



Succession Planning for Shared Governance Council Members

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Shared governance councils are often challenged with recruiting new members to replace council members who are due to rotate off the council. As a result, councils may find it difficult to adhere to established term limits or maintain appropriate representation. Implementing proactive succession planning activities can help councils at both the unit and organization level identify and prepare staff for future council roles.

As you think about what succession planning may look like in your organization, here are some tips to help you get started.

- Start with the hiring process. Peer interviews are a great place to begin talking about what shared governance looks like in your organization and establishing expectations for involvement. Once a new team member is hired, consider embedding key shared governance council meetings into the new employee's orientation schedule. This allows protected time during orientation to see the council(s) in action and better understand the work of the council(s).
- Provide opportunities for employees to "shadow" a council member to learn more about their role.
- Establish strong bi-directional council communication structures to engage all staff in decision making and help others see how the council positively impacts the unit and the unit's outcomes.
- Incorporate succession planning into your shared governance strategic planning process. Engage council members in developing succession plans for their role. Identify shared governance competencies and determine potential successors based on those key competencies. Consider who may be ready now versus who may be ready in the future. Reach out to potential successors to determine their interests, aspirations, and development opportunities.
- Engage high performing staff in council projects, sub teams, or champion roles they are passionate about. This provides an opportunity to get more involved in shared governance and help prepare them for a future role on the council.
- Host an annual shared governance fair to celebrate council accomplishments and provide information about the councils. This provides an opportunity to get others interested and excited about shared governance. Make it fun by incorporating food, games, and prizes.
- Consider surveying staff to gather interest in upcoming shared governance roles. Inquire about existing knowledge, areas of interest and perceived barriers. Develop action plans to enhance knowledge and address perceived barriers.
- Ensure your council meeting times are conducive to attendance and that council members have dedicated, protected time to attend council meetings. If council members are struggling to juggle council attendance and patient care responsibilities, it will likely discourage others from participating.

These are just a few strategies for shared governance succession planning. CHCM offers a variety of workshops and consulting services to create, strengthen, or deepen your shared governance culture. Contact Amber (aorton@chcm.com), Marky (mmedeiros@chcm.org), or Gen (gguanci@chcm.org) for more information.

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