the County employment website is a low-cost alternative to traditional recruitment strategies. It is important to consider that the County's website provides a critical first impression to potential applicants, by highlighting unique aspects of County employment culture that may attract individuals whom would fit especially well within the organization. It is important that the County provides information in a manner that "sells" the County to potential employees as an Employer of Choice.

The County may be disadvantaged in their recruitment efforts because of negative perceptions that exist regarding employment in the public sector. Such negative perceptions may repel the young and talented pool of candidates that the county needs to attract.

Many public sector employers are moving to correct this image, and are using their websites to help them accomplish this. For example, the City of Riverside's website is a good example of a website that focuses attention on the rewarding aspects of working for their county. Emphasizing Riverside's commitment to quality of life by providing, *"flexible work schedules, ride share, educational support, employee assistance, wellness programs, ample paid leave time, and many other programs that enhance employee well-being."* It features their jobs as providing an opportunity *"to play an active role in your community"* with *"career possibilities that are endless and personally rewarding. At the end of each day, you can reflect on the lives you have impacted by working for a County department. You can take pride in having a part in making Riverside County a great place to live, while performing the work that you love."*

The military has also taken advantage of their websites to communicate the many career development opportunities available within their organizations, and to overcome negative perceptions. Their websites are engaging to applicants. The army website, goarmy.com, for example, features personal stories, an interest inventory to help match applicants to jobs, a career explorer to inform about jobs, as well as a searchable careers and jobs section.

When President Obama launched his new program, "New Educational Opportunities for Unemployed Workers," he also made sure that the new website, Opportunity.gov, was an easy-to-use portal for information gathering about the new program.

This may seem like a two edged sword, as the County has so many applications for low level positions. The reality is that the County may not be attracting the "Candidates of Choice" due to the problems described above.

The County should use their website, as well as department websites, to form positive initial impressions and counteract any pre-existing stereotypes that may deter applicants. The County, and individual departments can leverage unique aspects of their culture through the information they present on their website. A great deal more information can be communicated through a website than has been possible with traditional recruiting materials (e.g., newspaper advertisements or brochures). Providing more detail relating to everyday operations, the people one may encounter while on the job, and the values held by an organization allow people to form more precise impressions of organizational life. A critical advantage of providing this much detail allows an applicant to make a more informed assessment of his/her fit with an organization

Refunding or revitalizing the learning academy will also help current employees to prepare for the jobs of the future by providing practical career path information as well as pointing the way to education and technical training.

Adopt Processes to Streamline Recruitment in Public Sector

Consider OPM's recently issued guidance to agencies when making recruitment process improvements and adopt those ideas that mesh with County requirements:

> Eliminate red tape
>
> Use plain language in job announcements
>
> Recruit veterans
>
> Adopt an accelerated hiring model
>
> Compete on campus
>
> Offer incentives for talent
>
> Utilize on-the-spot hiring authority
>
> Leverage other new hiring flexibilities
>
> Fully engage HR staff

The OPM is a leader in establishing policy and conducting research in the HR arena. The County should take advantage of their research and policy formulation to inform the direction the County takes to transform its HR functions.

Partner with College Marketing Departments

The County should partner with local Universities to work with their marketing departments, filmic writing department, and cinema departments to develop model materials that County departments could use on their website and in their outreach recruitment efforts. One of the Executive Recruiters we spoke with indicated that one of the most difficult challenges in finding top people for County positions was "selling" Los Angeles as a place to work, particularly to candidates in the Midwest. The County Offices are located in the center of Los Angeles, near the Music Center, Disney Hall, and the beautiful Courthouse mall. This should be a "selling" point. A short video that introduces the "Best" parts of working in Los Angeles should be developed to assist in this effort. The use of a College Partnership would make the project a reasonable effort, as many professors are looking for such class projects and will provide consultation without fee.

Recruitment for Information Technology Positions

Discussions with a specialist in the IT recruitment arena, indicates that the County is experiencing a problem that is common in recruitment for these positions. The IT Business heads need to provide training for the HR recruiter or the process is doomed to failure. You cannot select on the basis of "keywords," you need to know enough about the "real" requirements to be able to screen resumes effectively. It was suggested that due to the economic downturn, it was possible not only for the County to engage recruiters who could deliver qualified candidates, but also capture some top talent in the IT world. The County should explore a "different" type of contract with IT recruitment specialists. A "Bulk" contract, where the recruitment firm agrees to supply candidates on a continual basis for a set fee was suggested. Job Boards, such as Monster Hot Jobs and Dice, are generally good sources for IT.

The most important step in successful recruitment for IT jobs is to train the recruiter, so that they understand job requirements.

Maintain Frequent Contact with High Potential Candidates

Don't let high potential applicants submit their resumes and never hear from the County again. All the momentum and time developing the top recruits will be lost. The County should utilize e-mail to maintain a relationship with top recruits, keeping them informed of other opportunities for them within the organization.

Use Executive Recruitment Firms

Executive recruitment firms can be extremely valuable in helping identify top talent. The best firms do a great deal of evaluation of the potential candidate pool. Don't let the recruiter send you a stack of resumes, demand that they pre-screen candidates and only send you only those with the best fit. Make sure your executive recruiters keep job candidates informed as to the progress of the recruitment.

Use Temporary Placements

Consider using temporary job placements as a solution to "try a person out in a position" or to staff a position that might not have funding for the long haul. This can include new employees or existing

employees. The "Temporary Transfer Program," for example, has been a successful part of Bureau of national Affairs (BNA) since 1997, when it was recognized by the EEOC as an outstanding employee development program. This type of effort can be developed as a joint union/management initiative to provide training and growth opportunities. Temporary employees can also provide a useful buffer for the ups and downs of the business cycle. Temporary placement firms can also be useful if you carefully monitor the way they screen applicants and guarantee your satisfaction.

Publicity

The publicity the County receives in the news media, in print, on television, on the radio and online is tremendously important for recruiting top talent. Consideration should be given to sending favorable press releases, or an interesting article about the County's success, that reflects DHR in a favorable light, as the employer with the most to offer in the Los Angeles Area.

Recommendations

64. Utilize innovative recruitment and selection procedures such as job boards with "benchmarking" tools, social networking sites, employee referrals, temporary to permanent hiring process for job tryout, online pre-screening, computerized testing, and realistic job previews.

65. Coordinate Countywide recruitment and develop a model countywide recruitment plan that individual departments can adapt to suit their specific needs. This would include marketing materials that actively feature the benefits of County employment, (website, brochures, tabletop exhibits, posters, CD-ROM 'business cards', and other recruitment materials), using one consistent message. Improve recruitment web-site for County and departments.

66. Leverage relationships with associations, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, local universities to build high-potential candidate pool.

Review of Job Analysis and Technical Reports [57]

One of the biggest challenges the County DHR faces is ensuring validation of selection procedures for all positions. With so many classifications, it is extremely difficult for the test research unit to keep up with validation, particularly when a new "test" must be developed for each classification. The County has done an excellent job in maintaining their validation efforts despite antiquated IT support systems that make it difficult to obtain or combine data to support analysis. Much hope is riding on the eHR system to take over the functions now performed manually and by TRAC.

For each of the examinations studied by the Efficiency Team, a technical review of supporting documentation was conducted. This review included review of job analysis and technical reports, discussions with staff, and a review of TRAC data concerning examinations. Detailed analysis is available in supplemental material.

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[57] Information was current as of 8/20/09

Job Analysis

The County of Los Angeles utilizes the Western Regional Inter-governmental Personnel Assessment Council (WRIPAC) system to perform "Complete Job Analysis" of job classes for which tests are developed. The WRIPAC system was developed at a time when the model for test development was based on "situational specificity." Each job needed to be analyzed separately, in order to establish the validity of an assessment.

WRIPAC is an excellent job analysis system that establishes the content validity for the examination process. However, it is very time consuming, and requires a great deal of input from Subject Matter Experts (SME's) to complete, particularly when the examination analyst does not use established definitions for the KSA's identified, and attempts to have the SME's create such definitions. In the WRIPAC system, task ratings include criticality and frequency of performance, KSA ratings include expected at entry and criticality. A detailed Task/KSA linkage is also provided.

A complete WRIPAC job analysis was completed on 9 of the 15 examinations reviewed (in one of these cases the analysis was conducted on the lower level position, but used to justify the higher level). The dates of these studies indicated that only 5 of the 9 were completed between 2000 and 2004. The type of job analysis performed is shown in the table below.

Type of Job Analysis Used

Exam Title	Exam No.	Type of Job Analysis
Intermediate Clerk	R1138J	WRIPAC '08
Dept'l HR Manager III	R1885B	Reclass Study
Dept'l Civil Serv. Rep	R1881D	Board Ordered
Senior Clerk	R1140C	WRIPAC '01
Accounting Officer II	R0657C	Not Available
Procurement Asst III	R2347D	used PCII '09
Sup. Children's Social Wkr	R9074D	WRIPAC '01
Sup. Welfare Fraud Invstgtr	R9153A	WRIPAC '07
Community Worker	R8103C	WRIPAC '09
Contract Prog Auditor	R4614B	Job review '07
Agri Wts & Measure Ins III	R0011D	WRIPAC '00
Programming Sup II	R2530B	Board Ordered
Eligibility Supervisor	R9181C	WRIPAC '03
Adoption Assistant	R8993A	WRIPAC '04
Division Chief, DCFS	R9108G	Job review '06

The effort needed to conduct the WRIPAC analysis has led to the use of "Job Reviews," which require less time to complete. In some cases, these job reviews are adequate for establishing the validity for the examination process, in other cases the documentation consists of copies of manuals and notes.

There was no job information available for four of the examinations, these included "Board Ordered" examinations, a reclassification study, and an examination where information was missing from the files.

Job Analysis is critical to establishing the job relatedness of Selection Procedures, as well as providing a blueprint to improve selection. A simplified Job Analysis process, such as recommended in this report should be implemented.

Many of the KSAs identified in the job analysis were similar across the jobs studied. This should allow for much streamlining of the process.

Examination Methods

There are an excessive number of applications received for many examinations, far greater than the number required to fill vacancies. Steps should be taken to reduce the applicant pool. An online screening examination or lottery to select candidates to be tested, or other techniques would be desirable. Examination methods included Written Tests (8), Appraisal of Promotability (9), Interviews (4) and Rating from Record (2).

The following table presents the examination methods utilized for the jobs reviewed and means and standard deviations for the test parts.

Exam Title	Written		AP		Interview		RR	
Intermediate Clerk	77.6	9.8						
Dept'l HR Manager III					85.2	12.9		
Dept'l Civil Serv. Rep					90.1	9.2		
Senior Clerk	74.6	6.4	88.7	12.1				
Accounting Officer II			85.4	10.8				
Procurement Asst III	76.1	7.5	87.5	12.1				
Sup. Children's Social Wkr	74.6	7.7	92.0	9.3				
Sup. Welfare Fraud Invstgtr	86.2	2.8	95.4	7.0				
Community Worker			93.4	8.7			93.4	8.7
Contract Prog Auditor					99.6	8.5		
Agri Wts & Measure Ins III	72.1	9.2			78.9	11.5		
Programming Sup II							80.3	7.2
Eligibility Supervisor	71.5	7.1	92.3	10.9				
Adoption Assistant	68.0	7.4	93.3	9.6				
Division Chief, DCFS			97.7	5.6				

Written Examinations

Written examinations were used in eight of the examinations. Many of the KSAs tested are generic, such as the ability to communicate, comprehend written information, and accurately analyze and interpret data. It is likely that segments of current examinations could be utilized for many additional job classes, perhaps with the addition of other exam elements.

When new requests for exams are made, the KSAs and Task questionnaires used in similar examinations should be used as the first step in job review to determine if a current exam (or segments of it) could be adapted to the new class.

The difficulty level of the written examinations appeared to be appropriate, with the exception of the Sup. Welfare Fraud Invest, examination (mean score 86.2).

Interviews

Interviews were used in four of the examinations. The mean scores in three of the four interviews were quite high. It is difficult to control rater bias, and when there are numerous interview panels this becomes an impossible task. Whenever possible, it would be desirable to reduce the applicant pool so that one interview panel would be able to assign scores for all candidates.

Appraisal of Promotability (AP)

The AP process was the most common assessment method in the jobs reviewed. The current AP process does not effectively distinguish levels of performance. Mean scores ranged from 85.4 to 97.7, with many candidates receiving scores above 95. For example, in the promotional examination for Division Chief only 10 of the 43 candidates received a score of less than 100 (5 received 95, 3 received 90, 1 received 85, and 1 received 70). The AP in this case, served as a pass fail criteria, with those scoring 95-100 "passing" and being placed in band "1." While this example is the most extreme, the same pattern can be found in many of the tests. All of the AP's observed had a negatively skewed distribution, with most candidates receiving very high APs, and a few candidates doing very poorly. The process seems to do a good job identifying those that should NOT be considered, but does not add to the process of differentiating amount the qualified candidates.

Because the AP is not an excellent differentiator, many key skills are not being assessed in the promotional process. If these skills have been properly screened at the entry level, this will not be a problem. If the Competency has not been assessed at entry, there may be skill gaps at the promotional level.

Rating from Record

Rating from Record was only used in two examinations. The mean scores ranged from 80.3 – 93.4.

Detailed Review

A detailed review of the 15 job classes is included in Auxiliary material.

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Section 6: Listing of All Recommendations

Recommendations Highlighted In the Executive Summary

In the Executive Summary, we highlighted a series of recommendations we believe are most important for achieving significant improvement in the County's recruitment, selection, classification and compensation systems. Some of these recommendations are strategic/long-term in nature and will require implementation efforts over a several-year period. These recommendations will require continued executive and Board support to ensure the changes occur as planned. Other recommendations are tactical and short-term. Actions on these recommendations can be initiated quickly and completed within a fairly short-term time horizon.

Recommendations in this section combine or summarize separate, parallel recommendations presented in Sections 3 to 5. Recommendations from Sections 3 to 5 are presented in their entirety later in this section.

Executive Summary – Strategic/Long-term Recommendations

1. Become a *strategic business partner* with line departments. Appoint an advisory executive group to work with the Interim Director of Personnel and CEO staff to develop an overall set of change objectives and a strategy for effective change management to accomplish them. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented in this report; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress is made toward goals established. (See Section 3, page 27.)

2. Work directly with departments to identify current and future human resources needs; develop understanding of departments' changing business needs and become knowledgeable about the business goals and challenges of their organizations; consider assigning an experienced DHR staff person to serve as "account manager" for each department. (See Section 3, page 35.)

3. Appoint a high-level, Countywide working group to re-examine the current County HR architecture and its alignment with the County strategic plan and governance model and report back to CEO in six months; deliverables to include: (See Section 3, pages 37 to 38.)

   ➤ Reexamination of and delineation of appropriate central versus line department responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities.

   ➤ A conceptual framework and criteria for building required DHR resource support and charge-backs for services provided.

4. Develop and implement initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce, taking advantage of the current interest in public service. Initiatives can be modeled on best practices already in place in certain County departments. Consider:

➢ Recruiting a pre-qualified pool of potential employees before they are needed to fill positions; develop mechanisms to bring outstanding candidates on board immediately while minimizing County costs.

➢ Increase the use of unpaid or partially paid internships to tackle specific projects or work in specific areas.

➢ Develop a special voluntary management training and career rotation program to accelerate preparation for executive and management roles.

(See Section 4, page 65 and Section 5, page 88.)

5. Transition to the use of a *Competency-Model* methodology for classification and selection to significantly streamline and improve the effectiveness of both systems. (See Section 3, page 40 and Section 5, page 106.)

➢ Move to a Competency-Based Job Analysis System; simplify the WRIPAC job analysis process now in use and integrate it with the new County competency model; evaluate the potential for using multi-purpose job analysis processes for both classification and selection.

➢ Develop job classes and families based upon similarity of competencies, resulting in significant consolidation of classes and streamlining of the classification plan.

➢ Conduct validation studies in one job family and "transport" validity to other jobs within the family.

➢ Develop or lease selection instruments to assess core competencies applicable to multiple classifications; develop methods of "banking" candidate scores for use in subsequent examinations as soon as technologically feasible.

➢ Evaluate the quality, validity, and reliability of exam content vis-à-vis its ability to generate talent with core competencies reflective of organizational needs.

6. Streamline the County's classification plan over a five-to-seven-year period. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented in this report; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress toward goals established. (See Section 4 for detailed information.)

➢ Appoint a classification advisory committee and, in collaboration with the committee, formulate a *Classification Philosophy* that expresses, at a policy level, the County's objectives regarding classification plan design.

➢ Incorporate use of the *Competency-Model* methodology.

➢ In collaboration with the classification advisory committee, develop a comprehensive plan to meet this objective, including establishing priorities in the review of job families/class structures that address both pressing department needs and central agency concerns.

> Establish mechanisms for on-going maintenance of the classification plan, including required information management tools such as coding of classes by service, job family, EEOC and FLSA purposes.

7. Develop and implement a comprehensive five-year plan to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of County recruitment and hiring processes. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented in this report; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress toward goals established. (See Section 5 for detailed information.)

> Utilize a variety of marketing, branding and outreach recruitment techniques to reach high-potential applicants who fit short- and long-term County staffing requirements.

> Redesign exam bulletins to better present the County as an employer while clearly communicating specific job information.

> Redesign the County/DHR websites to portray the County as an "employer of choice" and to more effectively attract top quality applicants.

> Make greater use of assessment processes with high validity and utility, including developed or leased competency tests and pre-packaged selection systems; incorporate innovative techniques such as online prescreening and online testing.

> Institute a feedback process following the conclusion of recruitment and selection processes to obtain feedback from managers and a sample of applicants on timeliness of the process and quality of the resulting eligible list.

> Implement process improvements and technology solutions that improve speed to hire, including processes for communicating with applicants via email or the internet.

8. Formulate, with the involvement of line departments, and implement performance metrics for managing, monitoring and evaluating organizational performance. Assign a financial analyst from the CEO's Office to advise on development and use of ROI measures. (See Section 3, 4 and 5 for additional information.)

> As a first step, instruct DHR and Class/Comp to develop and implement an initial work management tracking and reporting process.

> Following development of organizational performance metrics, formulate performance standards based on these metrics for each of the key tasks performed and utilize these in the staff performance evaluation process.

9. Revitalize the County's Strategic Workforce Planning Program. (See Section 3, page 47).

> Identify department needs to achieve effective implementation and provide consultation and additional resources/support to accomplish this.

> Integrate department workforce plans; identify **significant Countywide issues**; develop strategies and begin execution of implementation priorities to address strategic workforce needs.

Executive Summary – Tactical/Short-term Recommendations

1. Conduct an assessment, in consultation with the CEO, County Counsel, Auditor-Controller and all County departments, to re-examine the current HR policy framework; review any pending policy development requests; identify need for policy revisions and development of new policies; and establish a schedule and timeline to revise/develop policy drafts for review. (See Section 3, page 35.)

2. Develop and implement, **with a sense of urgency**, intensive training programs to meet critical training and development needs for core HR systems staff in central agencies as well as line department staff performing similar functions. (See discussion in Sections 3, 4 and 5.)

   > Move forward quickly with final development and implement the Certified Examination Analyst assessment and training program.

   > Develop and implement a new classification training program; consider establishing a Certified Classification Analyst assessment and training program as a follow-on effort.

   > Include training modules on internal consulting and change management competencies and on business fundamentals and analytics.

   > Include cross-training, rotational assignments and/or other work assignment methods to enhance staff understanding of the businesses and operational needs of the departments they serve.

3. Improve customer focus and communications. Give significant weight to customer service effectiveness by using the performance standard for *Customer Service,* included in the MAPP Performance Evaluation document, and applying it, or a similar behavioral statement to *all* DHR/Class and Comp staff; mandate use of the customer survey process included in the behavioral description or obtain feedback on performance from the managers'/staff members' primary customers. (See Section 3, page 40.)

4. Propose Civil Service Rule changes needed to support and facilitate implementation of various change and improvement initiatives, including:

   > New rules that allow for streamlining hiring processes and providing "flexibilities" similar to those used by the federal Office of Personnel Management. (See Section 5, page 92.)

   > Rule change to make Appraisals of Promotability optional.

   > Use of broad classifications together with selective certification, flex classes and/or any other approaches that are developed consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy.*

> Rules and supporting policies regarding reclassification of positions to higher and lower classes following major classification studies.

> Rules and supporting policies regarding employee status in positions affected by department reorganizations and restructures.

5. Formulate a strategy for comprehensive implementation of the federal Factor Evaluation System (FES) for conducting job analyses for classification and compensation purposes; ensure integration with use of Competency-Model processes. (See Section 4, page 66.)

6. Design efficient procedures and forms for conducting large-scale studies required to streamline the classification plan; include elements required for Competency-Model processes. (See Section 4, pages 72.)

7. Streamline day-to-day work processes in Class/Comp in order to maximize resources assigned to classification plan improvements. Processes to be addressed include: the budget position allocation process and special salary actions. (See Section 4, page 80.)

8. Redesign the County's class specification format, providing for the inclusion of clear classification standards and essential competencies required for proficient job performance; establish methods to improve the relevance and appropriateness of statements of minimum qualifications. (See Section 4, page 71.)

9. Implement a variety of process improvements that will streamline the County hiring process. (See Section 5, page 104.)

> Streamline the exam bulletin review process. Actions are being taken by DHR and should include developing pre-approved templates and language for department use, and a single-point approval process.

> Change the order of certain elements of the application review process to achieve greater cost effectiveness and screening validity.

> Develop templates or model procedures that can be used across job families and developed prior to a specific exam request. These "pre-packaged" selection systems should focus on improving the quality of selection, particularly for new hires, and can easily be adapted by departments to meet their individual hiring needs. The selection systems should include recruitment plans, supplemental applications, MQ evaluation criteria, structured interviews, ability tests for foundation skills, "soft skill" assessments, realistic job previews and other selection tools.

> Improve the examination pre-planning process to include a strategic consultation with requesting departments regarding hiring needs.

> Establish clear expectations and target completion dates with the department at the outset of the examination process and monitor "real time" progress toward goals. Get

commitment from the department to supply necessary subject matter experts and provide quick turn around on approvals.

➤ Develop an examination status web page for each recruitment where departments and applicants can find information on examination status.

➤ Develop a searchable database to answer frequently asked questions.

➤ Take immediate action to shape the applicant pool including forecasting the size of list required to fill vacancies and limiting the size of the list, if necessary.

➤ Simplify the WRIPAC job analysis process.

➤ Consider eliminating or revamping the Appraisal of Promotability (AP) process to improve selection and reduce examination completion time.

➤ Incorporate a high-level financial analyst into the DHR team and charge that individual with analysis of the cost/benefit of current processes.

➤ Immediately revisit the many excellent recommendations made by County DHR staff in its report on "Streamlining the Centralized Examination Process: Building a Leaner System" and by the CEO Efficiency Team and implement changes.

Section 3 Recommendations

1. In collaboration with an advisory executive leadership group, utilize the results of this Human Resources Study to develop an overall set of change objectives and a strategy for effective change management. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress is made toward goals established.

2. Critically examine where traditional County practices and "customs" and the interpretation of Civil Service Rules contributes to or hinders the County's ability to achieve its goals for workforce excellence.

3. Work directly with departments to identify current and future human resources needs; develop understanding of departments' changing business needs and become knowledgeable about the business goals and challenges of their organizations; consider assigning an experienced DHR staff person to serve as "account manager" for each department.

4. Conduct an assessment, in consultation with CEO, County Counsel, Auditor-Controller and all County departments, to re-examine the current HR policy framework; review any pending policy development requests; identify need for policy revisions and development of new policies; and establish a schedule and timeline to revise/develop policy drafts for review.

5. As part of succession planning efforts, develop training and mentoring programs to transfer critical skills, expertise, and institutional knowledge from retiring workers to new managers and staff.

6. Revitalize the County Strategic Workforce Planning Program (see *A Note on Workforce Planning*):

    ♦ Continue turnover analysis and enhancement of workforce planning resources and tools;

    ♦ Consider whether streamlining the planning process and worksheets would result in broader department participation;

    ♦ Identify department needs to achieve effective implementation and provide consultation and additional resources and support to accomplish this;

    ♦ Integrate department workforce plans; identify *significant Countywide issues*; develop strategies and begin execution of implementation priorities to address strategic workforce needs.

7. When implementing new initiatives and projects, conduct project implementation risk assessments and develop project plans to avoid/overcome those risks. Steps may include:

    ♦ Designate a "champion" at the highest organizational level possible to help with project implementation.

    ♦ Find a willing department or work group to pilot the project.

    ♦ Partner with and/or obtain assistance from County departments that have extensive experience with new "rollouts."

8. Select for use a strategic HR management and staff competency model; identify training priorities for the most critical competencies; develop and include in DHR and Class/Comp staff training programs:

    ♦ Training to develop internal consulting skills.

    ♦ Training to develop change management skills.

    ♦ Training to develop knowledge of business fundamentals and the application of business analytics.

    ♦ Cross-training, rotational assignments and/or other work assignment methods to enhance staff understanding of the businesses and operational needs of the departments they serve.

    ♦ Move forward with plans to develop and implement the Certified Examination Analyst assessment and training program. The exam training work group has developed five training modules that should be implemented immediately. As the division of responsibilities between DHR and departments is delineated, this material should be reviewed to ensure that sufficient competency is held by all central and departmental staff responsible for designing, developing and conducting examinations.

    It may be desirable to develop levels of expertise within the certification process, for example:

> ➤ The **Generalist** utilizes knowledge base and scripts to respond to a wide variety of questions and issues.

> ➤ The **Subject Matter Expert** interprets policy to respond to escalated issues and questions. The subject matter expert usually has a specialized experience or knowledge in a specific topic and is empowered to make low risk decisions.

> ➤ The **Decision Maker** responds to complex issues, questions and critical incidents. The decision maker interprets policy and has decision-making authority around complex issues, questions, and critical incidents.

- ◆ Pursue design and development of a Certified Classification Analyst assessment and training program similar to those underway for Certified Examination Analyst (see Section 3 for further discussion).

9. Appoint a high-level, Countywide working group to re-examine the current County HR architecture and its alignment with the County strategic plan and governance model and report back to CEO in six months; deliverables to include:

   - ◆ Review of the current DHR Strategic Plan, Strategic Values Study and other documents to determination whether any modification to the Countywide HR philosophy is warranted;

   - ◆ Reexamination of and delineation of appropriate central versus line department responsibilities, authorities and accountabilities;

   - ◆ A conceptual framework and criteria for building required DHR resource support and charge-backs for services provided.

10. Request DHR and Class/Comp management to convene a working group to advise them on formulation and execution of cost effective, relevant initiatives for addressing and resolving the *customer service* and *communication* concerns of line departments.

11. Operationalize the performance standard for *Customer Service,* included in the MAPP Performance Evaluation document, and apply it, or a similar behavioral statement to all DHR/Class and Comp staff; mandate use of the customer survey process included in the behavioral description or obtain feedback on performance from the managers'/staff members' primary customers.

12. Complete evaluation of available competency models and ultimately develop County of Los Angeles "Competency Models" to help streamline processes.

13. Complete the pilot study, currently underway, of the use a competency model for development of assessment procedures for a County job class. (Associate Contract Analyst class has been selected.) This project will also explore the commonality of competencies between several other job classes with similar characteristics including Human Resources Analyst I, Department Personnel Technician/ Program Specialist, Associate Analyst – CEO and Administrative Assistant III.

14. Develop a comprehensive plan to expand use of the competency model across job families on a prioritized, phased-in basis.

15. Request DHR and Class/Comp to develop and implement an initial work management tracking and reporting process as the first step toward developing metrics for managing, monitoring and evaluating organizational and staff workloads and performance.

16. Request DHR and Class/Comp, in collaboration with internal staff and/or a focus group of department customers, to select a work process that is cumbersome, time intensive and negatively impacts customer service and conduct a business process re-engineering study to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Section 4 Recommendations

17. Appoint a small working/advisory group made up of departmental human resources managers to serve as a sounding board and collaborator with the Class/Comp division in designing and carrying out initiatives recommended in this report for improving the County's classification and compensation program.

18. Formulate a *Classification Philosophy* that expresses at a policy level the County's objectives regarding classification plan design, including its preferences for broad vs. narrow classes, department-specific vs. Countywide/multi-department classes and other design questions. In conjunction with this initiative, develop and implement a policy establishing criteria for approval of department-specific classes.

19. Develop, in collaboration with the classification advisory committee, a comprehensive plan, to be implemented over a five to seven year period, to:

   ♦ Streamline the County's classification plan consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy*;

   ♦ Establish priorities in the review of job families/class structure that address both pressing central agency and department needs;

   ♦ Provide mechanisms for on-going maintenance of the classification plan, including required information management tools such as coding of classes for service, job family, EEOC and FLMA purposes; and

   ♦ Ensure sharing of results and integration of efforts in conducting job analyses with divisions in DHR.

20. Propose Civil Service rule revisions required to facilitate implementation of classification streamlining initiatives:

   ♦ Use of broad classifications together with selective certification, flex classes and/or any other approaches that are developed consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy*.

- ◆ Rules and supporting policies regarding reclassification of positions to higher and lower classes following major classification studies.

- ◆ Rules and supporting policies regarding employee status in positions affected by department reorganizations and restructures.

21. Design and implement a new comprehensive classification training program (see Section 3, general recommendation 8) that is available to both central and department staff responsible for performing classification analyses:

- ◆ Incorporate provisions for rotational assignments within the Class/Comp division to provide experience with difference occupational groups and department business requirements.

- ◆ Consider rotational/training assignments between central and departmental classification units.

- ◆ Include organization and job design modules to provide exposure to principles and practices in the field of organizational development.

- ◆ Include modules on interpersonal competencies such as internal consulting, consensus-building and change management.

- ◆ Consider design and development of a Certified Classification Analyst program similar to the effort underway in development of a Certified Examination Analyst program.

    - ➢ Ensure congruency between the training on job analysis provided in the Certified Examination Analyst program and that used in the classification training program.

    - ➢ Determine how to integrate proficiency in use of the competency-based methodology into the Certified Classification Analyst program.

Consider use of unpaid or partially paid interns from local university graduate schools to conduct research and develop modules for the training program.

22. Clarify responsibilities of departments, CEO budget analysts and Class/Comp analysts for assisting departments in conducting organizational analyses and organization/reorganization studies; develop appropriate policies, procedures and standards for efficiently carrying out such studies.

23. Formulate a strategy for comprehensive implementation of the federal Factor Evaluation System (FES) for conducting job analyses for classification and compensation purposes, including:

- ◆ A pilot project for evaluating its utility and its compatibility with a competency-based model and engaging line department staff and stakeholders in the evaluation process.

- ◆ Conducting job analyses of selected classes/class series to establish benchmarks for creating an internal equity classification hierarchy.

- ♦ Establishing its use as a required component in <u>all</u> class/comp studies.

- ♦ Intensive training and mentoring on the methodology in the new classification training program open to all central and departmental classification staff. See Recommendation 5 above.

24. Incorporate use of competency-based classification methods, assuming successful completion of the pilot study recommended in this report and adoption of competency-based selection methodologies as the County standard.

25. Re-examine the provisions in Policy 300 regarding a *Shared Classification Program* and determine whether greater delegation of classification responsibilities to departments can be achieved:

- ♦ What types of transactions/classification determinations might be delegated, provided proficiency among department HR staff is demonstrated.

- ♦ What policies and standards would have to be developed and what audit processes installed.

- ♦ At a minimum, consider expanding the list of 240 classes for which allocation authority has been delegated in order to reduce central staff time required during the budget position allocation process.

26. Develop a new set of classification policies that reflect current and new processes and methodologies installed, revised processes and procedures and other changes made to support implementation of recommendations made in this report. Policies should include coverage of the information and factors outlined on page 63.

27. Develop a division manual that describes procedures, steps and considerations to be followed for each key division function:

- ♦ Work tracking and monitoring processes to be installed.

- ♦ Requirements for learning the businesses of assigned departments, including field audits during classification studies.

- ♦ Responsibilities and procedures associated with department organization studies.

- ♦ Processes for keeping departments up-to-date on the status of their work requests.

28. Redesign the County's class specification format, providing for the inclusion of clear classification standards and essential competencies required for proficient job performance. Establish a methodology to the relevance and job-relatedness of statements of minimum qualifications.

29. Design streamlined procedures and forms for conducting studies required to streamline the classification plan.

♦ Develop a new standard position description questionnaire that:

> ➢ Simplifies completion by individual or groups of employees.

> ➢ Is consistent with the division's job analysis/classification methodology.

> ➢ Can be made available and completed electronically.

♦ Consider the development and use of tailored questionnaires when conducting studies of large-incumbent classes.

♦ With the CEO's information technology staff, install systems to allow for online completion and submission of classification requests and position descriptions questionnaires.

♦ Research and develop processes that will streamline and minimize job content data collection costs for large-scale studies that may involve thousands of incumbents.

30. Based on data collected through the new work management tracking and reporting process recommended in general recommendation 15:

♦ Develop a set of division performance metrics.

♦ Formulate processes for keeping customers informed of the status of their requests.

♦ Consider their eventual use in establishing service level agreements with line department customers.

31. Based on division performance metrics established in recommendation 14, formulate performance standards for each of the key tasks performed by division analysts and utilize these in the staff performance evaluation process.

32. Define and document for consistent use:

♦ The multiple labor markets in which the County competes to recruit and retain top quality managers and staff.

♦ The sources of compensation data that will be used to evaluate competitiveness of pay within each of those markets.

33. In conjunction with initiatives to streamline the County classification plan, using competency-based and FES job evaluation processes and with input from the classification advisory committee (see Recommendations 1 and 3 of this section), initiate efforts to establish a hierarchy of internal job relationships based on similarity in job content.

♦ Utilize that process to identify serious internal equity issues and work collaboratively with CEO and department staff to develop appropriate strategies for resolving them.

♦ Develop and implement procedures and guidelines for the analytical processes involved in establishing and maintaining internally equitable relationships of pay.

♦ Incorporate modules in the new comprehensive classification training program. Determine how to integrate proficiency in these processes into the Certified Classification Analyst program.

34. Develop a policy governing special pay requests, including their purpose, eligibility, criteria and considerations for approval and alternative options.

35. Define roles and responsibilities for delegation of this responsibility to departments, including audit processes that will be followed by Class/Comp to ensure policy compliance.

36. Re-examine DHR Budget Allocation Studies policy, Policy 345 with regard to:

♦ Working directly with line department management and HR staff on requests for allocating and reallocating positions.

♦ Determining the most appropriate type/level of documentation required for new or modified positions, positions being transferred to new units, title changes, deletion of classes and organization structure changes.

♦ Coordination points and processes in the CEO budget review between the budget analyst and the classification analyst.

37. Conduct a business process re-engineering study of the County's new position budget allocation process to streamline and improve its effectiveness.

♦ Once the business process re-engineering study is completed, re-write and re-promulgate the policy consistent with the re-engineered process.

♦ Develop an internal division procedure documenting the steps and considerations involved.

38. Take action on the short-term recommendations regarding the organizational structure and staffing of the Classification/Compensation division.

Section 5 Recommendations

39. Develop initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce; recruit a pre-qualified pool of potential employees before they are needed to fill a job; consider ways to bring outstanding candidates on board immediately.

40. Search for Best Practices within the County Departments and use successful programs as a model to formulate targeted Countywide programs.

41. Identify mission-critical occupations, and develop plans to place a high priority on developing competency models and streamlined selection processes for these occupations. Once the County eHR system is online, it will be possible to instantly screen applications that are filled out through

the County website, so that viable candidates for mission critical occupations can be contacted before they get swept up by other organizations.

42. Increase the use of student internships to tackle specific projects or work in specific areas. The student internship delivers a chance for the County to solve problems that might not otherwise be possible to tackle, while providing a learning experience for participants. A short internship, typically 4-6 months, structured to provide value to both the student and the County is the goal.

43. Develop a special career rotation program. Employees would be selected to participate in the program based upon a competitive selection procedure designed to identify future leaders. The program could be modeled after the highly successful Administrative Intern program, but focus on the development of current employees. Participants would be given management and systems training and "rotated" through several departments within the County. They would be charged with developing solutions to real-world problems, and utilize the support network of the group to make connections throughout the County. The experience should include coursework, developmental assignments, coaching, rotational and shadowing assignments. Such a program was a very successful part of the Hughes Aircraft talent management initiative. Each year the Career Rotation participants would connect, not only with their "class," but with participants that had recently completed the program. As a result, when the "rotation" participants reached higher levels of management within the company, they had a network of contacts and close ties to others throughout the organization.

44. Develop a management mentoring program modeled after the program developed by the Auditor-Controller.

45. Use an "account manager" approach to facilitate discussion with departments. This would include a yearly meeting to define and understand the department's current and future human resources needs; to share best practices with the department HR staff; and to identify upcoming recruitment requirements. When specific vacancies occur, additional consultation should occur to define the specific parameters for the recruitment effort. A form cannot substitute for this consultation.

46. Modernize the County civil service rules. Develop a set of hiring "flexibilities, that include specific guidance as to how it should be used, what it provides, when to use it, who is eligible, any statues and regulations tied to the process, implementation guidelines, and an example of its use in practice.

47. Improve the quality of selection by using assessment processes with high validity and utility.

48. Shape the applicant pool to target competencies and reduce the number of applicants. Avoid having the labor intensive and unreliable application screening process be the primary selection tool.

49. Streamline and improve the hiring process:

   ◆ Develop templates or model procedures that can be used across job families and developed prior to a specific vacancy. These "pre-packaged" selection systems should focus on improving the quality of selection, particularly those for new hires. The "pre-packaged" selection systems could easily be adapted by department to meet their individual needs.

The selection should include recruitment plans, supplemental applications, MQ evaluation criteria, structured interviews, ability tests for foundation skills, "soft skill" assessments, realistic job previews, and other selection tools.

- ♦ Improve the examination pre-planning process to include a strategic consultation with requesting departments regarding hiring needs.

- ♦ Establish clear expectations and target completion dates with the department at the outset of the examination process and monitor "real time" progress toward goals.

- ♦ Modernize Civil Service Rules to allow flexibility in the way the merit system is applied.

- ♦ Develop and validate Countywide ability test for "pipeline" analyst positions, and for supervisory, technical, and professional occupations. The test will focus on foundation competencies that are most critical and most difficult to develop after hire.

- ♦ Develop or lease "soft skill" measures (customer service orientation, conscientiousness and other personality variables) that will add incremental validity to the selection process, and can be used as an initial prescreening tool.

- ♦ Consider ways to streamline the bulletin process, and make the resulting bulletin more effective in attracting applicants with the desired skill set.

- ♦ Consider ways to streamline and make the AP process an effective selection tool.

- ♦ Monitor hiring manager satisfaction after each appointment.

- ♦ Immediately revisit the many excellent recommendations made by County DHR staff regarding process redesign, and implement changes. Pair the "thinkers and dreamers" with the "doers and the connecters."

50. Move to a Competency-Based Job Analysis System; simplify the WRIPAC job analysis process and combine with the new competency model.

51. Develop job families based upon similarity of competencies, and conduct validation study in one job family and "transport" validity to other jobs within the family.

52. Evaluate the quality, validity, and reliability of exam content to generate talent with core competencies reflective of organizational needs.

53. Improve communication with line departments; get feedback from the "customer "on a regular basis.

54. Consider how the DHR can better connect to decision makers at the top, and increase the visibility of the many excellent programs that have been developed. Provide needed resources to insure that project implementation has the support needed for success.

55. Improve communication with candidates by utilizing e-mail or website.

56. Improve the HR DERM meetings, make content relevant, have top leadership from DHR present at the meetings, address critical County issues.

57. Develop management tools and tracking systems to ensure accountability; include measures of HR performance that are based on ROI, quality and long-term workforce planning criteria.

58. Research the financial implications of current processes, and rediscover the value added "Vision" that DHR promised.

59. Evaluate new programs early and often in the implementation cycle. Review policies with operating departments early in the development process. Determine how policies will impact department operations. Coordinate the timing of requests to departments so department staff are not over-whelmed with multiple requests at the same time.

60. Incorporate a high-level financial analyst into the DHR team and charge that individual with analysis of the cost/benefit of current processes.

61. Ensure that the "dashboard" includes reports that reflect strategic goals.

62. Review policies with operating departments early in the development process, determine how policies will impact department operations. Coordinate the timing of requests to departments so department staff is not "overwhelmed" with multiple requests at the same time.

63. Improve training/mentoring of DHR Staff. Include traditional HR Knowledge domains as well as Interpersonal Skills (influencing others, effective communication, leadership skills), Project Implementation Skills (managing projects, managing change), and Business Skills (business fundamentals, business analytics etc.).

64. Utilize innovative recruitment and selection procedures such as job boards with "benchmarking" tools, social networking sites, employee referrals, temporary to permanent hiring process for job tryout, online pre-screening, computerized testing, and realistic job previews.

65. Coordinate Countywide recruitment and develop a model countywide recruitment plan that individual departments can adapt to suit their specific needs. This would include marketing materials that actively feature the benefits of County employment, (website, brochures, tabletop exhibits, posters, CD-ROM 'business cards', and other recruitment materials), using one consistent message. Improve recruitment web-site for County and departments.

66. Leverage relationships with associations, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, local universities to build high-potential candidate pool.

◆◆◆◆◆

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See the following sites for competencies and competency models (note that specific pages of sites often change; access the agency site if necessary to locate materials):

NYS Department of Civil Service
http://www.cs.state.ny.us/announ/mainpages/Prom%20Test%20Bat%20Guide/
promtestbatguidesection1.htm#formidlevelhighlevelmanagers
Competencies tested on the Promotion Test Batteries for Mid-Level and High-Level Managers and Administrators

<u>**NYS Office of Children and Family Services**</u>
Management competencies

State of Kansas
http://da.state.ks.us/ps/documents/comp/Definition%20and%20Descriptor%20Guide.pdf
State of Kansas Competency Model: Definitions and Examples of Behavioral Competencies. (This document may not be accessible to the visually impaired.)

State of Michigan
http://www.state.mi.us/mdcs/OPE/group4comp.htm
Group Four and SES Leadership Competencies Definitions & Key Actions - competencies for higher level managers and leaders.
Http://www.state.mi.us/mdcs/OPE/group3mgrcomp.htm
Group Three Manager Competencies Definitions & Key Actions - competencies for middle managers.
Http://www.state.mi.us/mdcs/OPE/group3supcomp.htm
Group Three Supervisor Competencies Definitions & Key Actions

State of Washington
Http://hr.dop.wa.gov/workforceplanning/compprof.htm
Competency Profile Suggestions. This includes links to competency profiles for mid-level managers and others.
Http://hr.dop.wa.gov/workforceplanning/mgmtcomp.htm
Core competencies for mid-level managers.

US Office of Personnel Management
Http://www.opm.gov/ses/define.html
Competencies for the Senior Executive Service.

Public Service Commission of Canada
Http://www.psc-cfp.gc.ca/cap/03/mgnarr_e.htm#III
The site has five categories of management competencies with a total of 14 competencies with definitions.
Http://www.managers-gestionnaires.gc.ca/career_development/competency_profiles/menu_e.shtml
This includes middle management competencies listed in interactive learning, narrative and summary formats.

Northern Territory Government of Australia
http://www.nt.gov.au/ocpe/documents/publications/hr-info-series/infoseries13.htm Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment. Updated Executive Officer Competencies.

Competing Values Framework
This framework is used in GOER's "Challenges in Supervision and Management" training courses.
Http://www.goer.state.ny.us/Train/currprogsvc/infochallandpsfstrnrs.html Also see *Becoming a Master Manager: a Competency Framework*.

Workforce: HR Trends & Tools for Business Results, an online publication.
Http://www.workforce.com/archive/article/23/11/74.php
31 Core Competencies Explained: Major competencies for which employers look, along with some of the behaviors associated with each.
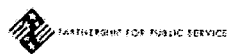
APPENDIX A

Launching the Hiring Process

Launching the Hiring Process: The Strategic Con~~~~anag

| This information can be obtained prior to the discussion by checking out the Department website and strategic plan |

| This information should always be a part of the discussion with the hiring manager. |

MISSION
- *Describe your organization's mission and culture.*
- *What are the critical challenges that you face in the short-term and long-term?*

POSITION/ROLE
- *What is the position?*
- *What are the major responsibilities/duties/tasks this person will perform?*
- *Approximately what portion of the person's time would be spent on each of these*
- *How does this position contribute to the mission of the organization?*

| Pull information from file and confirm with Department. Always ask how position contributes to mission. Use data from *ONet, Mosaic to speed this process |

COMPETENCIES/EXPERIENCE
- *What skills/competencies are needed to be successful on the job?*
- *How would you rank these skills in terms of critical importance for success in this*
- *What does a candidate need to know to be successful in this position?*
  - *What level of knowledge is required? (Rank each area basic, intermediate, expert.)*
  - *What might you ask a candidate to gauge their knowledge in these key areas?*
    (Optional if you need to create new screening questions. May entail a separate discussion.)
- *What kind of professional experience is required/preferred for the position?*
- *What degrees/certifications/clearances are required/preferred?*
- *Who are the subject matter experts in your organization or others who might be helpful in the resume screening and interviewing process?*

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS
- *What personal qualities would you like to see in an applicant?*
  - *Of the qualifications elicited above, which are essential and which are desirable?*

OTHER REQUIREMENTS
- *Are there specific requirements that candidates should know to evaluate this job, including: Travel requirements, overtime, seasonal peaks, etc.?*

- *Why would this person want to work here? (Describe the top five reasons why a candidate would find your organization -- and this position -- of interest, including mission, great team or experts, nature of the challenge, technologies or processes, etc.)*
- *What do people outside your organization know about you?*
  - *How much do we need to educate candidates about your work?*
  - *What preconceptions do we need to overcome?*
- *What is the professional development potential for this position? (Describe the career progression to which this position might lead.)*

| Information in these sections are KEY to recruiting to candidates. |

- *Where might we find the best candidates?*
- *For what other organizations might potential candidates currently work*
  - *Where have you found great candidates in the past?*
  - *Who are your major contractors that have talent you desire?*
- *To what associations might they belong?*

- *What flexibilities should be used in this process?*
  - *Recruitment bonus*
  - *Relocation*
  - *Student loan repayment*
  - *Other*
- *Are there special recruiting programs that might be used?*
  - *Federal Career Intern Program*   – *Veterans Appointing Authorities*
  - *Presidential Management Fellows Program*   – *Other*
- *Are there special considerations or processes that we need to consider in this process?*
  - *Budget concerns*
  - *Special approvals*
  - *Other*

PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

Appendix B

OPM Sample Recruitment Contract

OPM's Sample Recruitment Contract (Internal)

Position title, series, grade(s): -------------------

Organization: --SF#- ---------------------------------------

Action Item	Timeline	Target Date	Actual Date
Complete recruitment package, i.e., SF-52 and classified P.D., received in HR	15 workdays		
Staffing timeline discussed with manager & approved. Should occur within 1 work-day of receipt of complete package.			
Draft announcement issued to manager for review and approval			
Approval received from manager to post vacancy announcement on USAJOBS.			
Announcement opens.	10 workdays		
Announcement closes.			
Applications reviewed by HR for minimum qualifications determination.	19 workdays		
Qualified applications rated and ranked by (circle one): HR Specialist, subject-matter expert, or panel.			
Certificate issued to manager.			
Interviews conducted by manager.			
Certificate with selections received in HR.	25 workdays		
Job offer(s) made by HR and entrance on duty date determined. All other applicants are notified.	1 workday		

NOTE: 45-day government-wide model starts when vacancy announcement closes and ends with job offer.

HR Specialist's Signature --- Date--

Manager's Signature ---Date--

(Revised 6/21/05)

APPENDIX C

Recommendations from County of Los Angeles "Streamlining the Centralized Examination Process: Building a Leaner System," January, 2009

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, the research team made the following recommendations and feasibility initiatives to streamline examination processes:

1. Online application vetting

One of the most time consuming examination analyst tasks is the review of applications to ensure that minimum requirements are met. This task includes scouring through the materials and reviewing employment history dates to ensure that minimum requirements are met. It is a manually intensive process. Online application review would allow the system to "qualify" candidates based on targeted minimum qualification questions. Candidates would be informed that responses would be verified to reduce embellishment. This is one of the planned features of the Talent Management component of the e-HR System.

2. Use of behavioral consistency approach to minimum qualifications and training and experience – Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs)

A more valid, approach to assess candidates' KSAs related to specific jobs is to ask targeted questions in the application process regarding candidates' experience doing specific tasks related to the job. This approach is currently being used by the Federal OPM in its effort to streamline the examination process. These questions can be scored in Talent Management of the e-HR System. The commonly used rating from record method may continue to be utilized in some situations where it is practical and expedient.

3. Review of peripheral materials (e.g., transcripts, certificates, etc.) later in the process

A great deal of analyst time is spent retrieving transcripts, certificates, and other application information from candidates immediately after the filing ends. In addition, candidates are rejected for not having these materials. These rejects typically result in telephone calls from the candidates and potential appeals. Most candidates possess these documents but in their desire to file quickly do not submit with the application. Waiting until a further step in the process (e.g., prior to placement on the eligible list) would minimize trying to track down the paper. Because many applicants are not hired it reduces a step in the process to only those who are successful in the other phases. This change will further minimize labor time for the examining staff and reduce processing cost.

4. Structured phone screens and/or email to further explore candidate qualifications

For some smaller examinations or highly specialized/technical examinations, an assessment of a candidate's KSAs could be obtained through a telephone screen and/or email communication using a structured questionnaire. This method would allow candidates to describe their specific experience

related to a job without having to complete a written supplemental application. This technique is widely used in the private sector, the County's executive recruitment, and in some County recruitments.

5. Structured application review into one of five to six bands (similar to federal government)

Application reviews can be used to directly place qualified applicant information on the certification list or as a screen (qualifier). Instead of assigning a score and then producing a band, candidates could be immediately placed into a band based on best qualified, very qualified, somewhat qualified, minimally qualified designation. The assignment would be based on pre-established, job-related criteria. This method is best used for specialized, low volume examinations or when there are an insufficient number of candidates versus the number of vacancies. Alternate banding has been used in the County particularly for nursing examinations. This methodology is commonly used by the federal government as its primary method of screening candidates.

6. Computerized testing and self scheduling for large testing examinations

A time consuming activity is the scheduling (and rescheduling) of written and performance examinations. Candidates are provided a specific time to take the examinations and are required to show up on their assigned schedule. In some cases candidates need to call and reschedule their appointment or fail to show up. A better solution is to allow candidates to schedule themselves at a time that is convenient to them. A proctored computerized assessment can be delivered at any time and many different types of assessments can be delivered to different candidates simultaneously. The self scheduling tool could also be used for large interview administrations. DHR has estimated the cost for developing the infrastructure, securing the software, and updating the hardware to be $900,000.

7. Strategic use of open continuous examinations

Most examinations are now administered in an open continuous flow. The process creates a steady stream of candidates that frequently exceeds the number of vacancies and capacity of the facilities to test candidates. A better solution is to have most examinations administered in a standard or periodic basis to better control applicant flow. Better forecasting of vacancies, candidate flow, and success rates would help with examination planning. DHR administers many open-continuous examinations to enable qualified applicants to apply at anytime and in response to the steady vacancy rates for many commonly used classes, such as those in the clerical and IT series.

8. Expedited bulletin reviews by Human Resources Departmental Support (HRDS)

Bulletin review is a multi-step process designed to minimize error and reduce inconsistencies and risk. Many departments lack staff knowledge to effectively create bulletins. Consequently there is continued circulation of a bulletin between HRDS and departments that increases the time to get a bulletin published. Direct an improved instant communication by telephone or in person with departmental staff should reduce review time.

9. Use of committee based job analysis (job review) for classifications with low risk or small number of incumbents

Not all classifications require a WRIPAC job analysis. Professional guidance and the courts allow for several approaches to job analysis. These include small group job analyses studies that can document the tasks and the KSAs necessary to perform the job. DHR allows the use of a full range of job analysis methods including a simple one such as job review for some examinations, particularly the less litigious in nature.

10. Development of Countywide competency model for selection and performance appraisal

A competency model serves several purposes including selection, training and performance evaluation. Currently the classification specifications exclude detail about the competencies required to perform a job. Consistent use of a competency model would aid in the selection of generic testing tools and construction of Appraisals of Promotability.

11. Reliance on email versus mail for candidate contact

Email offers an immediate source of contact with the candidate. Email blasts can be sent to keep candidates informed of the status in the examination and reduce the number of phone calls. Emails can also be used for examination notice to candidates. The County will still need to maintain an alternate means of communication for those candidates who do not possess email.

12. Use of telephone panel interviews or video conferencing

Many examinations use face-to-face interviews conducted by interview panels. The logistics required to coordinate interviews is labor intensive. Many Fortune 500 companies use telephone interviews. These interviews would be structured and evaluated as before. They can be used as an alternative method for selected examinations. Interviewers would be able to conduct interviews from their offices. Interviews could then be scheduled on a flow basis rather than batch processing.

13. Use of off-the-shelf general abilities assessments with customer service supplements as needed

One of the more time consuming activities is test construction. Many of the County's entry level jobs require basic cognitive skills and fundamental customer service. Many vendors provide tests with validation evidence that can be used by the County. These examinations are typically available for computerized proctored delivery. The vendor would be responsible for collecting the validity evidence and defending the test. Job specific exams, primarily used for promotional classifications, will still require custom development.

14. Generic testing for multiple classifications (i.e., candidate takes battery of tests that are combined to compute scores for specific jobs)

Many candidates apply for several entry-level classifications. This results in duplication of scheduling and application review. Instead, candidates should be afforded to take a single battery of tests that could be scored differently to match the requirements of a number of classifications. The County currently uses generic testing for some classifications. For example, the Administrative Intern examination is also used for Administrative Assistant classifications.

15. Targeted recruitments for specific jobs instead of generic examinations followed by canvassing and selective certifications

Some classifications have generic classification specifications that result in large candidate volumes. In order to fill vacancies the hiring authority is faced with canvassing a large volume candidate pool to identify appropriate candidates. This process requires a letter and return response from the candidate. A process may take weeks and may require several letters. Candidates can become inundated with letters. A better approach is to target recruitments for a specific skill set. This reduces the volume of potential candidates and focuses on those that possess the appropriate skills.

16. Unproctored typing assessments as first step in selection process to be followed by subsequent assessment.

For classifications that require typing, candidates must demonstrate a proficiency to surpass a certain threshold of typing speed. This demonstration is conducted in a proctored setting and requires the candidate to be scheduled. The failure rate for the typing examination is fairly high. A more expedient and cost effective approach is to require candidates to take the test either at home or an unproctored facility via the internet. Once the candidate achieves the threshold they are allowed to apply for the vacancy. A candidates typing speed will be verified later in the process thereby dramatically reducing the number of candidates tested. DHR has submitted an Information Technology Fund (ITF) grant application for an online typing assessment.

17. Candidate self service online to determine status in selection process to reduce calls

Currently candidates have no mechanism to inquire about their status in the examination process. Subsequently, many candidates call an analyst to inquire. Providing the candidates with a means to view their status via the internet or receive an email if a status changes would dramatically reduce the number of calls. Once the entire e-HR system is implemented, candidates will have the ability to check their application status.

18. Restructuring or Elimination of Appraisal of Promotability (AP) for Interdepartmental Promotion (IP) examinations due to limited variability in selection method

The AP provides little utility with respect to predicting subsequent performance. There is very little variability in AP scores with approximately 70 to 80 percent of the pool receiving scores of 95 or more. The AP data collection is very labor intensive, lengthy and costly. Options for the AP include: (1) Using performance evaluation system to collect and store AP evaluations as part of appraisal process; or (2) collecting AP data at the hiring stage much like a background or reference check. AP examinations are required by the Civil Service Rules for promotional examinations.

19. Use of alternate banding models for promotional examinations

There is no perfect prediction in selection and many factors contribute to one's success in a position. For some classifications it may be prudent to expand the size of the bands to provide more flexibility to the hiring managers who are most familiar with a candidate's past performance and ability to perform in a

specific assignment. Both the State of California and Federal OPM use three band models. The County has used an alternate banding system for nursing classes.

20. Combining hiring interviews and examination interviews where feasible

For small candidate examinations, it may be more efficient to allow hiring managers to participate in the examination interview. This practice provides the hiring manager with more immediate information about a candidate and may reduce the need to schedule for a subsequent interview, which in some cases may take several weeks or months.

21. Implementing a call center to handle candidate inquiries and reschedules

Candidates call for a number of reasons: (1) Find out why they were rejected; (2) call for a reschedule/ schedule; (3) check status; (4) ask about submitting further documentation; and (5) miscellaneous questions. A call center could serve as a triage for the most common calls. Analysts could then focus more on the examination-specific questions. A proposal for an Information Technology Fund (ITF) grant application is being finalized to fund a call center at DHR-Wilshire Employment Information Office.

22. Securing funding during the budget process for examination services rendered by DHR to client departments

Currently, DHR prepares cost estimates for every examination request made by County departments. The cost estimate approval process takes as long as two months to obtain approval from client department. In order to fast-track this process on a case-by-case basis, a line item appropriation can be made during the formal budget process.

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Appendix D

Participants in the Stakeholder Input Process

Stakeholder Interviews

Confidential stakeholder interviews were scheduled with Board deputies from each supervisor's office, and a cross section of department heads and/or staff representing large, medium and small departments within the County. Prior to the interview, a set of data-gathering questions was shared with interview subjects (see Appendix A), so that they would be able to anticipate areas of inquiry and prepare for the interviews. All interviews were conducted by Sandra Comrie and Cheryl Mahaffey.

Stakeholders interviewed included:

Board Deputies

　　Louisa Ollague, SD1

　　Vincent Harris, SD2

　　Alisa Katz, SD3

　　Rick Velasquez, SD4

　　Lori Glasgow, SD5

CEOs

　　Bill Fujioka, CEO

　　Sharon Harper, Chief Deputy, CEO

　　Jim Adams, CEO Employee Relations

Departments

　　Phillip Browning, Director, Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)

　　Greg Polk, Administrative Deputy, Department of Health Services, (DHS)

　　Koke Resler, Administrative Deputy, Auditor-Controller (A-C)

　　Craig Norris, TTC

　　Brad Fleischer, Department of Beaches and Harbors (DBH)

　　James Jones, Chief Deputy Director, Internal Services Department (ISD)

　　Gail Farber, Director Department of Public Works (DPW)

In some cases, department heads included several staff members in the discussion.

The interviews were semi-structured and included an open and free-flowing discussion of issues. At the conclusion of a discussion topic, or at the conclusion of the interview, subjects were asked to quantify their judgments by rating their observations on key study elements. All participants were assured that their comments would be taken in confidence.

Department HR Managers Focus Panel

Department HR Managers were asked to participate in a focus panel that explored participants' perspectives on the core HR processes in terms of how effectively the needs of County departments were met. They were also invited to provide suggestions for policy and process changes that would result in better service to departments. Prior to the panel discussion, members completed an online survey. The survey results were distributed to members prior to the meeting. Members of the HR Managers Focus Panel included:

Susan Moser, DMH	Linda Hopkins, DHR
Mark Colton, ISD	Ann Marinovich, DHS
Corrine Cortinas, PD	Barbara Knighton, DPW

Department Survey

Departments that were not included in the Stakeholder or Focus Group meetings were asked to complete an online survey to obtain feedback on how well their department needs were being met. The invitation to complete the survey was sent on behalf of Ellen Sandt, DCEO, Operations Cluster. Department heads were asked to respond to the survey directly and/or ask executive managers within the department to respond. The survey was sent to the following departments:

Affirmative Action Compliance Office	Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Agricultural Commissioner/Weights & Measures	Forester & Fire Warden
Alternate Public Defender	Human Relations
Animal Care & Control	Human Resources
Arts Commission	Mental Health
Assessor	Military & Veterans Affairs
Chief Information Officer	Museum of Art
Chief Medical Examiner	Natural History Museum
Child Support Services	Office of Ombudsman
Children & Family Services	Parks and Recreation
Community & Senior Services	Probation
Community Development Commission	Public Defender
Consumer Affairs	Public Health
Coroner	Public Library
County Counsel	Regional Planning
District Attorney	Registrar-Recorder
	Sheriff

Applicants

A number of interviews were held with job applicants to obtain feedback concerning the applicant experience. This included an applicant who was not selected, as well as individuals who are currently employed in the County.

DHR SWOT Analysis

DHR recently completed a SWOT (strength/weakness/opportunity/threat[58]) survey. This information was used to structure a snapshot as to the department's analysis of their own performance. (It would be desirable to have Analyst-level positions and above complete a survey that parallels the department survey to establish future benchmarks for improvement).

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[58] This survey was prepared by the Organizational and Employee Development Division

Appendix E

Improvements Accomplished by DHR since April 2009

Prepared by Lisa Garrett

<u>Legal Exposure and Risk Reduction Training</u>: DHR served as lead department in developing risk management training for managers and supervisors. The program has been piloted and steps are being taken to roll out training to approximately 20,000 managers and supervisors.

<u>Employee Performance System</u>: Implemented the electronic MAPP evaluation process using the Employee Performance System (EPS). DHR created training modules and trained all MAPP managers to use the system. As a result, the MAPP evaluation process was significantly streamlined by the electronic system and the need for large volumes of paper transmissions was eliminated.

<u>Benefits Portal</u>: The new employee benefits portal was implemented for annual enrollment in October of 2009 allowing employees to calculate costs of the benefit selections and access their benefits information 24/7.

<u>E HR</u>: Implemented the first phases of the talent management portion of e HR, replacing the job bulletin system. In addition, Certification Desk Management Software has been implemented, which will allow the sharing of candidate lists between departments. Further, job specific questionnaires were created and piloted to reduce HR exam analyst time for processing applications and the time to hire. With regard to the implementation of the new payroll portion of e HR, DHR worked to ensure that the interfaces with the benefits vendors were developed and tested.

<u>Outside Employment</u>: Conducted a Countywide review of Outside Employment activities of full-time employees engaged as in-home supportive service (IHSS) providers. I worked with the Auditor-Controller and DPPSS to obtain a data match between CWTAPPS and CMIPS, the State IHSS payroll system, to ascertain the number of County employees serving as IHSS workers. DHR provided general guidelines to departments for assessing violations of the outside employment provisions and corrective action measures. Additionally, DHR reviewed several departmental forms for reporting outside employment, developed a sample template and provided the same along with suggestions for improving the outside employment process to the Executive Office of the Board.

<u>Live Scan</u>: Moved forward on the Live Scan project and obtained Board approval to expand live scan to require federal background checks for unclassified employees as defined in Measure A. In addition, continued work on the live scan feasibility study with input from County departments and Board deputies, which is near completion.

<u>Civil Service Advocacy</u>: Conducted Countywide review of advocacy staffing and Civil Service outcomes of cases by department. Proposed, for CEO consideration, a shared services model for the provision of advocacy services for all departments.

<u>Countywide Succession Planning</u>: In accordance with the County Strategic Plan, have taken steps to implement a succession planning program. Best Practices in other jurisdictions have been identified. Working with each department to identify potential vacancies and to tailor succession plans to fill the higher-level positions. The plan will include training for first-line supervisors and the distribution of succession planning tools to each department.

<u>HR Policies</u>: Implemented the Countywide Dress Code Policy, which I personally requested of DHR almost three years ago. The policy was vetted with the unions and sent to department heads in December 2009. Finalizing policy on criteria for and use of Student Workers for distribution.

<u>Return-to-Work</u>: Developed general guidelines for department heads advising of necessary requirements including medical certification, discussion with employees on leave referred to as the interactive process, and other key areas. Also, addressed each manager group in the County concerning return-to-work practices and self assessments. DHR, along with CEO-Risk Management, will conduct audits of 10% of the departments' Return-to Work files based on the CEO self assessment requirements. Currently requesting Absence Management policies of other jurisdictions as DHR will lead the effort in establishing a Countywide policy on Absence Management with the various branches of the CEO, OAAC and County Counsel. In addition, in September 2009, DHR participated on the team led by the CEO to review a sampling of Probation return to work files.

<u>Reviews of and Assistance with Department Personnel Operations</u>: Provided assistance and oversight to personnel operations in Regional Planning, Probation Department and DCFS.

<u>Executive Recruitment</u>: Conducted the department head recruitment for the Chief Probation Officer and with assistance from executive search firms, the recruitments for Regional Planning and County Counsel. Additionally, conducted several non-department head recruitments for unclassified positions and provided consultation to departments on recruitment processes. Implemented pre-employment orientations for the two newest department heads that included a binder with resource materials regarding employee benefits, the County and their respective departments.

<u>Performance Metrics</u>: Working to establish a department-wide metrics program, called PeopleStats, that will effectively expand the department's ability to effectively collect, organize, monitor and improve performance and service delivery. A PIF grant request has been submitted to the Productivity Commission and is currently under review to assist with implementation of the digital dashboard.

<u>Fringe Benefit Bargaining</u>: DHR played a key role in participating and providing technical support to fringe benefit bargaining.

<u>Strategic Plan</u>: With department staff, surveys of County stakeholders and input of the CEO consultants, developed a departmental strategic plan to set priorities and direction for the department for the next three years. The Strategic Plan is the first major effort to move the organization from a siloed set of activities to an integrated set of services addressing the complex needs of our customers. The Plan will be rolled out to staff in February, and cross-divisional working groups will be created to advance the implementation of the Plan.

<u>CEO Efficiency Initiatives</u>: Implemented CEO Efficiency Team Corrective Actions to streamline the exam process. Phase 1 of the Target Change Process consisted of 48 recommendations from the CEO Efficiency Team and the DHR Departmental Support and Impact Divisions. Currently, 83% of the recommendations have been implemented. Revised the Master Calendar and Master Calendar Policy and in the process of finalizing both for distribution. In addition to the above, DHR drafted new exam request forms and is working to automate and streamline the exam request process.

<u>Exam Analyst Training</u>: Finalizing a certification training course for Exam Analysts to increase the skill level within the county's personnel operations. Reviewing training modules with line departments. Training to be rolled out in the next few months.

<u>DHR Website</u>: Taking steps to implement a more user friendly website for DHR including a "splash page." Working with CEO budget and ISD to identify funds to change platform necessary to overhaul the site. Notwithstanding the above, updated the IT career information page.

<u>Broad-Based Testing and Competency Modeling</u>: Piloting broad based testing to streamline the exam and classification processes and allow one exam for similar job families. Additionally, piloting a competency model, with CEO-Class Compensation, and taking steps to begin using competencies, rather than minimum requirements, to assess viable candidates for entry-level analyst positions.

Department of Human Resources

(Implementation of Consultants Recommendations)

January 2010

BACKGROUND

As part of the County's strategic planning effort, the CEO commissioned consultants Mahaffey and Comrie to review core HR systems. The study includes recommendations in key areas to improve HR services and to develop key strategic direction for the human resources function. Department of Human Resources (DHR) has been working collaboratively with the consultants and DHR has included many initiatives into its strategic plan. Listed below is DHR's approach to implement the recommendations. It should be noted that the recommendations are specific to DHR's scope of responsibilities.

We have separated the recommendations into short-term (within 6 months), mid-range (6 months – 2 years) and long-term initiatives (2 or more years) and further categorized them into six themes: Strategic Planning, Customer Service, Training, Recruitment and Selection, Civil Service Rules/Policies, and Workforce Planning.

Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
Phase I – Short-Term (within 6 months)		
Strategic Partnering		
1. Establish an executive advisory committee to examine HR architecture, DHR structure, determine central vs. de-centralized program issues, and explore budget requirements to fund initiatives. Develop an overall set of change objectives and a strategy for effective change management to accomplish them. Establish a project plan, priorities and deadlines for implementing recommendations presented; formulate performance indicators to ensure appropriate progress is made toward goals established.	14, 26, 37 and 132	Full-scale implementation of this recommendation must occur over an extended period to internalize this operating philosophy and framework.
2. Follow project planning principles, designate a project champion, identify pilot departments, and work with departments with "roll-out" experience to adopt best practices.	14, 138	
3. Develop performance metrics program i.e., (People-Stats) and performance metrics dashboard in conjunction with e-HR.	114- 115	
4. Increase focus on workforce planning and succession planning programs.	46-49	

Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
Customer Service		
1. Improve customer focus by obtaining feedback from primary customers and introducing customer survey process for various stakeholder groups.	38-39 and 114	
2. Implement account manager approach to better address line department needs.	118, 134	
3. Utilize the current communication forums (e.g., departmental human resources manager meetings, admin deputy meetings, etc.) to assume leadership role in providing HR service.	114	
4. Update and improve DHR website (e.g., a new DHR "splash" page.)	100	
Training		
1. Finalize development and implementation of Exam Analyst Training.	135	
2. Implement various training programs for DHR staff (including customer service) immediately and introduce rotational assignments on a pilot basis.	119	
Recruitment and Selection		
1. Implement recruitment pre-planning process to become more strategic and increase communication about exam completion dates.	104	
2. Identify best practices related to recruitment and selection from Departments.	87	
3. Complete review of available competency models and move forward with implementation.	105	
4. Collaborate with Class/Comp to pilot competency model for contract analyst class and create Associate Administrative Analyst class to be used to fill various entry level analyst positions (e.g., HR, Contracts, CEO, etc.)	40	
5. Complete four recruitment and selection streamlining initiatives and implement CEO Efficiency Team recommendations. ▪ New transcript/document review process later in the application flow. ▪ Creation of a job specific questionnaire for e-HR Talent Management. ▪ Online list management system. ▪ Commentless Appraisal of Promotability.	102-104, 121	
Civil Service Rules/Policies		
1. Propose to E&E Commission rule changes to streamline the hiring process including the	90-91	

Department of Human Resources
(Implementation of Consultants Recommendations)
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2. Follow project planning principles, designate a project champion, identify pilot departments, and work with departments with "roll-out" experience to adopt best practices.	14, 138	
3. Develop performance metrics program i.e., (People-Stats) and performance metrics dashboard in conjunction with e-HR.	114- 115	
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Action Item

		Report Page #	**Comments**

Customer Service

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2. Implement account manager approach to better address line department needs. — 118, 134

3. Utilize the current communication forums (e.g., departmental human resources manager meetings, admin deputy meetings, etc.) to assume leadership role in providing HR service. — 114

4. Update and improve DHR website (e.g., a new DHR "splash" page.) — 100

Training

1. Finalize development and implementation of Exam Analyst Training. — 135

2. Implement various training programs for DHR staff (including customer service) immediately and introduce rotational assignments on a pilot basis. — 119

Recruitment and Selection

1. Implement recruitment pre-planning process to become more strategic and increase communication about exam completion dates. — 104

2. Identify best practices related to recruitment and selection from Departments. — 87

3. Complete review of available competency models and move forward with implementation. — 105

4. Collaborate with Class/Comp to pilot competency model for contract analyst class and create Associate Administrative Analyst class to be used to fill various entry level analyst positions (e.g., HR, Contracts, CEO, etc.) — 40

5. Complete four recruitment and selection streamlining initiatives and implement CEO Efficiency Team recommendations. — 102-104, 121

   - New transcript/document review process later in the application flow.
   - Creation of a job specific questionnaire for e-HR Talent Management.
   - Online list management system.
   - Commentless Appraisal of Promotability.

Civil Service Rules/Policies

1. Propose to E&E Commission rule changes to streamline the hiring process including the — 90-91

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Action Item	Report Page #	Comments

appraisal of promotability as an optional assessment, technology enhancements through e-HR and the internet, and other streamlining initiatives.

2. Establish policy steering committee to re-examine the current HR policy framework; review any pending policy development requests; identify need for policy revisions and development of new policies; and establish a schedule and timeline to revise/develop policy drafts for review. | 84, 147

Workforce Planning

1. Conduct turnover analyses, streamline the workforce planning process, provide consultation to departments, and identify significant County issues including pending retirement. | 138

2. Increase the use of student interns through the existing C-BEEP program for special projects. | 88, 133

Phase II – Mid-range (6 months – 2 years)
Strategic Partnering

1. Establish longer-term project plans and priorities and the development of performance metrics for human resource structures, strategies, and policy formation with the executive advisory committee. | 36-37

2. Implement further enhancements to streamline the recruitment and selection processes. | 102

3. Propose financial analyst position as part of 2011-2012 budget to compute return on investment (ROI) data for human resource programs. | 118, 137

Customer Service

1. Improve website and County stakeholder communication (e.g., hiring managers, applicants, department heads, etc.) through the e-HR Talent Management system. | 100

2. Complete internet job website enhancement (FAQs, online videos, and other resources) and develop a countywide brand to better market. | 100, 122

3. Improve roll-outs of major programs to include adequate staffing and consider other line department needs. | 138

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February 9, 2010

Action Item	Report Page #	Comments

Training

1. Implement training modules on internal consulting and change management. | 119, 138

2. Expand training to include HR knowledge domains, interpersonal skills, project management, and business analytics. | 120

Recruitment and Selection

1. Begin implementation of broad-based testing to efficiently screen candidates for a number of similar positions. | 133

2. Locally validate the competency-model and implement technology to offer it for county-wide use. | 139-140

3. Enhance the use of technology including greater reliance on online application submissions and exploration of a computerized testing center. | 102-103

4. Implement e-HR talent management system to enhance communication to candidates and hiring managers regarding examination status, frequently asked questions, standard boiler-plate language, and metrics on time-to-fill. | 116

5. Expand competency models for entry level classes. | 139-140

6. Use e-HR Talent Management system to search for qualified candidates (applicant profile) quickly and forecast number of applicants required. |

7. Develop and validate a county-wide ability test and lease soft-skill measures. | 94

8. DHR to review results of competency pilot project and expand program into other analyst classes. | 146

Workforce Planning

Develop tools to capture business goals and challenges and help departments align their human resources needs with their strategies. | 138

Phase III – Long-Term (more than 2 years)

Training

1. Implement an internal cross-training program to further expand staff knowledge. | 119

2. Complete roll-out of training for internal consulting, change management, and business analytics. | 119-120

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Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
Recruitment and Selection		
1. Complete final phases of e-HR Talent Management implementation.		
2. Expand broad-based testing to include identifying appropriate instruments, locally validate and implement technology to deliver the competency-model assessments where appropriate.	93-94	
Civil Service Rule/Policies		
Implement Civil Service Rule changes including negotiations with unions, public hearings, etc.	104	
Workforce Planning		
Introduce additional succession planning tools for departments to effect knowledge transfer, provide additional development activities, and implement career rotation programs to develop future leaders.	138	
Priority Category: Immediate (6 to 9 months)		
1. Develop and implement initiatives to infuse new talent into the County workforce, taking advantage of the current interest in public service. Initiatives can be modeled on best practices already in place in certain County departments. [other specific actions related to recruitment and selection]	64, 86	Research opportunities to obtain unpaid and partially paid interns from local universities to support a variety of development efforts related to report recommendations.
2. Appoint a classification advisory committee and, in collaboration with the committee, formulate a Classification Philosophy which expresses, at a policy level, the County's objectives regarding classification plan design. The committee should also provide advice on initiatives that can be taken to improve customer service and communication to departments.	60 Also, Section 3	

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Proposed Implementation Action Priorities
(Primarily focused on Classification and Compensation)

	Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
3.	In collaboration with the classification advisory committee, develop a comprehensive plan to streamline the County's classification plan, including establishing priorities for review of job families/class structures which address both pressing central agency and department needs.	61	This sets the framework for a phased, 5 to 7 year initiative to streamline the classification plan. Priority setting processes will occur prior to the beginning of each fiscal year to set the year's work plan and required resources.
4.	Develop and implement an initial work management tracking and reporting process.	Sections 3, 4 and 5	Data collected will initially be used to keep departments informed on progress in responding to requests. Once sufficient data is collected, it will be used to develop performance metrics for organizational and individual performance.
5.	Begin development of an intensive classification training program to meet critical training and development needs for Class/Comp staff as well as line department staff performing similar functions. Initial focus should be on core technical concepts and methods.	Sections 3, 4 and 5	Development work could be supported, in part, by interns and line department staff.
6.	Implement evaluation of the customer service effectiveness of all Class/Comp staff by using the performance standard for *Customer Service* included in the MAPP Performance Evaluation document. Either use the customer survey process included in the behavioral description or obtain feedback on performance from the managers'/staff members' primary customers.	90	

Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
7. Begin analysis to develop Civil Service Rule changes that may be required to: • Implement broad classifications together with selective certification, flex classes and/or any other approaches which are developed consistent with the new *Classification Philosophy*. • Support reclassification of positions to higher and lower classes following major classification studies. • Support equitable actions regarding employee status in positions affected by department reorganizations and restructures.	61	
8. Formulate a strategy for comprehensive implementation of the federal Factor Evaluation System (FES) for conducting job analyses for classification and compensation purposes; ensure integration with use of Competency-Model processes.	65	Use of the FES systems is currently being tested.
9. Design efficient procedures and forms for conducting large-scale studies required to streamline the classification plan; include elements required for Competency-Model processes.	70	This includes developing a streamlined position description questionnaire that can be distributed electronically.
10. Initiate efforts to streamline day-to-day work processes in Class/Comp in order to maximize resources assigned to classification plan improvements. Processes to be addressed include: the budget position allocation process and special salary actions. As an initial step, evaluate addition of classes to the budget allocation class list delegated to departments.	78	Both of these items are essential to free up staff time to work on classification studies required for Class Plan streamlining efforts. Assistance in conducting the business process analysis would facilitate quick completion.
11. Redesign the County's class specification format, providing for the inclusion of clear classification standards and essential competencies required for proficient job performance; establish methods to improve the relevance and appropriateness of statements of minimum qualifications.	69	
12. Restructure the Class/Comp division based on report recommendations. Consider	77, 81 -	The division structure and

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Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
additional resources to support change efforts.	83	staffing assignments need to be realigned to support implementation of report recommendations.
13. Complete the Competency Model Pilot project. Based on results, formulate plans to expand use of general competency testing across class series and plans to utilize competency model methodologies in classification plan streamlining initiatives.	40	Use of competency analyses and FES system features will be used to identify job families and class series where class consolidations are feasible. Streamlining the class plan will require a phased, multi-year effort.

Priority Category: Short-term (9 to 18 months)

1. Complete efforts to streamline day-to-day work processes in Class/Comp including: the budget position allocation process and special salary actions. — **78 - 81**

   - Draft policy provisions and implement delegation of approval of special pay requests to departments, incorporating audit processes to ensure policy compliance.

   - Using results of the business process reengineering study of the budget position allocation process, revise Budget Allocation Studies policy, Policy 345, reflecting the new streamlined process and develop an internal division procedure for staff use.

2. Implement first modules of an intensive classification training program to meet critical training and development needs for Class/Comp staff as well as line department staff performing similar functions. Continue development of modules on advanced technical concepts and methods, including job and organization design, and critical soft skills, such as: — **61 - 64**

   - Active listening and communication
   - Internal consulting
   - Change management
   - Project management

	Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
3.	With advice and input from the classification advisory committee, evaluate priorities, establish and implement a year-two work plan for classification studies to be conducted as part of the classification plan streamlining initiative.		Competency model and FES methodologies should be fully incorporated in this process. Incorporate learning from year one studies.

Priority Category: Medium Term (18 months to 2 ½ years)

	Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
1.	Implement classification training program modules on advanced technical concepts and methods and critical soft skills, including: • Active listening and communication • Internal consulting • Change management • Project management Incorporate staff cross-training and rotational assignments into the formal staff training program.	61 - 64	
2.	With advice and input from the classification advisory committee, evaluate priorities, establish and implement a year-three work plan for classification studies to be conducted as part of the classification plan streamlining initiative.		Continuing action on a phased, 5 to 7 year initiative to streamline the classification plan.
3.	Develop and implement a formal *certified classification analyst* program. Establish central and line department staff certification goals.	64	
4.	Clarify the responsibilities of line departments, CEO budget analysts and Class/Comp analysts for assisting departments in conducting organization/reorganization studies; develop appropriate policies, procedures and standards for efficiently carrying out studies.	63 - 64	
5.	Utilizing data collected in the work management tracking and reporting process, develop and implement: • Division performance metrics for all key functions • Performance standards for all key tasks performed by classification analysts for use in conducting performance evaluations	71	
6.	Re-examine Policy 300, *Shared Classification Program*, and determine whether greater	66 - 69	

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Action Item	Report Page #	Comments
delegation of classification responsibilities is feasible, including necessary audit processes.		
7. Develop a new set of classification policies that reflect processes and methodologies installed to support implementation of recommendations in the HR Assessment report.	66 - 69	
8. Develop a Class/Comp division procedures manual.	66 - 69	
9. Define and document for consistent use the County's various labor markets for job groupings and the sources of compensation data that will be used to evaluate competitiveness of pay.	71 - 74	
Priority Category: Longer Term (2 ½ years to 5 years)		
1. With advice and input from the classification advisory committee, evaluate priorities, establish and implement annual work plans for classification studies to be conducted as part of the classification plan streamlining initiative.		Continuing action on a phased, 5 to 7 year initiative to streamline the classification plan.
2. Develop and implement a policy for proactive, on-going maintenance of the County's classification plan.	68 - 69	
3. Develop and implement a transition plan for the re-integration of Class/Comp into DHR.	83	Re-integration of Class/Comp into DHR should be feasible during the time period of this priority category.