Constructive Leadership in a Strong Nuclear Safety Culture: The Role of Leadership Development and Succession Planning

Presented By:
Jesse L. Brooks, III MSOD
President
Vice President
Tosan, Inc.
"Organizations are like automobiles. They don’t run themselves, except downhill. They need people to make them work. And not just any people, but the right people. The effectiveness of an organization’s employees—particularly individuals in leadership positions – determines how the organizational “machine” will perform. What distinguishes great organizations from mediocre ones are the attitudes of its people! Organizations that will set the standard in the twenty-first century have leaders who will get the best out of their people because the people believe that their leaders are authentic, their colleagues are trustworthy, and their work is meaningful."

--Dr. Manfred Kets de Vries
Vitry d’Avaucourt Chair of Leadership Development at INSEAD, France
Constructive Leadership in a Strong Nuclear Safety Culture

• Effective leadership is a key aspect of a strong nuclear safety culture

• Leaders have the need to develop the capacity, capability and requisite skills to balance delivering on performance objectives and shifting priorities in order to support and sustain a strong safety culture

• It is incumbent upon senior leaders to align themselves and model constructive behaviors that demonstrate their commitment to nuclear safety
Leadership Development and Succession Planning

• Leadership Development plays an extremely important role in shaping organizational culture and behaviors including those required for a strong safety culture

• A conscientious assessment of leaders’ mindset, skills, knowledge and approach to change is essential to a strong safety culture
Edgar Schein, a leading authority on organizational culture emphasizes the importance of leadership behaviors in embedding desired constructive norms into the culture:

- What leaders pay attention to, measure and control
- How leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crises
- Observed criteria by which leaders allocate scarce resources
- Deliberate role modeling, teaching and coaching
- Observed criteria by which leaders allocate rewards and status
- Observed criteria by which leaders select employees or remove people from senior positions
What Constructive Leaders Must Do

• Senior leaders must create a vision that reflects the desired state or outcome of the leadership development initiatives.
• Leaders must align and model those behaviors that support nuclear safety and that provide for the sustainable development of desired leadership capabilities and capacities at all levels. This may include:
  – Driving organizational safety performance improvement through planned change management processes
  – Developing a strong commitment to excellence, fostering accountability
  – The integration of leadership development into key management processes in partnership with Human Resources and front line organizations
  – Developing and sustaining leadership development and desired nuclear safety behaviors through formal and informal learning and practice
  – Developing a comprehensive approach to leadership development that identifies the desired competencies and skills required of leadership in support of shift to a more constructive nuclear safety organization.
  – Fostering an environment where leaders at all levels can effectively contribute to shifting behaviors to create a more robust safety culture, that is inclusive, accountable and focused on delivering excellent results.
  – Developing a common platform of skills, competencies and behaviors for all leaders
Succession Planning

- Successful culture change to enhance nuclear safety requires executives to be deliberate in the selection, placement and development of future leaders, which in turn will send clear messages to the workforce regarding expected behaviors.
- Strong succession planning processes are fundamental for the identification of future leaders, knowledge transfer and the development of their critical leadership skills and competencies.
Implementing Leadership Development and Succession Planning

• The Fukushima disaster of 2011 has increased scrutiny of the safety and security systems of nuclear plants.
• Post-Fukushima, plants are required to make a significant investment of time, energy and viability in building future leaders.
• In order to improve human and plant performance, senior leaders must understand and support the need to develop the management and technical skills of all leaders to perform their assigned tasks.
Implementing Leadership Development and Succession Planning

- The basic principles, standards and criteria for building strong Leadership Development and Succession Planning processes may be found in several documents issued by industry oversight groups:
  - IAEA-TECDOC-1024 “Selection, Competency Development and Assessment of Nuclear Power Plant Managers”
  - INPO “Leadership Fundamentals to Achieve and Sustain Excellent Station Performance”, Sec. Supportive Leadership Team
  - INPO 05-003 Sec. III “Corporate Leadership and Management CO.1.12
  - INPO 05-003 Sec. III “Human Resources” CO.4
  - INPO 05-003 OR.4 “Management and Leadership Development Overview”
  - WANO PO&C OR.3 “Management and Leadership Development
Implementing Leadership Development and Succession Planning

There are several critical elements to developing a strong Succession Planning process:

1. **It must be linked to the organizational strategy** – A succession plan should change as the organization’s strategy changes.

2. **It must be managed by senior leadership** – Senior leaders have the responsibility to ensure the future of the organization. Senior leaders must make decisions about future potential, developmental assignments and job movement. Senior leaders are personally involved and hold themselves accountable for growing leaders.

3. **It must document a consistent and transparent methodology to fill key positions** – A fair and consistent process makes sure that all eligible candidates for key positions receive the same consideration.

4. **It must create a pipeline of candidates through developmental programs and work assignments, at all levels** – Candidates must participate in specific developmental programs and job assignments geared towards developing their leadership skills.

5. **It must be integrated with the organization’s Human Resource strategy and processes** – Goal setting, performance appraisal, individual development plans, recognition and rewards systems and compensation should all be aligned with the succession planning process.

6. **It must be facilitated by a useful technology base** – An automated means of documenting and monitoring progress is a key success factor.

7. **It must be helpful to line and staff organizations** – Line organizations and Human Resources must work collaboratively (in partnership) in order to successfully support a succession planning process.
Conclusion

A 2009 INPO study, *The Organizational Culture Inventory, Leadership and Plant Performance* states:

• “For senior leaders at the strong performing sites the primary and secondary styles were Humanistic-Encouraging and Achievement.

• Leaders at strong plants have a style that focuses on building healthy relationships, developing people, and high-quality results while leaders at challenged plants use a style that overly focuses on details and tasks, views work as more important than people and treats rules as more important than ideas.

• One can conclude that there is a relationship between the constructive styles at the Senior Leader levels and the overall performance at the sites.”
OCI Comparisons

Senior Leaders Culture