



Planning for succession: A Leadership Legacy

Problem

A large federal agency became aware of the fact that they had a “bi-modal” distribution of employees: people had worked at the agency either 30 plus years or less than 5 years. Further, they would be facing massive retirements in the near future with virtually no one ready to step into the managerial and leadership roles necessary to run the agency.

Solution

Gilburg Leadership Institute (GLI) recommended they create a blue-ribbon task force, commissioned by the director, to study the needs of the agency and recommend a process for leaders to develop leaders. The task force was made up of senior executives who wanted to leave a legacy. They took a full year to research and develop the program with our consulting guidance. GLI made a strong recommendation that this initiative not be relegated to the HR division, as its success depended on the Leadership of the Agency investing their full attention to this potentially dire crisis.

Result

The recommendation, which was fully endorsed by the director and vetted throughout the agency, called for the development of three tiers of leaders that they called People Leaders, Organizational Leaders and Strategic Leaders. In the fall of 2005 they began their first program for developing People Leaders with a selection process that attracted the best young talent in the agency. They are on track to support the program despite crippling budget cuts. The agency leadership recognized that this project must take precedence and move up the priority scale now before it is too late. The consequences of waiting—even for good reasons—would present a crisis that would call for drastic, and possibly more expensive measures to resolve. Ultimately, the leadership of the agency realized that this was their charge. If they did not act, the consequences of the crisis would fall squarely on their shoulders.

For more information contact Gilburg Leadership Institute, Inc. at 413-534-6934, or visit our website: www.gilburgleadership.com.