



Government  
Veterinary  
Services

**Government Veterinary Services**

# **Talent Management and Succession Planning Strategy**

**Date in format: September 2017**

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## 1. Context

The Government Veterinary Services (GVS) is one of the smaller professions in government. Significant change in the organisational landscape has reduced the opportunities for GVS members to progress up the career ladder within the profession and for senior managers to manage staff moves to assist with talent management and succession planning. Coupled with this, reductions in staff has impacted on the available pool for succession and the number of senior mentors/role models.

There is an ongoing need to review our approach to talent management in order to accelerate the current cadre and fill the gaps that exist in our succession plans. An expectation has been set in the Civil Service Capabilities Plan that all government professions will identify and develop talent to provide strong succession pipelines. Heads of Profession have been tasked with proactively managing and deploying talent corporately across government departments.

This strategy is intended to support the identification and development of high potential GVS members in order to establish a strong pipeline for future senior/critical GVS roles. The strategy is aimed at all veterinary staff.

## 2. Vision

A commitment to facilitate opportunities for interchange across Government, professional-wide approach to talent management and succession planning which is fair, transparent and inclusive. Using methods like mentoring to expose individuals to other roles at a higher more challenging level. By developing and retaining high-calibre staff, we will secure the veterinary expertise and capability required to deliver government priorities and objectives across the Civil Service in the future. Whilst the strategy focuses on those on the top row of the talent grid, there will be the recognition that other staff are valued and we will continue to support others with progressions and development. As a result, we will have engaged and skilled veterinary leaders in the right posts at the right time.

## 3. Purpose

- To address any immediate gaps in the succession pipeline to senior GVS roles;
- To build a strong succession pipeline to senior/critical GVS roles for the future;
- To build expertise and capability across the Veterinary Profession, including against the four Civil Service Capabilities Plan priorities.

## 4. Objectives

As a profession we will:

- a) Identify GVS members who are suitable for Corporate and Veterinary Civil Service talent schemes and help them gain access to those schemes;
- b) Help develop individuals and, in doing so, seek to build strong succession plans and capability within the profession using consistent benchmarks and standards.
- c) Match our most high potential people with the most critical roles.

As a result, we will have:

- greater visibility of the internal pool to fill vacancies faster and more efficiently;
- improved staff engagement and staff retention, as a result of a more visible commitment to career development.

## 5. Evaluation

The veterinary performance evaluation is intended to supplement, and must not replace, the performance management appraisal and career conversations between veterinary employees and their line managers.

The evaluation will involve the capture and consideration of the generic performance appraisal assessment level, career conversation levels derived from talent assessments and additional information gathered at face to face meetings with individual veterinarians that specifically relate to veterinary aspirations to identify existing talent and those with the aspirations and ability to progress.

Evaluations will take place on an annual basis at the same time as the generic talent management assessment within individual organisations, ideally in the same career conversation and, where necessary, involving a relevant senior veterinary manager as well as the immediate line manager. It will be important to ensure that assessments include both technical/ veterinary skills, competences and behaviours.

Results of the evaluations will be used by the Head of Profession and GVS Talent Board to form a baseline assessment of veterinary capability individually by organisations and more widely across the Civil Service. The results will further inform veterinary-specific talent management within the Civil Service and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to effective succession planning for business critical roles.

## 6. High Potential – how to define it

The Civil Service Talent Grid has three levels of high performance – High Potential, Excellent and Star.

High Potential are those individuals with strong initial impact, but new or inexperienced in current role. Ready for stretch through a variety of roles to develop sustained performance.

**Excellent** are those individuals who frequently achieve challenging and stretching goals with strong demonstration of potential. Very experienced at grade/band and acknowledged as a leader. Performance continually improving and now ready to consider roles at the next level.

**Star** are individuals who are exceptional performers who stand out from their peers. Realised potential and ready for/will be successful at next level now. Acknowledged as a leader and role model.

### Assessing potential – what to think about

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Ability</b></p> <p>This explores how far an individual shows the ‘stretch to do and ability to learn in a role with increased complexity and ambiguity, greater use of sound judgement and wider role span.</p>	<p><b>Behaviours</b> expected of our leaders</p>
	<p><b>Technical and functional skills</b> in line with the GVS and Civil Service competence frameworks</p>
	<p><b>Attitudes and responses needed for success at the next level</b> – drive and perseverance to achieve results, resilience, desire to improve their performance, intelligence, awareness of self and impact on others</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Engagement</b></p> <p>Explores how committed to the civil service the individual is at an emotional and rational level.</p>	<p><b>An emotional and rational commitment to the organisation</b> – deriving pride, enjoyment or meaning and a sense of appropriate reward for their contribution</p>
	<p><b>Discretionary effort</b> without prompting</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Aspiration</b></p>	<p><b>Ambition</b> to progress</p>

<p>Considers the level of desire to progress (accepting this varies at different stages of people’s lives) and the motivation to learn and develop.</p>	<p>Has a track record of <b>setting and achieving their own challenging goals</b></p>
<p><b>Leadership Values</b></p> <p>Considers the individual’s ability to personally role model both the Civil Service values and the leadership values of pace, passion, pride and professionalism.</p>	<p>Consistently seeks out opportunities for <b>core learning and Continued Professional Development</b></p> <p>Inspiration - Shows pride in and passion for public service by showing purpose, direction, clarity and enthusiasm</p> <p>Confident – straightforward, truthful and candid in communications, supporting our teams to succeed and be team players.</p> <p>Empowering – our teams to deliver, to be visible, approachable, and welcome challenge, however uncomfortable and investing in the capabilities of our people, to be effective now and in the future</p>

The following criteria have been established for identifying high potential GVS staff.

- Sound and proven professional competence, with a specific requirement for an understanding of risk assessment and communication;
  - The ability to work well with other professionals as part of multidisciplinary teams and build effective networks;
  - Leads from the front, communicates with clarity, conviction and enthusiasm and inspires others to engage;
  - Negotiating and influencing ability/potential;
  - Proactive in development of self and others;
  - A reputation for delivery, ability to work with pace and sets work in the context of the bigger picture;
  - Personal aspiration and flexibility (e.g. geographical location, type of role) in order to widen skills/experience;
- 9 box grid marking (i.e. High Potential, Excellent and Star) on corporate talent schemes (or equivalent in other departments).

## 7. Process

### Step 1 – Assessing Talent

- a) Evaluations will be completed annually with input from the relevant senior veterinary manager and line manager using a talent assessment, Civil Service Competency framework and GVS Competence framework.
- b) Managers will assess suitability for corporate schemes, as well as suitability for more senior GVS roles, taking into account individuals career aspirations and personal circumstances.

### Step 2 – Preparing vacancy map and assessing critical roles

- a) Government Departments and Agencies to prepare their initial critical roles succession plan to assess the strength of the pipeline to senior and critical GVS roles.
- b) Government Departments and Agencies to prepare vacancy map for GVS roles at Grade 6 and above.

### Step 3 – GVS Talent Board

- a) GVS Talent Board to review outputs to calibrate results, draw together a GVS-wide assessment and to revisit critical role succession plan.

## 8. Roles/Responsibilities

	Role	Responsibilities
Head of Profession	Senior Responsible Owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leads GVS, promoting corporate and collaborative working across government</li><li>• Takes a leading and influential role in talent management and succession planning for vets across Government</li><li>• Oversees senior GVS appointments across Government</li><li>• Leads and chairs the GVS Talent</li></ul>

		Board/Steering Group
<p>GVS Steering Group</p>	<p>To set the talent strategy for GVS and oversee progress.</p> <p>To champion talent management.</p> <p>To ensure high-potential leaders are managed and developed corporately so that the best individuals are ready to fill future leadership roles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve the GVS talent management strategy and direction of travel</li> <li>• Oversee the progress of the talent management strategy and track benefits/effectiveness</li> <li>• Promote the GVS talent management strategy across Government [and wider]</li> <li>• Calibrate assessment to ensure consistency of standards across Government and draw together the GVS-wide assessment</li> <li>• Develop and maintain a succession plan for critical roles</li> <li>• Consider opportunities for managed moves as a first step to SCS vacancy filling</li> <li>• Take a special interest in high-potential staff, supporting their development and career progression in the Civil Service</li> <li>• Define and gain cross-Government for support for and maintain a GVS organisational structure (posts and grades) that enables career progression and development</li> </ul>

<p>GVS Talent Board</p>	<p>To maintain an overview across all departments to ensure they are all joined up.</p> <p>Provide progress updates to the GVS Steering Group.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the GVS talent management strategy across Government and wider</li> <li>• Oversee the progress of the GVS strategy and its effectiveness</li> <li>• Liaise with other departments to explore secondment opportunities</li> <li>• Design and implement a communication plan to support the strategy, ensuring effective communications with GVS members and departmental HR contacts</li> </ul>
<p>Senior Leaders and Managers</p>	<p>To support the development of high potential staff and implement the GVS talent management strategy across Government</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage all staff to take ownership of their own careers and drive their own development</li> <li>• Ensure completion of the processes set out in the GVS strategy to agreed timescales</li> <li>• Provide all veterinary staff with open and honest feedback on performance and potential, skills gaps and career prospects</li> <li>• Support, encourage and manage high-potential veterinary staff to gain breadth and depth of experience, releasing staff where appropriate to develop skills</li> <li>• Leaders in large</li> </ul>

		<p>departments and agencies to share knowledge and expertise with smaller departments and agencies to encourage common standards and consistency across Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work in partnership with other Professions across Government to enable roles and opportunities to be identified and defined that provide stretch/development for vets</li> </ul>
Individuals	To take ownership for personal development and career progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commit to self-development, including development to meet the needs of the Civil Service Capabilities Plan and changing business requirements</li> <li>• Actively seek out and act on feedback</li> <li>• Find opportunities to improve corporate contribution and breadth of knowledge to succeed in future recruitment</li> </ul>

## 9. The offer

All GVS members have access to Civil Service Learning, which is applicable across the Civil Service. In addition to this, all GVS members will be supported in completing learning and development objectives as part of their CPD/development plans, via discussion with managers. There will be the expectation that the recognised top talent will drive their own development and seek opportunities for themselves by creating a balance between individual commitments with the support of GVS.

Members of the GVS Talent Steering Group will commit to making available opportunities for those staff identifies as having high potential. These could include work shadowing, networking opportunities, project work to develop specific skills or to gain exposure to stakeholders/situations, and access to mentors.

## 10. Principles, terms and conditions

- We will comply with data protection principles at all times.
- Membership of the GVS high-potential stream comes with responsibilities and individuals will need to fulfil these to continue membership of the stream. There may be a degree of career management initiated to harness potential.
- It does not guarantee promotion. It should however help individuals gain the skills and experience necessary for promotion.
- The high-potential stream population will be reviewed annually and continued membership will depend on continued demonstration of potential and performance.

## 11. Implementation/Communications plans

The GVS communications workstream will make successful implementation of the Talent Management Strategy one of its objectives. Existing platforms will be used to advertise, or alert to, opportunities and vacancies and better publicise what is available. This will include cascades via managers, the GVS website and the CSL professions page. User needs will be assessed to see if there are other digital platforms that would be useful in addition to these existing methods. It is anticipated that GVS will publish case studies and/ or blogs and create opportunities for interaction and discussion (eg forums).

## 12. Timetable and review process

Annually the timetable should be aligned with the corporate talent scheme.

Success criteria:

- We will have identified critical senior GVS posts in Defra by **July 2016**
- We will have identified critical senior GVS posts across the rest of GVS by **October 2017**
- We will have identified an initial cohort of high-potential staff across GVS by **December 2017**

- We will have at least one potential successor identified for each critical senior post in Defra by **September 2017**; with a target of at least two successors by **April 2018** (in Departments and for posts where this is appropriate)
- We will increase the number of managed moves, loans and interchange opportunities etc. across Government.
- We will roll-out a wider (long-term) talent management strategy across Government from **January 2018**

## Annex 1: Useful guidance and reference documents

### Civil Service Learning:

- Giving Feedback
- Managing People – Coaching Skills
- Holding career conversations <https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk/Talent>.
- Managing Self – personal objective setting; action planning
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Competency Framework
- The Government Veterinary Surgeons Competence Framework
- Career Development Discussion

### Reference documents

#### The Government Veterinary Surgeons Competence framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-veterinary-surgeons-competence-framework>

#### Career Development Discussion

[https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/line\\_managers\\_talent\\_toolkit\\_24\\_03\\_16.pdf](https://civilservicelearning.civilservice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/line_managers_talent_toolkit_24_03_16.pdf)

#### Competency Framework

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/436073/cscf\\_fulla4potrait\\_2013-2017\\_v2d.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/436073/cscf_fulla4potrait_2013-2017_v2d.pdf)