Developing Talent Management Plans (example from Statistics Canada)

What is talent management?
Talent management is the application of integrated people management practices that enable an organization to plan for, attract, engage and retain talented employees in support of the realization of the organization’s key business objectives.

When should talent management plans be created?
Identifying and recognizing talented employees and offering a formal talent management plan are important components of an organization’s employee performance management program. Talent management plans are typically triggered by managers and supervisors in one of two ways:

1. At year-end, employees with a performance rating of Surpassed must be offered a talent management plan. Although the manager or supervisor must offer a plan, it is up to the employees to choose if they would like to proceed with a talent management plan or not.
2. At anytime during the year, a manager or supervisor can initiate a talent management plan in consultation with the employee. This is typically done when the employee is already exhibiting exemplary performance and is on-track for a rating of Surpassed at year-end. In some cases, the manager and supervisor may also wish to implement an in-year talent management plan for employees who they considered a strong Succeeded + (Succeeded + overall with a Surpassed in either their work objectives or core competencies rating). In both situations, initiating a talent management plan prior to the year-end gives the employee and his or her manager or supervisor a head start on development activities.

Talent management plans are meant to go well beyond the focused job related learning and development found in an employee’s learning and development plan. Talent management plans concentrate on developing the skills, competencies and experience of employees with outstanding performance to position them for future career possibilities.

Why is accurately identifying talented employees important?
Creating a talent management plan and implementing and supporting additional measures to assist in an employee’s enhanced development take some additional effort on the part of managers or supervisors, but it is time well spent. If a manager or supervisor does not accurately assess, rate, develop and recognize his or her employees, including those eligible for talent management plans, the employees will eventually move onto another area that better supports employee development and talent management principles and practices.
What constitutes a talent management plan?

Talent management plans are typically designed for one year, however, they can be longer or shorter, depending on the specifics of the employee’s situation.

Although each talent management plan will be tailored to the specific competency (abilities and skills) development needs and interests of the employee, there are some suggested components outlined below (not an exhaustive list):

- additional training or leadership development activities (over and above what is in the employee’s learning plan);
- conference attendance;
- participating in or leading departmental and interdepartmental committees or working groups;
- involvement in bilateral meetings with other statistical agencies or organizations;
- assignments or secondments;
- job shadowing for the next level;
- additional coaching or mentoring;
- education support programs;
- cross-functional opportunities (contributing to the work of interdepartmental teams or to horizontal initiatives);
- participation in national and international committees;
- participation in professional organizations and communities of practice.

To be realistic and effective, the talent management plan should focus on developing one or two specific competencies and concentrate on enhancing the employee’s strengths.

After the plan is developed, what is the next step?

Once a talent management plan has been drafted for an employee, the manager or supervisor should discuss it with his or her own manager and/or director. Directors are asked to bring each talent management plan to the Branch or Field Review Panel. The review panel is mandated to provide advice on all talent management plans, to review the progress of each plan at various points during its lifecycle, and to consider talented employees in the context of Branch and Field strategic human resources planning and succession planning.

In conclusion

Identifying and accurately assessing talented employees and offering talent management plans are an important part of an organization’s employee performance management program. Talent management planning is well supported by divisional management teams, agency review panels, and the Human Resources Branch. Applying the required due diligence to assessing and rating employee
performance, to employee development and engagement, and to the creation and monitoring of talent management plans are important ingredients in ensuring a strong future for employees and the organization.

Annex A – Talent management plan example template

1. **Employee’s Consent**
   In this field, the employee consents to having a talent management plan developed. Employees who check the “No” box will be considered as having been offered one.

2. **Employee’s Information**
   This includes the employee’s identification number, surname and given name, group and level, organization, and work location.

3. **Year the Plan Is Established**
   The year in which the talent management plan is established.

4. **Previous Year’s Performance Rating**
   This includes each of the three ratings for work objectives, core competencies and overall performance from the previous cycle’s year-end assessment. Space is also provided for employees to enter ratings they received for functional and technical competencies, if applicable.

5. **Employee’s Linguistic Proficiency**
   The employee is responsible for inputting the information in this section, which includes their first official language, second language evaluation results (if any), and any other languages in which they are proficient.

6. **Employee’s Profile**
   This information generates an overall profile of the employee’s skills, knowledge and experience, as well as openness to new challenges, adaptability, perseverance, and ability to learn and grow. This information will be used by the manager or supervisor and the review panel. Employees are responsible for completing these fields and are encouraged to use their résumés to assist them in doing so.

   - Educational achievements
   - Professional designations, affiliations and certifications
   - **Work accomplishments and strengths**: Employees should provide two to three paragraphs that describe specific achievements, results and impact on their work. Employees are encouraged to highlight the strengths that have helped them succeed, for example, organizational ability, persuasiveness, attention to detail, perseverance, creativity, problem-solving skills, analytical skills, etc.
• **Volunteer experience:** Employees can describe their contributions and the impact of their volunteer activity to demonstrate the range of their talents, abilities and interests.

• **Awards/recognition:** Employees may include formal and informal acknowledgements they have received for their work and volunteer activities.

• **Other:** Employees may include information on achievements in, for example, recreational, artistic, musical or sporting activities, i.e., accomplishments that demonstrate behavioural qualities such as resilience, ability to focus and personal determination.

7. **Employee’s Career Interests**
   The employee provides information on his or her public service career interests. Employees should briefly explain what is of interest to them. Information must be as specific as possible to help in identifying potential assignments or positions.

   To help in making their selections and providing details on why specific options interest them, employees can ask themselves questions such as:
   - What are my career aspirations?
   - In what areas do I want to get more experience?
   - Do I want more experience or influence in my functional area, or am I interested in a management position?
   - Am I interested in a stretch assignment?
   - Am I interested in a lateral move to gain experience in a different area?
   - Am I interested in moving to another department or agency to get that experience?
   - Would experience outside the public service help me develop and achieve my public service career aspirations?

8. **Talent Management Plan Desired Outcome**
   The employee and the manager or supervisor have enough information to begin working collaboratively to develop the details of the talent management plan. The first step is to agree on a desired outcome or goal. This statement should describe, in general terms, what the employee is to be prepared for.

   The desired outcome should be a 30- to 45-word statement that reflects the best possible match between the employee’s achievements, work accomplishments and strengths in terms of his or her career progression, and what the public service workforce needs. It may identify a type of project or new role, or a specific position or occupational group for which the employee is to be prepared. Or, it may include a general reference to developing capacities or gaining experience to develop the employee for the project, role, position or occupational group.
9. Developmental Plan Items
This table identifies talent management developmental activities to achieve the talent management plan’s desired outcome.

The first step is to formulate one or more objectives. Each objective should describe a specific action or developmental target required to achieve the plan’s desired outcome, such as developing a competency or skill related to the requirements for a new position, or a special assignment for the employee to gain the on-the-job experience required for a type of project identified in the desired outcome statement. Each talent management objective must be “SMART” (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Trackable/time-bound).

Then, with advice from HR and/or her or his management table or review panel, the manager or supervisor works with the employee to identify the specific talent management developmental activity to achieve the objective. As with learning and development activities, the type of the activity is identified alongside estimates of its cost, time and projected end date. Comment boxes for the employee and the manager or supervisor are provided for each activity so that both may document progress at regular intervals and keep track of any issues that arise. As the plan progresses, the manager or supervisor and the employee can work collaboratively to update this information at any time, including adding additional objectives and talent management developmental activities if the employee requires them to achieve the plan’s desired outcome.

10. Closure of the Talent Management Plan
The manager or supervisor closes the talent management plan when it has been completed, indicating whether the desired outcome has been met or is no longer applicable. In the latter case, a text field is provided for the manager or supervisor to indicate the reason.

11. Comments
The manager or supervisor and the employee may document general information as the talent management plan proceeds and keep a record of, for example, key milestones achieved, dates of meetings and what was discussed, and so on. When the plan is closed, the manager or supervisor and employee may also include feedback about the overall effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of the talent management activities in advancing the employee’s career progression.