



## MEMORANDUM

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**DATE** April 10, 2013

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**TO** Veterinary Medical Board

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**FROM** Sue Geranen Executive Officer  
DCA/Veterinary Medical Board

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**SUBJECT** **CPS Succession Planning**

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**Background:**

CPS submitted their draft succession planning and organizational assessment document for the Board's review. The full document encompassing succession and workforce planning may be included at the Board's July meeting.

**Action Requested:**

Update report - no action requested.

April 5, 2013

# Veterinary Medical Board

## Succession Planning and Organizational Assessment



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# I. Objectives of Succession Planning Phase

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## A. Statement of need

The Executive Officer of the Veterinary Medical Board (VMB) announced a 2013 retirement date. The Executive Officer has held that position for 15 years, gaining a wealth of knowledge and experience that will be difficult to replace. In addition, the Executive Officer wanted to determine if there were other critical functions or leadership positions with insufficient backup within the VMB. A 2009 report published by the California State Auditor found that “the majority of employees in leadership positions – and nearly half of the employees in rank and file positions – ..... were age 50 or older as of June 30, 2008.” In spite of that finding, the State Auditors found state departments did not have workforce or succession plans in place<sup>1</sup>. As a good business practice, the VMB Executive Officer cited the need for succession planning within the organization to:

- Identify methods to develop a future leadership pool of employees with the skills, attributes, and experience to fill leadership positions and ensure continuity of VMB’s leadership.
- Identify and document the Executive Officer’s and other key leaders’ knowledge and perspectives so it is available for staff development.

## B. Succession planning defined

Workforce planning relates to the broad concept of having the right people in the right place at the right time throughout the organization in order to facilitate success in the present and be prepared for future staffing needs. Succession planning is a subset of workforce planning, focused specifically on having staff with the right leadership or other mission critical skills prepared to apply those skills when needed. Both workforce and succession planning are proactive strategies for managing a workforce rather than reacting to a staff vacancy, the need for an enhanced skill or other changes.

## C. Succession planning in the public sector

In the private sector, high potential individuals may be identified and groomed for specific leadership positions. That strategy is unworkable in the public sector where merit system principles require open competition for promotions. However, public sector organizations have successfully used a leadership competency model for development of skills needed to excel in supervisory or management level jobs. A leadership competency model serves as a

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<sup>1</sup> *High-Risk Update – Human Resources Management*, California State Auditor, Report 2008-605, March 2009

communication tool so anyone aspiring to higher-level or mission critical positions will know what competencies are important to success within their organization and where they need to focus their own development to be prepared for the future. The model also serves to provide executive management with data on which to make plans and decisions relating to the development needs of their workforce. This model builds a “deep bench” which is an advantage to the organization and to the employees who benefit from on-going learning and development.

## II. Methodology Overview

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The basic steps in developing a competency model of succession planning are:

1. Assure leadership support
2. Create a succession planning team
3. Identify positions/classifications for which the succession plan will be developed
4. Gather basic demographic data for incumbents in selected positions/classifications
5. Update or create a competency model for selected positions/classifications
6. Assess current proficiency in competencies that will:
  - a. Enable employees to identify professional development gaps they might have which will aid them in career planning and individual development;
  - b. Enable the organization’s executive leadership to assess the available labor pool and to develop solutions for closing the readiness gaps with internal development and/or plan for future external recruitment.
7. Gather data from incumbents and their supervisors regarding past training, learning experiences, skills, knowledge, and other competencies that foster readiness for leadership and potential for knowledge capture
8. Analyze all results to identify competency and/or knowledge transfer gaps and priorities for implementing a succession plan
9. Develop an action plan and accountability measures for implementing selected gap-closing priorities

## III. Results and Findings

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Due to the small staff size of the VMB, some of the steps and roles described above were combined. The results and findings of the above methodology as well as how the steps were applied and customized for VMB are described in this report section.

## **A. Assure leadership support and create a succession planning team**

The Executive Officer (EO) and Assistant Executive Officer (AEO) served as both project leaders and as primary members of the succession planning team. The AEO filled the role of Project Manager to oversee the development of the succession plan. Both the EO and AEO demonstrated leadership support throughout the project and served as subject matter experts for identification of needed competencies and professional development priorities. The VMB's EO and AEO will be responsible for assuring initial implementation and continued monitoring and support of the succession plan in the future.

## **B. Identify mission critical functions and positions**

The VMB's mission is to protect consumers and animals through development and maintenance of professional standards; licensing of veterinarians, registered veterinary technicians, and premises; and diligent enforcement of the California Veterinary Medicine Practice Act. The VMB's mandated activities that support that mission are 1) Licensing 2) Enforcement and 3) Examinations.

The AEO identified positions critical for succession planning in the organization using the following rating scale:

- 5 – Mission Critical:** Mission critical knowledge or skills with potential for significant operational impacts. Knowledge undocumented. Requires two to four years of training and/or experience. No ready replacement.
- 4 – Critical:** Mission critical knowledge or skills same as above but with some documentation and/or cross training existing.
- 3 – Important:** Important, systematized knowledge and skills. Documentation exists and/or other personnel possess the knowledge/skills. Recruits generally available and can be trained in one to two years.
- 2 – Non-Mission Critical:** Procedural or non-mission critical knowledge and skills. Clear, up-to-date procedures exist. Training programs are current and effective and can be completed in less than one year.
- 1 – Common Knowledge:** Common knowledge and skills. External hires possessing the knowledge/skills are readily available and require little additional training

The AEO rated four positions as falling into the Mission Critical category: Executive Officer, Assistant Executive Officer, Enforcement Lead and Administration/Licensing Lead. All require two to four years of training to become fully competent. Decision-making is often situational (especially for the Executive Officer and Enforcement Lead), which is difficult to document. There is also a high degree of customer contact and visibility in these four positions. The Staff Services Analyst in Licensing, the Cashier in Licensing, and the three Enforcement Analysts were also rated important/critical but better back-up exists for those positions. Consequently, it was agreed the succession planning effort would focus on Executive Officer, Assistant Executive Officer, and the Enforcement and Licensing Leads.

### **C. Demographic data for selected positions**

Of the four positions identified as critical for succession planning, only one incumbent (the Executive Officer) is planning to retire in the near future. These leadership positions have been stable in recent years. Tenure in these critical positions is approximately 15 years for the EO, five years for the AEO, and three years for each of the leads. In addition, both the EO and the Enforcement Lead have years of prior tenure at the VMB in various other positions.

As is currently common in many organizations, over half of the workforce will be retirement eligible within five years (i.e., at least 50 years of age). Six (46%) of the current VMB employees are under age 45 and seven are currently age 45 or over. (Please note that retirement eligibility is based on age only in this study. There was no attempt to ascertain incumbents' length of CalPERS service or individual retirement plans.) This underscores the value of continued staff development and planning for future staffing needs.

### **D. Create competency model for VMB**

Competencies are the knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics that are associated with superior job performance. They are the attributes needed to be successful within an organization and a specific job. A competency model serves as both a communication tool so employees are aware of the competencies that are important to success within their organization and a tool for executive management to use to make plans and decisions relating to development needs of the workforce. Since VMB had not yet developed a competency model, this was the foundational step for their succession plan.

The State of California Leadership Competency Model provided the basis for VMB's competency development. Starting with the state's leadership competency dictionary, VMB's EO and AEO selected the most relevant competencies and customized the definitions and

behavioral indicators to best fit the organization. The customized VMB Competency Dictionary appears in Appendix A.

The EO and AEO then designated competencies from the VMB Competency Dictionary that were Core Competencies. Core Competencies are competencies that are critical for superior performance for all VMB employees. These competencies apply at every level of the organization and across all positions. The Core Competencies align with the VMB vision, mission, and strategic goals and communicate to all employees what is critical to the organization, its leadership, and its stakeholders. The EO and AEO first independently selected which competencies each thought were core and then met to reach consensus. The resulting Core Competencies designated for VMB are:

<b>Table 1</b> <b>VMB Core Competencies</b> <b>(See Appendix for Complete Definition)</b>	
<b>Analytical Thinking</b>	Approaching a problem by using a logical, systematic, sequential approach.
<b>Customer Focus</b>	Identifying and responding to current and future client needs; providing excellent service to internal and external clients.
<b>Ethics, Integrity &amp; Personal Credibility</b>	Degree of trustworthiness and ethical behavior of an individual with consideration for the knowledge one has of the impact and consequences when making a decision or taking action. Demonstrating concern that one be perceived as responsible, reliable, and trustworthy.
<b>Learning</b>	Desiring and making an effort to acquire new knowledge and skills for work. Concern for the acquisition of new job knowledge and maintenance of currency in the field.
<b>Thoroughness</b>	Ensuring that one's own and others' work and information are complete and accurate; carefully preparing for meetings and presentations; following up with others to ensure that agreements and commitments have been fulfilled.

In addition to the Core Competencies, the EO and AEO identified competencies that they deemed most critical for superior performance in a leadership position (Enforcement Lead and Administration Lead) and for the executive/management positions at VMB (EO and AEO). Those competencies designated as Leadership Competencies and those designated as Executive/Management Competencies are shown in the following tables. The competencies for

each category build on the former category, i.e., both the Core and Leadership competencies are critical for superior performance in the lead positions and all three categories of competencies are critical for superior performance for the EO/AEO positions.

<b>Table 2</b> <b>VMB Leadership Competencies</b> <b>(See Appendix for Complete Definition)</b>	
<b>Accountability for Results</b>	Focusing personal efforts on achieving results consistent with the organization's objectives.
<b>Conflict Management</b>	Preventing, managing, and/or resolving conflict.
<b>Global Perspective</b>	The ability to recognize and address issues that are outside local perspective. Issues are viewed without any pre-set biases or limitations. Ability to see the "big" picture.
<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	Extent to which an individual gets along and interacts positively with co-workers. Degree and style of understanding and relating to others.
<b>Managing Work</b>	Shows ability to plan, schedule, and direct work of self and/or others.
<b>Planning &amp; Organizing</b>	Defining tasks and milestones to achieve objectives while ensuring the optimal use of resources to meet those objectives.
<b>Team Leadership</b>	Ability to effectively manage and guide group efforts. Includes providing appropriate level of feedback concerning group progress.

<b>Table 3</b> <b>VMB Executive/Management Competencies</b> <b>(See Appendix for Complete Definition)</b>	
<b>Communication</b>	Listens to others and communicates in an effective manner.
<b>Developing Others</b>	Willingness to delegate responsibility, work with others, and coach them to develop their capabilities.
<b>Empowering Others</b>	Conveying confidence in employees' ability to be successful, especially at challenging new tasks; sharing significant responsibility and authority; allowing employees freedom to decide how they will accomplish their goals and resolve issues.

<b>Table 3</b> <b>VMB Executive/Management Competencies</b> <b>(See Appendix for Complete Definition)</b>	
<b>Flexibility</b>	Adapting to and working with a variety of situations, individuals, and groups. Openness to different and new ways of doing things; willingness to modify one's preferred way of doing things.
<b>Forward Thinking</b>	Anticipating the implications and consequences of situations and taking appropriate action to be prepared for possible contingencies.
<b>Organizational Awareness</b>	Understanding the workings, structure, and culture of the organization as well as the political, social, and economic issues affecting the organization.
<b>Relationship Building</b>	The ability to develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships with others inside or outside of the organization who can provide information, assistance, and support.
<b>Vision &amp; Strategic Thinking</b>	Supporting, promoting, and ensuring alignment with the organization's vision and values. Understanding how an organization must change in light of internal and external trends and influences.

#### **E. Assessment of current proficiency**

The next step in the process involved assessing the current proficiency level of competencies within the organization for two purposes:

1. To collect information from employees to assist them in assessing their professional development gaps for reference in their own career planning and individual development plans;
2. To enable the organization's executive leadership to develop solutions for closing any development gaps and to plan for future needs.

##### **1. Survey design**

To accomplish the assessment, two surveys were designed – a self-assessment that allowed employees to give their opinion of their individual level of competency, and an organizational assessment for employees to give their opinion of the proficiency of the VMB workforce as a whole. The CPS project consultant conducted two employee

orientation meetings to explain the purpose of the assessment instrument and to provide instructions for completion. Employees were given the choice to send their completed surveys back to the CPS consultant by email or by US mail if they desired anonymity. Appendix B shows the blank survey forms for both self-assessment and organizational assessment.

#### **Self-Assessment:**

To complete the self-assessment, respondents used the following scale:

- ✓ **Highly Proficient**, if you believe you exhibit a superior level of proficiency in this competency. You would define this area as one of your “strong suits.”
- ✓ **Proficient**, if you believe you are fully proficient in this competency. You believe you meet expectations at a satisfactory level but would not call yourself “highly proficient.” There is always room for improvement but development in this area is not a high priority for you.
- ✓ **Needs Development**, if you believe you could benefit from training or development in this area in order to be fully proficient and meet the expectations of the organization. You would define this as a high priority for your training or development.

#### **Organizational Assessment:**

In addition, all employees were asked to provide their opinion of the proficiency of the VMB workforce as a whole. This included not only core competencies and leadership competencies, but also executive management competencies that were identified as those most critical for superior performance in executive/management roles. The respondents used the following scale:

- ✓ **Highly Proficient**, if you believe the workforce exhibits a superior level of proficiency in this competency. You would define this area as one of the “strong suits” of the organization.
- ✓ **Proficient**, if you believe the workforce exhibits a fully proficient level of this competency. In general, the workforce meets expectations at a satisfactory level but would not be deemed “highly proficient.” There is always room for improvement but development in this area is not of highest priority.
- ✓ **Needs Development**, if you believe the workforce could benefit from training or development in this area in order to be fully proficient and meet the expectations of the organization. You would define this as a high priority for training or development for the organization as a whole.

## 2. Survey Results

Table 4 illustrates the results of both the average self-ratings and organizational ratings from all employees for the Core and Leadership Competencies. Table 5 shows the average organizational ratings only for competencies deemed to be Executive/Management Competencies. Staff members were not asked to provide a self-rating for the Executive/Management Competencies because most employees would not be in a position to develop or use executive competencies. However, all staff members were asked to provide their opinion of organizational competencies using the same scale definitions defined above.

Some findings of note for Table 4 (Core and Leadership Competencies):

- Six of the 24 ratings averaged Proficient (2.0) or above. Those six were self-ratings for Customer Focus, Ethics, and Interpersonal Skills; and organizational ratings for Ethics, Interpersonal Skills and Managing Work. It is a positive statement about VMB's culture that the Ethics competency received the highest rating on both the self and organizational assessments.
- The remaining ratings in both self and leadership competencies average below 2.0 (Proficient) which provides many opportunities for individual and group development and training.
- Customer Focus is one of the three highest average self-ratings and one of the two lowest average organizational ratings. Again, the small number of respondents makes interpretation difficult but the perspective seems to be "I provide excellent customer service but it is not a strength throughout the organization." This is an area for further exploration and evaluation.
- In general, the self-ratings are a bit lower than the organizational ratings. However, the number of respondents is so small that single scores can cause significant changes in the average so these findings need to be interpreted cautiously.
- Conflict Management received the lowest average rating in both the self and the organizational assessments, which might indicate a priority for development.
- Four of the five Core Competencies had the lowest average organizational ratings (Analytical Thinking, Learning, Thoroughness and Customer Focus). This is another area for future discussion and evaluation since the Core Competencies are defined as those that are critical for all employees at VMB regardless of their assignment.

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Core and Leadership Competencies</b> <b>Results of Self-Ratings and Organizational Ratings from All Employees</b> <b>3= Highly Proficient 2=Proficient 1=Needs Development</b>			
<b>Core Competencies</b> <b>(Listed high to low organizational rating)</b>	<b>Avg Self Rating</b> <b>N = 7</b>	<b>Avg Org Rating</b> <b>N = 8</b>	<b>Diff Org v Self</b>
Ethics, Integrity & Personal Credibility	2.43	2.00	-0.43
Analytical Thinking	1.86	1.75	-0.11
Learning	1.57	1.75	0.18
Thoroughness	1.71	1.75	0.04
Customer Focus	2.00	1.63	-0.38
<b>Leadership Competencies</b> <b>(Listed high to low organizational rating)</b>	<b>Avg Self Rating</b> <b>N = 7</b>	<b>Avg Org Rating</b> <b>N = 8</b>	<b>Diff Org v Self</b>
Managing Work	1.83	2.13	0.29
Interpersonal Skills	2.14	2.00	-0.14
Global Perspective	1.57	1.88	0.30
Accountability for Results	1.86	1.86	0.00
Planning & Organizing	1.71	1.75	0.04
Team Leadership	1.57	1.75	0.18
Conflict Management	1.57	1.63	0.05

Table 5 shows the average organizational ratings for the Executive/Management Competencies. Some findings of note for Table 5 are:

- Five of the eight average ratings reach the Proficient (2.0) level. This is a better ratio than found in the Core and Leadership Competency category wherein three of 12 ratings reach the 2.0 level.
- The two highest average organizational ratings in the survey are in this category of Executive/Management Competencies (Empowering Others at 2.29 and Vision and Strategic Thinking at 2.14).
- The lowest ratings in this category are for the competencies of Communication, Forward Thinking and Relationship Building, all with a 1.86 average rating. Although not among the lowest ratings on the survey overall, these areas could also be opportunities for development.

<b>Table 5</b> <b>Executive/Management Competencies</b> <b>Results of Organizational Ratings from All Employees</b> <b>3= Highly Proficient 2=Proficient 1=Needs Development</b>	
<b>Executive/Management Competencies</b> <b>(listed high to low ratings)</b>	<b>Avg</b> <b>Org</b> <b>Rating</b> <b>N = 7</b>
<b>Empowering Others</b>	2.29
<b>Vision &amp; Strategic Thinking</b>	2.14
<b>Developing Others</b>	2.00
<b>Organizational Awareness</b>	2.00
<b>Flexibility</b>	2.00
<b>Communication</b>	1.86
<b>Forward Thinking</b>	1.86
<b>Relationship Building</b>	1.86

#### **F. Ways to attain competencies**

An important component of any succession plan is to identify the factors that facilitated the current incumbents' success. Consultant staff conducted one-on-one interviews with the four incumbents in lead roles to learn what best prepared them for success in their jobs. The interviews began with a review of the existing job description for the position to identify job specific knowledge, skill and abilities needed as well as leadership competencies. A series of questions gleaned information about:

- Training and education – not just any training/education that the incumbents possessed, but that which they believed contributed to successful performance of their current job.
- Experiences – not just work experiences but also life experiences that provided insight into their leadership roles.
- Skills, abilities, and personal characteristics – that contributed to successful performance of the job.
- Hindsight – with hindsight what were obstacles and/or what would they do differently related to training, education, experience.

- Knowledge capture – what is currently done to capture their knowledge and transfer it to other staff members; and which of their job functions are most vulnerable to a lack of knowledge capture and transfer.

CPS Consultants analyzed the interview results to identify recurring themes, trends, or areas of interest for future development. Table 6 summarizes those trends.

<b>Table 6</b> <b>Summary of Methods</b> <b>To Attain Technical and Leadership Competencies</b>	
Factor	Summary of Trends
<b>Training and Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● College degree was a helpful foundation for many components of the job, e.g., research, analysis, writing skills, knowledge of government structure, and public administration.</li> <li>● DCA classes and/or roundtables were helpful for both knowledge of consumer boards and specific processes.</li> <li>● Attending state training classes was helpful (e.g., budgeting, basic supervision) but some respondents stated it often felt like there was not time to attend training.</li> </ul>
<b>Experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most moved to their leadership positions at VMB either by working in lower positions within VMB or at similar boards within DCA . Helpful experiences within VMB include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sunset Review process and report</li> <li>◆ Researching and preparing reports and other support for Board and subcommittees</li> <li>◆ Introduction to external contacts was instrumental in understanding the organization and the stakeholders (type of contact varied with each position)</li> <li>◆ Receiving assignments that built relationships with stakeholders (type of stakeholder varied with each position)</li> <li>◆ Attending relevant meetings to participate and/or observe (type of meeting varied with each position)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Helpful experiences that could be gained outside VMB include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Prior experience to provide knowledge of how governing Boards function and operate and their political nature.</li> <li>◆ Prior experience that facilitated understanding of how all pieces of an operation integrate and support each other and the mission of the organization.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Some kind of a mentor, coach, or other willing advisor was</li> </ul>

**Table 6**  
**Summary of Methods**  
**To Attain Technical and Leadership Competencies**

	<p>instrumental. (In some cases the mentor or coach was internal; others were within other DCA boards). However, each incumbent found their mentor/coach in a different way. Some had to rely on personal relationships they had built with employees in other Boards and stated there should be a better way to facilitate finding assistance.</p>
<p><b>Skills, Abilities, and Personal Characteristics</b></p>	<p>The following characteristics were deemed important to successful job performance. Depending upon the incumbent, these skills were honed through experience and formal training or were thought to be inherent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ability to juggle multiple tasks and not be frustrated by having to put out fires.</li> <li>● Strong interpersonal skills to build relationships both internally and externally</li> <li>● Strong communication skills (especially listening)</li> <li>● Good judgment in decision making</li> <li>● Creativity and flexibility in problem identification and resolution</li> <li>● Confidentiality and discretion</li> <li>● Ability to work effectively with considerable independence</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hindsight/Obstacles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Having overlap with predecessor would be helpful</li> <li>● Need a formal new employee orientation and training plan for first year, including some way to learn all functions/operations within VMB</li> <li>● Need desk manual, reference materials, sample packets, or other on-the-job training aids for VMB's major processes</li> <li>● Need training and/or assistance on making the transition from staff to lead/supervision</li> <li>● Need a way to facilitate learning from sister Boards</li> </ul>
<p><b>Knowledge Capture</b></p>	<p>Specific items mentioned for each leadership position related to knowledge capture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Officer – The most critical knowledge for the EO job is the experience to be able to anticipate Board and other stakeholder needs and questions and use creativity and flexibility to identify and resolve problems. She knows of no way to capture that knowledge other than through mentoring others because issues are often unique.</li> <li>● Assistant Executive Officer – There is currently no formal</li> </ul>

**Table 6**  
**Summary of Methods**  
**To Attain Technical and Leadership Competencies**

	<p>knowledge capture for specific components of this job. The incumbent stated that the most critical components are the management of the staff and resources (including the state budgeting process), which can be learned through experience in other leadership positions and formal training. Similar to the EO job, the problems faced by the AEO often have unique circumstances so mentoring others is often the only way to pass on the knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Administrative Program Coordinator – The most vulnerable assignments in this job are the regulatory support and board item preparation. The incumbent has started involving other staff to assist with portions of these assignments in order to transfer knowledge. However, more needs to be done so that other staff members understand the whole process.</li> <li>● Enforcement Program Coordinator – The incumbent stated she has no backup for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Preparing discipline case packages for the Attorney’s General (AG) office</li> <li>◆ Reviewing applications for licenses from people with prior convictions, issuing a decision, and responding to appeals.</li> <li>◆ Response to consumer appeals if they are not satisfied with outcome of discipline of a licensee.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>She has personal notes for these processes but has not had time to capture process steps in a way that could be used by a trainee. Other members of her staff support her work in these areas but she views these three assignments as the most critical need for knowledge capture and transfer.</p>
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**G. Summary of current state of organization and identified gaps**

The following table provides a summary of the major findings regarding the current state of the organization based on the data previously reported.

**Table 7**  
**Summary of Findings**

<p><b>Overall Workforce Demographics:</b></p>	<p>Six (46%) of the current VMB employees are under age 45 and seven are currently age 45 or over. Having approximately half the workforce at or close to retirement eligibility is not uncommon in state service but it underscores the need for organizations to give priority to staff training and development at all levels of the organization.</p> <p>Only one of the four employees in VMB’s leadership ranks has stated an intention to retire in the near future. The other three have been in their lead positions for at least three years, which has provided good stability for VMB.</p>
<p><b>Assessment of Competency Gaps:</b></p>	<p>Based on the employee survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The highest employee self-ratings (at least 2.0) were Ethics, Integrity and Personal Credibility, Customer Focus, and Interpersonal Skills.</li> <li>● The lowest self-ratings were Learning, Global Perspective, Conflict Management, and Team Leadership.</li> <li>● The highest organizational ratings (at least 2.0) were Ethics, Integrity and Personal Credibility, Managing Work, and Interpersonal Skills.</li> <li>● The lowest organizational ratings were Conflict Management and Customer Focus.</li> <li>● Conflict Management received the lowest average rating in both the self and the organizational assessments.</li> <li>● Customer Focus tied with Conflict Management for the lowest average rating in the organizational assessments. However, it was one of the three highest among the self-ratings.</li> <li>● Four of the five Core Competencies (i.e., those deemed by the EO and AEO as being critical for all employees to possess) had the lowest average organizational ratings (Analytical Thinking, Learning, Thoroughness and Customer Focus). The Core Competency that received a rating that was at least proficient in both the self-assessment and organizational ratings was Ethics, Integrity and Personal Credibility.</li> <li>● In the Executive/Management Competencies, five of the eight average ratings reached the Proficient (2.0) level. The two highest average organizational ratings in the survey were in this category of Executive/Management Competencies (Empowering Others at 2.29 and Vision and Strategic Thinking at 2.14).</li> <li>● The lowest ratings in Executive/Management Competencies were Communication, Forward Thinking, and Relationship Building, all with an average rating of 1.86.</li> </ul>

**Table 7**  
**Summary of Findings**

<p><b>Trends on Attainment of Competencies:</b></p>	<p>Based on interviews of incumbents in the four lead positions, it was found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most employees stated they learned their jobs through on-the-job training and/or observing others (either others within VMB or by getting assistance from sister boards or DCA departments).</li> <li>● Most stated that the lack of a structured new employee orientation, training plan and related job training manuals, examples, or training aides were obstacles to learning the job.</li> <li>● All stated that work assignments that allowed them to work with various stakeholders (e.g., Board members, licensees, professional association leaders, etc) were valuable learning experiences.</li> <li>● All stated that a mentor or coach helped them learn their jobs. However, some had to rely on their own personal relationships to find this assistance and stated there should be a better way to facilitate finding a coach.</li> <li>● All stated that state and DCA training classes (for both technical and leadership competencies) were good but sometimes they chose not to attend because of too much work volume at VMB.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Most Vulnerable Processes:</b></p>	<p>The four incumbents in leadership positions were asked what functions or assignments of their work were most vulnerable either due to being an extremely critical function or because others in the organization did not yet have knowledge of their work. A summary of the function or assignments identified by each of the four leadership incumbents follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Executive Officer: The knowledge and ability to anticipate Board and other stakeholder needs and questions and to use creativity and flexibility to identify and resolve problems.</li> <li>● Assistant Executive Officer: The management of the staff and other resources (including the state budgeting process).</li> <li>● Administrative Program Lead: The regulatory support and board item preparation assignments.</li> <li>● Enforcement Program Lead: Preparing discipline case packages for AG’s office; reviewing applications for licenses from people with prior convictions, issuing a decision, and preparing memo to AG if they appeal; and preparing response to consumer appeals when they are not happy with disciplinary outcome.</li> </ul> <p>All incumbents in leadership positions stated that it was difficult to cross train or delegate work due to the high volume of work experienced by those in leadership positions and other assignments in the office.</p>

## IV. Gap Closing Strategies

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The remainder of this report provides options to address the particular issues related to closing the gaps and meeting the challenges identified by the data analyzed for this report. The data collected indicates that VMB could improve its succession planning efforts in several areas, including:

- New employee selection, orientation, and on boarding
- On-going training and development for all staff
- Knowledge capture and retention, including training job aids and process documentation

The stated options are suggestions for considerations based on best practices in other organizations. Final decisions regarding the most appropriate gap closing strategies and the timing for implementation will need to be made by VMB's executive team based on organizational priorities and resources. Copies of generic templates and tools that might assist VMB in implementing chosen actions are included in the Appendices.

**Table 8**  
**Options for Gap Closing Strategies**

<b>1.0 Overall Strategy</b>	<p>The data collected indicates that VMB could improve its succession planning efforts in several areas as noted above. To coordinate these efforts, the first and foremost recommendation is that the Veterinary Medical Board leadership team develops a workforce management plan for the next three years using this report as guidance.</p> <p>To ensure successful implementation, CPS recommends that the Executive Officer assign a project manager that is responsible for developing an action plan, coordinating the work, and tracking/reporting progress. In addition, the Executive Officer should give priority to workforce development activities. This may entail adding staff and/or streamlining work so that there is time for training and developmental activities.</p> <p>VMB submitted Budget Change Proposals (BCP) to increase staffing in both Enforcement and Licensing in each of the past four years. While funding associated with legislative changes was approved, all other staffing BCP's were</p>
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**Table 8**  
**Options for Gap Closing Strategies**

	<p>denied even though there were increases in the licensee population and enforcement complaints during that time.<sup>2</sup> In addition to the impact on operations, findings from the interviews with leadership staff indicate that lack of time for training and development contributed to some of the gaps and vulnerabilities identified above. Future BCP's should include enough staffing to allow adequate time for employee training and development.</p>
<p><b>2.0</b> <b>Executive</b> <b>Officer</b> <b>Retirement</b></p>	<p>The current EO has been mentoring and involving staff over the past several years and feels there are no specific processes or procedures that need to be further documented before she vacates the position. The recent Sunset Review provided an outstanding learning opportunity for the current AEO and lead staff.</p>
<p><b>3.0</b> <b>New</b> <b>Employee</b> <b>Selection,</b> <b>On-boarding</b> <b>and Training</b></p>	<p>The competency model and opportunities for improvement identified by this report should inform future selection processes. Future applicants should be assessed for their strengths that align with the VMB Core and Leadership Competencies. (See Behavioral Interview Guides for CalHR leadership competencies at <a href="http://www.calhr.ca.gov/state-hr-professionals/Pages/behavioral-interview-guides.aspx">http://www.calhr.ca.gov/state-hr-professionals/Pages/behavioral-interview-guides.aspx</a> )</p> <p>Creating and implementing a new employee on-boarding program for new hires was identified as an area in need of improvement. All leader incumbents interviewed stated a need for enhanced orientation and training of new or promoted employees. All recognized that many of their tasks had to be learned by-doing or by observing others, but most stated that some kind of structured orientation or training program would have made learning the job more efficient and effective.</p> <p>The most successful new employee programs go beyond a one-time orientation to a broader commitment of continuous on-boarding and development for the first year of employment. Components of an employee on-boarding program for VMB might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 A new employee orientation conducted by a VMB manager, including such things as description of the mission of the Board, how the Board works within DCA, customer needs, roles and responsibilities of Board and VMB units, and competencies valued by VMB leadership.</li> <li>3.2 A new employee packet, modeled after the new Board Member packet but modified to be pertinent to VMB employees.</li> <li>3.3 A development plan created by the new employee and his/her supervisor</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> *Sunset Review Report 2012*, Veterinary Medical Board, September 2012.

**Table 8**  
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	<p>stating goals and expectations of the job as well as training and development goals for both technical aspects of the job and organizational competencies such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● State and DCA training classes related to the technical aspects of the job</li> <li>● Opportunities to gain knowledge of the veterinary field by interaction with licensees and the Board members</li> <li>● Planned observations of incumbents performing similar operations in sister DCA boards, and/or by shadowing other incumbents in the office</li> </ul> <p>3.4 An assigned “buddy” for the first few months to assist with learning the new organization.</p> <p>(See Appendix C for samples of individual development plan templates).</p>
<p><b>4.0</b> <b>Training &amp; Development</b></p>	<p>The results of the employee self-assessment and organizational assessments provide good guidance when planning training and development activities to enhance competencies for the whole organization. As noted above, the lowest average competency self ratings on Core and Leadership Competencies were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conflict Management</li> <li>● Learning</li> <li>● Global Perspective</li> <li>● Team Leadership</li> </ul> <p>The lowest average organizational ratings were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conflict Management</li> <li>● Customer Focus</li> </ul> <p>In addition, four of the five Core Competencies (i.e., those deemed by the EO and AEO as being critical for all employees to possess) had the second lowest average organizational ratings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Analytical Thinking</li> <li>● Learning</li> <li>● Thoroughness</li> <li>● Customer Focus</li> </ul> <p>The survey results show that self-ratings on the Leadership Competencies were lower than the organizational ratings in all except Interpersonal Skills. It could be concluded that the workforce at VMB see room for improvement in their own leadership skills (with the caveat that drawing conclusions from a small sample is problematic).</p>

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In the Executive/Management Competencies, five of the eight average ratings reached the Proficient (2.0) level. This is a better ratio than found in the Core and Leadership Competency categories wherein three of 12 ratings reached the 2.0 level. The lowest ratings in Executive/Management Competencies were:

- Communication
- Forward Thinking
- Relationship Building

Potential steps in an organization wide training and development plan within VMB include:

- 4.1 Identifying and reporting competency goals by sharing results of the survey with all staff, with emphasis on the value of the Core Competencies for all.
- 4.2 Based on the data collected, priorities for organization- wide training and development appear to be Conflict Management, Customer Focus and the four Core Competencies that received the lowest ratings. CPS recommends that the executive leaders confirm their priorities and build a three-year training and development plan. This plan might include internal group training for the entire staff, scheduling all staff for individual classroom and/or on-line training on a rotational basis, arranging luncheon speakers, and/or debriefing work projects for lessons learned related to Competencies. (See Appendix E for a list of courses offered by DCA SOLID and the competencies enhanced by each course. CalHR and CPS HR Consulting also designate competencies enhanced by their on-line and classroom training courses). For more detail, see <http://inside.dca.ca.gov/solid/elearning.html>  
<http://www.calhr.ca.gov/training/Pages/main.aspx>  
<http://www.cps.ca.gov/documents/TrainingCenterCatalog.pdf>
- 4.3 Creating an Individual Development Plan (IDP) template for all employees and training supervisors and staff on how to use it to guide development of additional skills, knowledge, and competencies related to their current job and building competencies for other VMB jobs (See Appendix C for sample IDP's).
- 4.4 Designing internal assignments as training and development tools. While civil service and union contract provisions can be the source of complications, internal training assignments can usually be structured to work within those provisions. Internal training and development

**Table 8**  
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assignments take multiple forms, such as:

- Cross-training of critical tasks across job classifications and across work units. Not only does the organization gain value from having additional trained internal staff, but also benefits from employees in each work unit having a better understanding of how their work intersects and supports the overall mission.
- Attendance at DCA Roundtables or other relevant DCA Board presentations.
- Action learning assignments, where real organizational problems are assigned to a cross-functional team of employees to research and recommend solutions to executive management. Typically, action-learning teams are composed of participants with a variety of skills, experiences and backgrounds. During the action learning experience, which can often involve full- or part-time assignments for several weeks or months, periodic coaching is provided by an executive sponsor.
- Stretch Assignments to provide the opportunity for incumbents to take on increased responsibilities or special projects within their current job assignment. To be most effective, stretch assignments should be accompanied by supportive training or mentoring.

4.5 Providing needed resources and time to reinforce the value of training and development by Executive leadership. As mentioned in the previous discussion of overall strategy, current staff perceive that they cannot devote time to internal, on-line, or external training due to work volume.

External options for leadership development include personality tests or style inventories. A recent Aberdeen research report found that 49% of companies are including these tools in their efforts to identify high-potential talent, to develop workers' interpersonal and leadership skills and to set performance goals for their staff.<sup>3</sup> By shedding light on workers' differing communication styles and how they make decisions and settle conflicts, workplace assessments are credited with helping to boost team effectiveness.

CPS HR Consulting partners with Hogan Assessment Systems to offer three

<sup>3</sup>“Further Assessment: More Companies Using Evaluation Tools to Identify Future Leaders and More”, Michelle Chandler, Workforce Week, January 28, 2013

**Table 8**  
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	<p>personality assessments for leadership development. Other popular instruments include the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the DiSC Personal Profile. All can provide insight to current or potential leaders and aid in tailoring individual development plans.</p>
<p><b>5.0 Knowledge Capture and Retention</b></p>	<p>The data gathered for this report points to a critical need for improvement in VMB’s knowledge capture and retention. Based on the leadership interviews, there are few formal or informal efforts to document processes or procedures at any level. When asked what they would do differently if they were training their replacement, most cited the need for desk manuals, process checklists, and training aides. They also noted that they had good intentions of documenting processes for themselves and others but in most cases had not had time. As noted above both the Administrative Program Coordinator and the Enforcement Program Coordinator reported several assignments or processes that are particularly vulnerable because others have little knowledge of their work.</p> <p>Potential steps in an organization wide training and development plan within VMB include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5.1 Identify a strategy for knowledge capture and retention. Some organizations give responsibility to a position to coordinate the efforts organization-wide; others ensure each lead person is accountable for knowledge capture and retention within their scope of responsibility.</li> <li>5.2 Assess internal technology policies and use to ensure good access and retention practices related to existing files and documents.</li> <li>5.3 Starting with the assignments and processes identified as most vulnerable, develop documentation and job training aides such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Process flow charts</li> <li>● Process steps, checklists, activities and quality checks</li> <li>● “Good example packets” with completed forms and documents needed for critical tasks or processes</li> <li>● YouTube-type videos to demonstrate performance of tasks or explain procedures.</li> </ul> </li> <li>5.4 Initiate community of practice teams where individuals with similar responsibilities periodically share their troubleshooting or problem solving experiences, methods, and learnings. Knowledge is transferred to multiple team members at once and the team members are then more likely to serve as internal consultants to each other.</li> <li>5.5 Establish internal learning opportunities as described in items 4.4 and 4.5</li> </ul>

**Table 8**  
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	above. 5.6 Monitor workforce demographics in order to plan knowledge transfer related to potential retirements.
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## V. Future Actions

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Succession planning is a subset of strategic workforce management and focuses on having potential leaders prepared and ready to manage and lead the organization when needed. Succession planning is not a one-time event, but is an ongoing process that will create a pool of internal candidates for management and leadership positions. This report provides the foundation for a succession plan for VMB based on its current priority needs. A long-term workforce management strategy includes continuous monitoring, evaluating and revising the following components:

1. A workforce management strategy including recruitment, development, retention, and knowledge management to ensure the right people with the right skills will be available when needed.
2. Communication of the importance of workforce planning as the responsibility of all employees.
3. Monitoring of staff competencies to ensure they align with current and future organizational needs and provide career development for employees.
4. Redundancy in core functions so that more than one person is proficient in critical competencies and assignments.
5. Targeted recruitment and selection efforts to ensure new employees' competencies align with current and future needs.
6. Intentional management of knowledge so that knowledge is continually shared and accessible.
7. Monitoring of retention patterns and reasons to understand and manage turnover constructively.

8. Intentional management of the organization’s culture to reinforce continual learning, knowledge sharing, and continual improvement to best support the organization’s mission.
9. Periodic evaluation of progress compared to baseline surveys and interviews conducted as part of this project.

VMB’s scheduled transition to DCA’s new database, BreEZe, in 2013 makes the importance of the above steps even more critical. BreEZe will automate many of VMB’s internal and client-facing processes and allow knowledge sharing across DCA boards. In many cases, software conversions place unanticipated changes and stresses on organizations. Therefore, it is currently a critical time for VMB to be proactive in workforce development and knowledge capture/transfer in order to be prepared for whatever changes occur due to BreEZe.

In summary, CPS HR Consulting recommends the following action steps for the Veterinary Medical Board in order to implement strategies presented in this report.

<b>Action Steps for Implementation</b>
1. Assign responsibility to an internal VMB leader for developing and implementing an action plan using the data from this report.
2. Develop a list of priority items from the potential gap closing strategies identified in this report that best align with current VMB needs and realities.
3. Determine and secure resources needed to accomplish action plan.
4. Determine how to measure and track progress for priority items.
5. Create an action and evaluation plan for the next three years for the priority items.
6. Implement, monitor, evaluate and revise as needed.