



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Toronto Public Service People Plan 2008 Annual Report

Date:	November 17, 2009
To:	Employee and Labour Relations Committee
From:	City Manager
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

The purpose of this annual report is to provide information on the progress made in 2008 in implementing the Toronto Public Service (TPS) People Plan 2008 – 2011. The Employee and Relations Committee adopted the People Plan in July 2008 and City Council received the People Plan for information in September 2008.

Overall, in 2008 there was significant progress in implementing the People Plan by the divisions and corporately, most notably perhaps in the goals related to health and safety, learning and in leadership. The Annual Report includes several examples of concrete and practical actions undertaken corporately and by Divisions. Divisions have implemented different actions under the People Plan that reflect the various businesses, working environments and operational issues requiring attention.

While there continues to be much work needed to implement fully the Toronto Public Service People Plan during its first cycle, particularly in assisting divisions to develop their own people plans, the expectation is that implementation issues will be addressed over the Plan's three-year cycle and beyond.

Financial Impact

There are no financial implications contained in this report.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The TPS People Plan 2008 – 2011 includes goals, objectives and action plans at both the corporate and divisional levels to address and advance employment equity issues within the Toronto Public Service. Performance measures have been identified (and will continue to be

refined); data will be collected as part of implementing the Plan to demonstrate progress. The results will be reported in subsequent annual reports to the City Manager.

DECISION HISTORY

This report is provided to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee as part of an annual reporting cycle.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The organization review of the Human Resources Division (completed in late 2007) recommended that the Division augment its strategic role in providing advice, programs and services to management and to employees, and that it enhance its capacity to provide corporate oversight and consistency in policy and service delivery.

Also, the Mayor's Fiscal Review Panel Report - Blueprint for Fiscal Stability and Economic Prosperity (February 21, 2008) recommended that the City develop a comprehensive human resource strategy including the development of a comprehensive employee learning and development strategy.

In addition, the City's current strategic directions and priorities for the next few years will require a workforce capable of providing creative policy options for decision-makers, and cost-efficient and user-focused services and programs for the public. As an employer, the City operates as part of the Greater Toronto Area economic region and draws from the same talent pool as other large and competitive employers. The City is already experiencing the challenge of managing an aging workforce, the imminent retirement of baby boomers particularly at the management level and in critical or hard-to-fill jobs, the challenges of recruiting younger workers to a public service career, and investing in a skilled and competent workforce, among other people management challenges.

The TPS People Plan 2008-2011 provides the basis for a comprehensive human resource strategy for the City as well as a foundation for the Human Resource Division to develop an enhanced strategic role in the organization. The Plan is designed to ensure that the City remains an agile and flexible organization able to meet its future business challenges by ensuring its workforce strategies align with its business and service goals.

The People Plan, therefore, is based on the current strategic and business directions of the City, and uses the current environment in which the City operates as an employer and as service provider to develop appropriate strategies and actions. Based on best practice, the TPS People Plan 2008-2011 is composed of two components: corporate level initiatives led by the Human Resources Division, and Divisional People Plans led by Divisions and supported by the Human Resources Division.

COMMENTS

The 2008 Annual Report (appendix A) indicates that positive initial progress has already been made in a variety of areas at both the corporate and divisional levels to meet the objectives of the People Plan 2008 - 2011.

The Human Resources Division is committed to report to the Employee and Labour Relations Committee on the progress the organization is making in achieving the goals and objectives of the TPS People Plan. An area that development has begun and will be reported further in the next (2009) Annual Report is refining and improving on the performance metrics currently included in the Plan to incorporate a greater number of impact measures where possible. The issue of establishing useful, measurable and relevant performance metrics is a challenge in the field of human resources and strategic workforce planning where best practice needs to focus on qualitative future-oriented issues rather than quantitative “efficiency” indicators.

The 5 goals of the TPS People Plan 2008-2011 are:

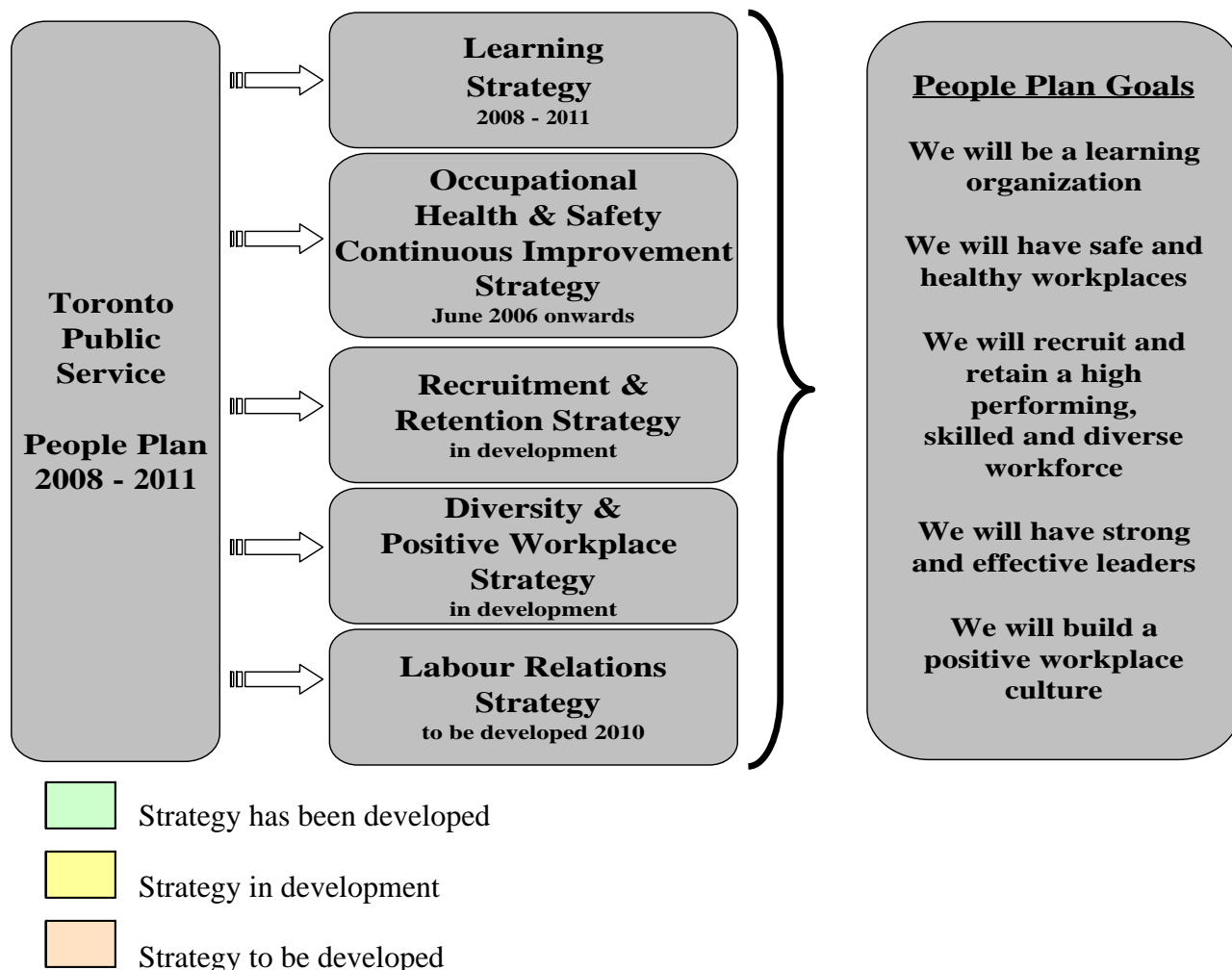
- We will be a learning organization
- We will have safe and healthy workplaces
- We will attract and retain a skilled, diverse and high performing workforce
- We will have strong and effective leaders
- We will build a positive work place culture

Each goal has objectives and proposed actions at both the divisional and corporate levels. The Plan also includes an environmental scan, people management challenges to be addressed, and preliminary metrics.

The Learning Strategy is the only specific strategy currently in place to address the goal of becoming a learning organization. Council adopted and approved the Learning Strategy 2008-2011 as a companion piece to the TPS People Plan in September 2008.

Strategies to Achieve the Goals

As part of the implementation of the People Plan, strategies will be developed that provide a more detailed plan on how the City will achieve the goals of the People Plan. The individual strategies will provide context, rationale, principles and other considerations as part of planning the steps necessary to achieve the goals of the People Plan. This section provides information on the Learning Strategy and the progress made in 2008 towards a Diversity and Positive Workplace Strategy that will be finalized in the fall of 2009.



The Learning Strategy

The Learning Strategy provides a framework for implementing two goals of the TPS People Plan:

- We will be a learning organization; and
- We will have strong and effective leaders

It describes the vision, roles and investments required to achieve them. The Learning Strategy was first developed and approved in 2007 by the Learning Strategy Sub-Committee of the Workforce Strategy Team. The scope of the Learning Strategy has been expanded to address the following recommendation in the February 2008 Blueprint for Fiscal Stability and Economic Prosperity report of the Mayor's Fiscal Review Panel:

“The City should develop a strategy for systematic and comprehensive staff training and education, including more internal resources for on-the-job training and retraining, as well as joint training initiatives with City unions.”

Purpose

The Learning Strategy is a first step toward a systematic and comprehensive training and development plan for the Toronto Public Service. It is a multi-year strategy to address the chronic under-investment in training and development that has existed since amalgamation. It is based on clear principles and accountability that require a measured and steady increase in funding to support divisional and corporate plans.

The Rationale and Principles for Moving Ahead

There are three primary principles that must be met for the Learning Strategy to succeed.

1. Commitment

The strategy lays a foundation for fundamental change and renewal that will take three to five years to achieve. The ability of the organization to remain committed to the overall goal through this implementation period will be a key factor in its long-term success.

2. Funding

The commitment of the organization must include a commitment to funding. This includes not only the up-front cost of training, but the hidden costs such as time required to learn. Training should be seen as an investment rather than cost. Although funding is critical, the City will pursue many effective learning methods that could involve little or no cost, e.g. mentoring, on-the-job learning, special assignments and projects.

3. Thinking

Ultimately, the success of the strategy hinges on a fundamental shift in thinking, both at the individual and organizational levels. Learning, in all its forms, must be valued and seen as a business imperative. Making this cultural change will require time and a commitment to stay the course.

To advance the Learning Strategy, four broad strategic goals are adopted to guide its direction and approaches:

Goal #1 - Review and adjust corporate policies and organizational practices

Adopting progressive management practices and policies that encourage innovation and continuous improvements will impact the City's ability to build and sustain a learning culture.

Goal #2 - Leverage technology to gain efficiencies in learning and learning administration

The City would target an enterprise wide system that will provide a learning solution that administers training, delivers programs, and shares knowledge efficiently and cost effectively. A blended approach will be adopted to tailor development to an employee's needs and learning style.

Goal #3 - Improve management, leadership and employee programs and experiences to enhance performance, development and potential

Building our internal capability is about investing in our people to build the specific skills and expand the capacity for each staff to fully realize their potential for excellent performance. Programs will be expanded and enhanced, with increased accessibility and delivered in a variety of formats to meet the unique needs of the City.

Goal #4 - Strengthen Commitment to a Learning Culture

Building a learning organization will ensure the City has the capacity to continuously improve, develop and reshape in order to meet the City's current and future challenges. A culture that shares and supports individual learning, along with group and cross functional levels will lead to a flexible and adaptable workforce. This strengthened commitment will enhance, attract and retain its fair share of talent, enabling employees to meet the challenges they face in serving the people of Toronto. It will also provide an environment that assists employees in achieving their personal career goals.

Much of the progress achieved to date under this strategy is captured in the TPS People Plan Annual Report under the two goal sections.

The Diversity and Positive Workplace Strategy (in development)

Similar to the Learning Strategy approved in 2008, the diversity and positive workplace strategy would create a consistent, integrated approach to the continuous improvement of our workplace, employment and employment practices, programs and services as they relate to employment equity, diversity, inclusion, staff engagement and positive workplace culture.

In late 2008, the Executive Director, Human Resources was offered the opportunity to receive a senior manager on secondment from the Federal government via the Government of Canada's Fellows Program. This is a special executive exchange program launched in 2006 by the Canada Public Service Agency to promote linkages between all levels of government and other sectors. The City was successful in receiving a senior executive for an 11 month placement reporting to the Executive Director, Human Resources and tasked with leading the research, consultation and development of a new Diversity and Positive Workplace Strategy. The assignment began in February 2009 as Special Advisor, Diversity and Positive Workplaces (Executive in Residence). The next annual report will describe the progress in developing and implementing the strategy and its alignment with the People Plan.

Divisional Strategic Workforce Planning

There are two components to the TPS People Plan: corporate initiatives and division level people plans. Similar to the Toronto Public Service People Plan process, the foundation for divisional strategic workforce planning is a division's strategic business or service directions and the corporate people plan's goals. A division's strategic directions provide the framework for where the business is going in the next three to five years while the Toronto Public Service People Plan provides the organization's overarching workforce priorities. Once a division has a clear picture of its future business directions, a division's management team works through an environmental scan to identify their particular people management challenges, it sets priorities and develops relevant strategies for closing gaps to meet its future operational success.

In 2008, three divisions launched a strategic workforce planning pilot with Human Resources support – Court Services, Municipal Licensing and Standards and Technical Services. Because the starting point for any strategic workforce plan is the operation's business plan, any changes to the operation that significantly impact business directions will affect the ability to undertake workforce planning. For example, the Municipal Licensing and Standards Division pilot that began in the fall of 2007 was deferred after a strong launch because of changes in the division, including the addition of a new business to the division. Similarly, because of the environmental scan component of the process, Technical Services undertook a major review of its strategic business plans, resulting in a deferral of its strategic workforce pilot until the future business directions have been determined.

Other divisions are interested in exploring strategic workforce planning. Five divisions (Municipal Licensing & Standards, Children's Services, Court Services, Human Resources and the City Clerk's Office) have completed the Human Resources Division's online Strategic Workforce Index questionnaire to gauge their workforce strengths and gaps.

Divisions using the Workforce Strategy Index questionnaire are assessing their workforce using three building blocks of a strategic workforce plan:

- **Workforce Engagement** (establishing a workplace that maximizes the potential and commitment of employees);
- **Talent Acquisition** (recruiting the right people with the right skills to drive divisional priorities; and
- **Talent Retention and Knowledge Transfer** (retaining key talent for critical work and protecting against loss of corporate memory).

Court Services is expected to be the first division to complete its people plan in the summer of 2009.

Looking At 2009 and Beyond

Strategic workforce planning is forward looking, linking the organization's future business directions to people planning. While part of this report is a look back on the activities divisions

and Human Resources have implemented in support of the People Plan, this is also the time to think about our future and the activities underway in 2009 and beyond.

The challenge division heads and directors face is balancing the short term fluctuations in our environment that create the need for immediate responses with the chronic demographic issues we know this organization will continue to face including:

- fewer people in the labour market to meet our hiring needs
- skill shortages in certain job families
- the potential for significant knowledge and skill losses due to boomer retirements, especially at the senior management level
- the need to better reflect the diversity of our community especially at senior manager and manager levels
- challenges in attracting, retaining and engaging employees as competition for talent eventually intensifies and workforce demographics shift

Divisions' Priority Ranking of Toronto Public Service People Plan Objectives

For the first time, the Human Resources Division asked divisions to assist in setting its work plan priorities. Using the Toronto Public Service People Plan's goals and objectives as a framework, 40 division heads ranked each objective based on a self-assessed willingness to expend time, energy or resources towards the achievement of each objective.

There were three clear findings from this data.

1. There was quite a variation in divisions' rank ordering of the objectives, which probably reflects the breadth of businesses, work environments, sizes of the divisions and extent to which they were already implementing strategic human resources programs.
2. Divisions tended to rank objectives that had a clear division focus as greater priorities than corporate-focused objectives. This probably reflects a desire to ensure the objectives have a clear and direct benefit to divisions.
3. While we assumed certain objectives would be ranked as priority, (due to legislative requirements, for example) it appeared that division heads selected objectives that represented areas of new opportunity for investment because of the work they were already doing.

As a result and to force a clear priority ranking, Human Resources conducted a weighted average process (see Appendix 1). The Human Resources Division will use the information to help shape its work plans and service priorities for the next couple of years.

Conclusion

Overall, in 2008 there was significant progress in implementing the People Plan by the divisions and corporately most notably perhaps in the goals related to health and safety, learning and in leadership. Divisions have implemented different actions under the People Plan that reflect the different businesses, working environments and issues to be addressed.

While there continues to be much work needed to implement fully the Toronto Public Service People Plan, particularly in assisting divisions to develop their own people plans, the expectation is that issues will be addressed over the plan's three-year cycle and beyond. The downturn in the economy may shift short term priorities and has potentially given us a brief reprieve from the looming staff and skill shortage crisis. However, it has only delayed the problem. The City of Toronto must continue to focus on longer term planning and work on solutions to address the approaching workforce issues now while we have the luxury of thoughtful preparation. The input from Division Heads has provided a sense of direction in how Human Resources and the divisions will together continue to press forward in implementing the People Plan's commitments.

As indicated at the beginning of the Annual Report, the area of greatest opportunity for demonstrating our collective successes and for improvement is in developing and refining People Plan performance measures, particularly "lead indicators" that demonstrate the long term value of having a comprehensive workforce plan operating at both the divisional and at the corporate levels. The Human Resources Division has committed to improve its ability throughout the plan's life cycle to identify lead measures, to enhance its ability to capture relevant data, and to measure and report on its progress.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Toronto Public Service People Plan 2008 Annual Report