



LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
CMC	Core Management Competencies
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Development
KRAs	Key Result Areas
PAs	Performance Agreements
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act, 2002
PMDS	Performance and Management Development System
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SDR	Service Delivery Review
SMS	Senior Management Services
SMSH	Senior Management Service Handbook
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
T&D	Training and Development



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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

“While much has been done to improve the functioning of the Public Service, significant challenges still lie ahead. Major concerns still constitute various facets of capacity which need to be addressed. Most significantly these include the capacity for optimal utilization of human resources, the capacity for more consistent policy implementation, the capacity for fully achieving a citizen-centered Public Service and improving the management of performance” (The State of Public Service Report, 2006:15).

1.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an orientation of the study on the capacity building support in the senior public service of the North West Province of South Africa. Bearing in mind the above statement, it provides a background to the study, followed by the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of concepts and the organisation of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Until 27th April 1994, South Africa was divided administratively into four provinces, six self-governing territories (homelands) and four independent states. The provinces were the Cape Province, Natal Province, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, whereas the self-governing territories were Gazankulu, KaNgwane, Kwa Ndebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa and QwaQwa. The independent states consisted of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC States). However, the advent of a new political order, particularly the introduction of a



new Interim Constitution, and later a permanent one, ushered in a completely new order underpinned by the principles of democracy and non-racialism. This has resulted in the amalgamation and reordering of government departments and the creation of new provinces. These changes, taken together, necessitate a new strategic direction and sustainable service delivery impact in the public service of South Africa and, in particular, the North West Province. Within this perspective, therefore, strategic leadership capability, among others, at senior public service level must be cultivated. In particular, the senior public servants must be effectively and systematically supported during their preparation and development with a view to achieving shared superior performance and public service capability.

At present, however, the government is constituted as national, provincial and local spheres of government, which are distinctive, interdependent and interrelated (the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 Act 108 of 1996). According to the Constitution, provinces may have legislative and executive powers concurrently with the national sphere over, among other things: agriculture; casinos, racing, gambling and wagering; cultural affairs; education at all levels, excluding higher education; environment, health services; housing; language policy; nature conservation; police services; provincial public media; public transport; regional planning and development; road traffic and development; road – traffic regulation; tourism; trade and



industrial promotion; traditional authorities; urban and rural development; vehicle licensing; and welfare services.

Furthermore, under the new Constitution, provincial governments have relatively few areas of exclusive legislative competence (Pottie, 2000:41). Provinces have executive authority only to the extent that they have the necessary administrative capacity and the national government may, under some circumstances, take over functions that a provincial government cannot properly perform. The national government also bears a responsibility to ensure that the provinces build that capacity. The exclusive areas of provincial legislative competence are set out in Part A of Schedule 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, as follows: abattoirs; ambulance services; archives other than national archives; libraries other than national libraries; liquor licences; museums other than national museums; provincial planning; provincial cultural matters; provincial recreation and sport; provincial roads and traffic; and veterinary services excluding regulation of the profession. Provincial government also has oversight powers with respect to certain areas of local government.



In this respect, the Constitution assigns to provinces the strategic functions noted below (Titus, 2000: 19).

(1) A strategic role

Provinces have to develop a vision and framework for integrated economic, social and community development in the province through the respective provincial growth and development strategies.

(2) A development role

Provincial governments should ensure that municipal planning and budgetary processes give priority to the basic needs of the community and promote social and economic development.

(3) An intergovernmental role

Provincial governments should establish forums and processes for the purpose of including local government and traditional leaders in decision-making.

(4) A regulatory role

Section 155 (7) of the Constitution gives national and provincial governments the legislative and executive authority to see to the effective performance by municipalities of their own functions through legislative and other means.



(5) An institutional development and capacity building role

Provincial governments establish municipalities, and are enjoined by section 155 (6) of the Constitution to promote the development of local government capacity to enable municipalities to perform their functions and manage their own affairs. These responsibilities give provincial government an important role in the institutional development of municipalities.

(6) A fiscal role

Provincial governments play a role in monitoring the financial status of municipalities through the implementation of project viability by the provincial task teams.

(7) A monitoring role

Provincial governments have a key role in monitoring local government in order to ensure that high standards of public service and good government are maintained.

(8) An intervention role

Provincial governments are given powers to intervene in the affairs of local government to protect and promote minimum standards of local government service delivery and ensure that local government fulfils its constitutional mandate.



For the provinces (presently Eastern Cape, Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, Limpopo, North West, and Western Cape) to exercise their legislative and executive powers and specifically to perform their concurrent and exclusive functions, the Constitution requires that each them should have its own legislature consisting of between 30 and 80 members. The legislative authority is empowered to make laws for the province in accordance with the Constitution. Laws made by the North West Provincial legislature are applicable only within the territory of the North West Province. Administratively, the Executive Council of a province consists of a Premier and a number of members (MECs).

Furthermore, the Premier is elected by the Provincial Legislature. In terms of Section 132, the Premier is responsible for the observance of the provisions of the Constitution and all other laws by the Executive Committee of the province. He or she must be competent to exercise and perform the following powers and functions, namely: to assent to, sign and promulgate bills duly passed by the provincial legislature; in the event of a procedural shortcoming in the legislative process, to refer back to the provincial legislature for further consideration, a bill passed by such legislature; to convene meetings of the Executive Council; to appoint commissions of inquiry; to make such appointments as may be necessary under powers conferred upon him or her by the 1996



Constitution or any other law and to proclaim referenda and plebiscites in terms of the Constitution or a provincial law.

Equally, subsection 7 (2) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994), provides that every one of the nine provinces will have its own provincial administration headed by a director-general. For every province an appropriate provincial administrative system will have to be devised. Subsection 196 of Act 108 of 1996 provides that there is a single Public Service Commission for the Republic of South Africa.

The establishment of provincial government poses a number of administrative and financial challenges for South Africa. According to Pottie (2000: 38), nine new provinces had to be demarcated for electoral and administrative purposes. In some cases former homeland administrations had to be integrated with the previous regional structures of the apartheid era and the new provincial legislatures had to be established from scratch. Notwithstanding these challenges, the government is faced with the monumental task of addressing the problems that are related to service delivery to all citizens of the Republic of South Africa, in particular to capacitate those who are in government and promote accountability. Specifically, provinces are restricted in the main by their lack of flexibility to respond effectively to local conditions. They are also hampered by their inability to restructure departments around the needs of service delivery and the constraints



placed upon them by budget formats (The Provincial Review Report, 1997:6).

In the new South Africa, the public service is an instrument through which the government can ensure the delivery of services to all citizens. Its capacity to deliver and expand basic services will be the difference between a stable political economy driving development in South Africa, or a volatile country beset with massive inadequacies in service delivery (Kroukamp, 1996:1). In this respect, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), which is government's policy framework for integrated and coherent socio-economic progress, constitutes the foundation upon which senior public servants in the provincial government find their new managerial and leadership mandates and roles to serve the public. In terms of the RDP, the public service must be capacitated so that it is accessible, transparent, accountable, efficient, free from corruption and it provides an excellent quality of service (White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1997). The White Paper on Service Delivery (*Batho Pele White Paper*) is equally significant in this regard.

Therefore, the issue for government is not about whether or not the provinces are important, but it is more about ensuring that provinces are properly capacitated so that they can give full effect to their constitutional mandates (Titus, 2000:17). This, in essence, does not



exclude the importance of committed political leadership and competent senior public servants at provincial levels of government with a view to ensuring that the national government values the continued existence of provincial government and realises its objective in the Republic of South Africa. However, it supposes that the operating environment of the public service must promote good leadership and effective management by allowing leaders and managers to discharge their functions and responsibilities and promote the development of leadership and management capacity.

Thus, the need to enhance good governance and effective management makes it essential for the South African government to recognise strong leadership and managerial capacity of the senior public servants as indispensable requirements. In this regard, the World Bank Report (1997: 81) called for three essential building blocks: firstly, strong central capacity for formulating and co-ordinating policy, including vision, goals and strategic priorities on the place of politicians and the public service alike; secondly, an efficient and effective delivery system, setting the balance between flexibility and accountability, including contracts for contestable services, better performance and client feedback; and thirdly, motivated and capable staff with incentive structures to motivate them to perform well, including merit-based recruitment and promotion, adequate pay and a strong *esprit de corps*.



Despite the enormous management responsibilities vested in the Provincial Administration, not much empirical assessment of institutional support for capacity building of the senior public servants has been undertaken. This study, therefore, focuses on the support for managerial capacity building of senior public servants in one of the provincial governments of South Africa: North West Province (As per a reference map in **Annexure A**). This province is the product of an amalgamation, and possibly integration, of three former geographical entities, namely, Bophuthatswana, a portion of the former Transvaal Provincial Administration (TPA) and a small part of the former Cape Provincial Administration (CPA).

1.3 Statement of the problem

According to the Provincial Review Report (1997: 73-74), the transformation of the public service from one directed to controlling the people of the country to one that serves them is difficult. Many of the problems of service delivery in South Africa have either been inherited from the apartheid era or are a product of it. As such, there is an over-centralisation of management control in provinces and there are few performance targets set and little monitoring of performance with a view to improving service delivery. Essentially, staff do not have sufficient skills or understanding of the importance of financial management to oversee the funds of provincial departments appropriately. Moreover, some provinces still need to create



departmental structures in line with their functions and activities (Provincial Review Report, 1997: 6-7). The findings of the report are significant and show that the senior public servants must be prepared and developed in order to function effectively in the new democratic dispensation.

Currently, the need to make managerial and leadership skills a key priority has been identified throughout government because of the poor performance of the public service, as reported in the State of the Public Service Reports (2005, 2006), and in the 2006 official speeches delivered by the President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki and the Minister for the Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi. Specifically, the Minister for Public Service and Administration pointed out "... we continue to confront many instances where the commitment and the provision of resources does not translate into adequate action on the part of the public service", detailing that "a component of the challenge of ensuring a responsive senior public sector leadership resides in attracting and retaining the right people. That is, people who have the required skills and who are committed to service in a complex and changing environment" (Fraser-Moleketi, 2005:11). However, this challenge is not new or unique to South Africa; for instance, Karrigan and Luke (1989:904) maintained that there is a widespread recognition that developing countries suffer from a lack of management capacities and that this scarcity of



indigenous talent is a major, if not the major, constraint in stimulating national development.

Thus, the public service requires systematic and holistic capacity building support with a view to ensuring that the management and leadership competencies are nurtured and cultured. This is sufficient to enable those who handle the generic administrative functions strategically to serve the public in line with the constitutional principles of public administration as set out in Section 195. In particular, effective capacity building and execution are fundamental transformational innovations which must be implemented to enable provinces to gain their meaningful legislative and executive autonomy and also to satisfy the most critical and immediate needs of the people in their jurisdictions (Mabeta, 2000: 87).

Effective public management nowadays requires systematic and holistic institutional capacity support with a view to building the capacity of senior public servants to perform the generic administrative functions (policy, personnel, financing, organising, work procedures and control) with technical and professional competencies. Given the context of the South African government in the era of transformation, the new vision of the public service and the unprecedented public services performance after ten years of democratic governance, it is hypothesised that effective public management in the North West Province can be





achieved if senior public servants are prepared and developed by the public service in a systematic and holistic manner. This requires appreciation of how the North West provincial government has transformed its philosophies, systems, structures, processes and policies with a view to supporting and guiding the actions and conduct of the senior public servants systematically and holistically to achieve strategic goals and objectives which, in the main, are aligned to the vision of the public service in South Africa.

To this end, the research question that drives the study is:

To what degree have governance and leadership impacted on the capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West provincial government of South Africa?

1.4 Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to assess the institutional support for capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West provincial government. More specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- (1) to determine how the North West province prepares its senior public servants;
- (2) to determine how the North West province develops its senior public servants;



- (3) to determine and evaluate the diagnostic mechanisms required to support the capacity of senior public servants.

Based on the main research question, the objectives of the study pursued the subsidiary questions which are noted below.

- (1) What is the state of public service in the present public management, compared to the traditional public administration period?
- (2) What principles of governance have been central to the changes in the public service?
- (3) What objectives and functions must the senior public servants perform in order to manage the public service effectively?
- (4) What are the management and leadership competencies which profile senior public servants?
- (5) How are the senior public servants prepared in the North West Province?
- (6) How are the senior public servants developed in the North West Province?
- (7) What diagnostic mechanisms have been institutionalised to support and evaluate the managerial capacity building of the senior public servants?
- (8) How effective are these diagnostic mechanisms in supporting the managerial capacity of the senior public servants in the public service?



1.5 Significance of the study

The government is faced with a daunting task of establishing itself as an effective and trusted vehicle for translating its objectives contained in the Reconstruction and Development Programme into reality. This task cannot be fulfilled without preparing and developing those already appointed in government to meet the challenges inherent in the governance and management processes. The study will therefore be a major contribution to the discipline of Public Administration in the developing world, in the sense that its focus is contemporary and has not been given special attention so far since the birth of democracy in South Africa after eleven years of democratic governance and leadership. The study will generate the theoretical knowledge concerning Public Administration in the area of effective human resource management practice, thereby contributing towards good governance and effective public management in the public service of North West Province.

Furthermore, addressing the capacity challenge in the Public Service requires dedicated leadership from the executive and senior management levels (State of the Public Service Report, 2006: 10). Without doubt, leadership must be felt at all the management and operational levels. Therefore, the evaluation of the institutional support for capacity building of the senior public servants will be an effort to generate capacity and knowledge to drive government policy in the



North West Province. Finally, the public service in the North West Province has both a history and a future. The future is for the current public servants and those who wish to work for government. The study undertakes to close the gap between them by providing best ways for institutional succession planning and enhancing public service confidence, leadership and skills to proceed with improvements about what works and how.

1.6 Definition of concepts

It is helpful to consider some definitions which have been developed to appreciate this study. These are listed below.

1.6.1 Governance

Neumayer (2002: 916) states that governance is a very broad term, and defines it as “the way in which policy makers are empowered to make decisions, the way in which decisions are formulated and implemented (or not implemented) and the extent to which governmental discretion is allowed to encroach onto the rights of citizens”. Governance can thus be seen as the exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. Simply put, governance is the process of decision-making and how such decisions are implemented, monitored and reviewed. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their



obligations and mitigate their differences. It encompasses not only the government or the state (the political and public institutions), but also transcends the state by including the private sector, and civil society. The civil society that lies between the individual and the government comprises an individual and groups of individuals, both formal and informal.

1.6.2 Good Governance

There is no single definition of good governance. However, according to the World Bank (1989:60), good governance is the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs. It significantly has to do with the institutional environment in which citizens interact among themselves, and with government bodies and/or officials.

1.6.3 Leadership

For the purpose of this study, leadership is defined as 'a directive process of shaping and influencing the personnel, systems and structures of the public service with a view to achieving the constitutional objectives and institutional mandates. Robbins (2003:314) defines leadership as the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals. However, Cole (2000) defines it as a process in which one individual, or sometimes a small group of individuals can influence the efforts of others towards the achievement of goals in a given set of circumstances. Thus, the key variables in any leadership situation are the



leader, the group members, the external environment and the group's goals and tasks.

It should be accepted that leadership is about coping with change. Leaders establish direction by developing a vision of the future; then they align people by communicating this vision and inspiring them to overcome hurdles. In organisational development, leadership development refers to the strategic investment in, and utilisation of the human capital within the organization. It can also be accepted that leadership has some common features across all sectors, but must also be adapted to the distinctive context of public services. Undeniably, the public sector itself is highly diverse in character, governance and size. Moreover, its boundaries have changed in recent years, and will change again, and the concept of public service extends beyond the public sector. Nevertheless, some features of the public sector clearly distinguish it from the private sector: the political context, funding arrangements and accountabilities; the lack of market competition; the pressure to collaborate horizontally; and the distinctive ethos of public service.

1.6.4 Capacity and capacity building

The etymology of capacity includes the Latin words *capere* ('hold') and *capacitas* – hence *capacious* ('able to hold much') (Broussine, 2000: 501). Its dictionary definition (Concise Oxford Dictionary, 2001) is the



'power of containing, receiving, experiencing, or producing. Capacity is the wherewithal to use and improve capabilities to achieve an individual or organisational goal (Tyler, 2004: 154). For the senior public servants in the North West provincial government, the definition suggests that they must have the capability to learn from experience and to reflect critically on their practice (Broussine, 2000: 501). However, apart from this understanding, senior public servants work with political office bearers and member of the public at differing levels. This suggests that there must be evidence to the public that they are competent – simply they have a fixed body of professional knowledge needed to carry their administrative and managerial work effectively. Therefore, capacity building is the institutionalised process coherently pursued to generate the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the development of structures, processes, technical and management systems, values and norms with a view to achieving superior public sector performance. This definition is adopted for this thesis.

1.6.5 Senior public servants

For this research, the term senior public servants refers to executive management of the North West provincial government specifically comprising Directors, Chief Directors, Deputy Director Generals and the Superintendent Generals.



From these definitions, it is quite clear that good governance prevails when government leads and manages public institutions in an accountable, effective, efficient, transparent, and responsive manner, and when an informed citizenry participates in, and is engaged with, government in the pursuit of their mutually beneficial social, political, economic and cultural objectives. In order for this to happen, government as the key player in good governance must build managerial capacity and create an institutional environment that encourages the participation of citizens in programmes that are designed to increase public participation in the decision-making process and more efficient and effective service delivery systems.

1.7 Organisation of the study

The study is organised into six chapters. Chapter One provides an orientation of the study. Chapter Two presents the methodology employed by the study, including site description, unit of analysis, justification for the case study approach, the methods of data collection and the techniques of data analysis. The third chapter reviews the literature on the need for capacity building support and provides a framework for capacity building support. The study is informed by this theoretical framework. The case study on the support for the institutional capacity building of the senior public servants is presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five provides a discussion, critical analysis and



interpretation of the case study. Chapter Six presents a summary, reports the findings and offers conclusions and policy recommendations.

1.8 Summary

In this introductory chapter, a brief orientation of the study has been provided, delineating the problem that is investigated, the formulation of the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of concepts and the organisation of the study. The major focus of the study is to evaluate the support for managerial capacity building in the senior public service of the North West Province of South Africa. Chapter Two presents a description of the research methodology adopted for this study.



CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

“The process of putting together a piece of good research is not something that can be done by slavishly following a set of edicts about what is right or wrong. In practice, the social researcher is faced with a variety of options and alternatives and has to make strategic decisions about which to choose. Each choice brings with it a set of assumptions about the social world it investigates. Each choice brings with it a set of advantages and disadvantages. Gains in one direction will bring with them losses in another, and the researcher has to live with this” (Denscombe, 1998:3).

2.1 Introduction

Public administration is both an art and a science. As an applied social science, it employs a variety of research methods to validate and augment its body of knowledge and advance its research. Bearing in mind the above perspective by Descombe and this view, this chapter describes the location of the study and its methodological framework. It explains the rationale behind the methodology employed, methods of data collection, how the research was conducted and the possible limitations of the study. The purpose of study as described in Chapter One and the theoretical framework in Chapter Three are the guiding force in this investigation.

2.2 The location of the study and unit of analysis

The study was carried out in Mafikeng; the capital city of the North West Province of South Africa. The province is made up of ten departments which are as follows: the Department of Economic





Development and Tourism, the Department of Developmental Local Government and Housing, the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment, the Department of Health, the Department of Sports, Arts and Culture, the Department of Finance, the Department of Transport, Roads and Community Safety, the Department of Public Works and the Department of Social Development. The senior public servants in the North West Province were the subjects of this study. The specific units of analysis of the study were the Department of Health, Department of Education and the Department of Social Development. These departments of the North West Province have a close relationship with the North West University which has four campuses: Mafikeng, Mankwe, Vaal and Potchefstroom. The researcher is attached to the Mafikeng Campus of the North West University and is domiciled in the North West Province. Therefore, this research work is an effort to promote the partnership relationship between the North West Province and the University by strengthening the North West public service to achieve its goals and objectives.

2.3 Case study as a methodological framework

This research is a case study about the support for capacity building of senior public servants in the North West Province of South Africa. A case can be a site, such as an institution or a department within an institution (Bryman, 1989: 171; Bryman, 2001:48). Events and activities can also be



viewed as units of analysis in case studies. Creswell (1994: 12) defines case studies as a type of qualitative research in which the researcher explores a single entity or phenomenon (the case), bounded by time and activity (a programme, event, process, institution or social group), and collects detailed information by using a variety of data collection procedures during a sustained period of time. As for Yin (1994: 13-14), a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. An evaluation of the support for capacity building of the senior public servants in the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education provides an opportunity to identify the rationale behind the success or failure of the public service in policy implementation. This view is supported by Stake (1995), who argues that the sole criterion for selecting cases for a case study should be “the opportunity to learn”. Case studies are conducted to shed light on a phenomenon, be it a process, event, person or object of interest to the researcher (Leedy, 1997: 157). Similarly, researchers generally do case studies for one of three purposes: to produce detailed descriptions of a phenomenon, to develop possible explanations of it, or to evaluate the phenomenon (Johnson and Joslyn, 1991: 121; Gall et al, 1996: 549).



Therefore, the exploration and description of the case takes place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context. These may include interviews, documents, observations or archival records (De Vos et al, 2005: 272). As such, access to, and confidences of participants are fundamental requirements for effective case. Thus, a case study methodology provides an approach which lends itself to the examination of the effects of policy, as well as the potential to generate theory (Bryman, 1989: 170). In the evaluation of the support for capacity building of senior public servants, a case study approach increasingly plays an important role, since it is able to illuminate the effects of leadership on the governance and management on everyday activities of the public service. Although it is acknowledged that it may not be possible to make generalisations about the three departments sampled, it is expected that the methodologies employed will enable the researcher to reason inductively from the findings about the impact of leadership on the support of senior public servants in building their capacities to fulfil public services in the North West Province.

However, this method of research has several weaknesses: First concentration on only one case makes it virtually impossible to make use of contrasting situations. In other words, when many organisations are compared, the parallels and differences between them often provide useful insights. The second weakness is the problem of typicality or



generalisation. In a case study, there is no assurance that the organisation chosen for study is representative of other similar organisations (Baldrige, 1971: 32). Additional weaknesses of the case study approach (Denscombe, 1998:40) are that case studies are often perceived as producing soft data. The approach is often accused of lacking the degree of rigour expected of social science research. Often, case studies are regarded as appropriate in terms of providing descriptive accounts of the situation, but rather ill-suited to analyses or evaluations. None of this is necessarily justified, but it is a preconception which the case study researcher needs to be aware of, and one which needs to be challenged by careful attention to detail and rigour in the use of the approach. Negotiating access to case study site can be a demanding part of the research process. Research can flounder if permission is withheld or withdrawn. In case studies, access to documents, people and settings can generate ethical problems in terms of things like confidentiality. It is hard for case study researchers to achieve their aim of investigating situations as they naturally occur without any effect arising from their presence. Those being researched might behave differently (the observer effect) from the way they do normally owing to the knowledge that they are under the microscope and being observed in some way (Denscombe, 1998:40).

In contrast, several strengths help outweigh the disadvantages. These have been identified by Baldrige (1971:32) and Denscombe (1998: 39-



40). Firstly, it allows the researcher to deal with the subtleties and intricacies of complex social situations. In particular, it enables the researcher to grapple with relationships and social processes in a way that is denied to the survey approach. Secondly, it allows the use of a variety of research methods. More than this, it more or less encourages the use of multiple methods in order to capture the complex reality under scrutiny. Thirdly, it fosters the use of multiple sources of data. This, in turn, facilitates the validation of data through triangulation. Fourthly, the case study approach is particularly suitable where the researcher has little control over events. Because the approach is concerned with investigating phenomena as they naturally occur, there is no pressure on the researcher to impose controls or to change circumstances. Fifthly, it can fit in well with the needs of small-scale research through concentrated effort on one research site. Lastly, theory-building and theory-testing research can both use the case study approach to good effect.

2.4 Data collection instruments

The methods of data collection are to some extent guided by the purpose of the study (Dixon, 1989:13). As stated in Chapter One, the purpose of the study is to evaluate the support for capacity building of senior public servants in the North West Provincial government. Therefore, the instruments employed in the collection of data are document analysis, the questionnaire and individual interviews.



2.4.1 Document analysis

To a greater extent, the study involved the use and analysis of documents. According to Bell (1993: 68), a document is a general term for an impression left by a human being on a physical object. Documents can be divided into primary sources which are those which came into existence in the period under research, and secondary sources which are interpretations of events of that period based on the primary sources. Essentially, the purpose of most of such documentation is to enhance accountability (Denscombe, 1998:161). This means that the records must have two qualities, both of which happen to be of particular value for research. They need to contain a systematic picture of things that have happened and they should be publicly available. The records only serve the function of accountability to the extent that they are made available to relevant people to scrutinise. In this regard, a good documentary research can use four criteria to evaluate documents (Scott, 1990:120). These are: authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. At this point, before beginning the search for documentary evidence, one must clarify exactly what kind of documents were to be used (Bell, 1993:68). The documents and the reasons for using them are delineated below.

(1) Official annual reports published from 2000 to 2005 were studied.

These reports were able to disclose the staff complements, the patterns of challenges that the departments experienced, how the



departments addressed these changes and other any other external observations, such as the Auditor-General's observations. The purpose of this analysis was to gather some evidence of managerial capacity or managerial capacity building requisition and assess their implementation success.

(2) Strategic plans developed from 2002 to 2005 were also studied.

Through the strategic plans, it was possible to assess the strategic role, capability and leadership exercised in the department and in relation to the senior public servants. The purpose of this analysis was to track down the challenges identified by the departments each year, whether they are being addressed and if there are capacity building opportunities identified, recommended and implemented in order to achieve superior public performance. It was also vital to obtain an impression of the commitment of the departments to capacity building and also the extent to which strategic plans appeal to the SMS competency framework.

(3) Human resource development information obtained through the

Human Resource Departments relating to the policies, programmes, processes, procedures and resources for supporting capacity building of senior public servants were requested and, where available, analysed. It was vital to assess what informed capacity building and whether the processes were internally owned, with evidence of



coherence, and support within and between the departments. It was also critical to assess the tools for measuring the achievement of the SMS competency framework. This perspective indicated the extent to which the SMS competency framework is being valued or embraced in the North West public service.

This research approach undoubtedly enabled instant access to relevant information and ensured that the credibility of the documents was realised given the authority of the source as per approval by the Office of the Premier. It was very cost effective and time saving which were important to the researcher.

2.4.2 Structured interviews

In order to triangulate the information obtained from the official documents, structured interviews were conducted with three senior Human Resource Development (HRD) staff respectively from the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education, as per **Annexure D**. According to Denscombe (1998:112), structured interviews involve tight control over the format of questions and answers. In essence, the structured interview is like a questionnaire which is administered to a respondent in person. The respondents were required to provide information relating to the institutional support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants in their own departments and between the departments



of the North West Province. The major weaknesses of interviews relate to analysis of data which is time consuming and difficult and the costs of travelling and transcription of information (Bryman, 2001:130). However, these weaknesses did not affect the reliability or the validity of information obtained from the departments because respondents answered identical questions, thereby seeking a balance between the views expressed by the officials responsible for managerial capacity building and the senior public servants of the North West Provincial Government. Indeed, the technique had the advantage of saving money and time which were concerns for the researcher. Through the structured interview, it was possible to complete the data collection process within four weeks and without compromising any other subject or source.

2.4.3 The questionnaire as a research tool

The study utilised the self-administered questionnaires to obtain views of the senior public servants regarding the public service support for their capacity building. The most important aspect of this type of data collection is that the questionnaire is the only means of communicating between the respondents and the researcher.

The questionnaire was employed because of the advantages of the self-administered questionnaire which are noted below (Dixon, 1989: 19; Denscombe, 1998: 105; Bryman, 2001:129-130). Firstly, it is cheaper to



administer: travelling and subsistence costs are minimal. Secondly, it is quicker to administer. It can be sent out through the mail or otherwise distributed in very large quantities at the same time. Thirdly, since questionnaires are identical, the stimuli provided are identical. Fourthly, the anonymity of respondents means that respondents' names are not given. In this study even the names of the departments were not divulged, because doubts about anonymity could have influenced the validity of the responses. Lastly, questionnaires can be processed easily, if they are carefully structured and precoded.

The limitations of the self-administered questionnaire cannot be overlooked. Like all other strategies for data collection the self-administered questionnaire has some disadvantages. Firstly, pre-coded questions can be frustrating for respondents and, thus, deter them from answering. Secondly, there is no opportunity to probe respondents to elaborate an answer. Lastly, some respondents could have negative attitude towards them (Dixon, 1989: 19; Denscombe, 1998: 106; Bryman, 2001:130). Despite these limitations, the self-administered questionnaire is still commonly used in collection of data. With great care taken in the construction of the questionnaire and its administration, positive responses could be attained (Dixon, 1989:22).



2.4.3.1 Questionnaire construction

The measuring instrument has the greatest influence on the reliability of the collected data; hence great care was taken in the construction of the questionnaire. A well-designed questionnaire boosts the reliability and validity of the data to acceptable levels (Bryman, 2001:136). The questionnaire is commonly used as a tool for data collection (Denscombe (1998: 87; Dooley, 2001: 135; De Vos, 2005: 166). However, there are some criticisms against the use of the questionnaire, such as: excessive non-response rates; poorly- constructed items; questionnaires deal with trivial information; and data from different questions are difficult to synthesise. Bryman (2001:129) argues that the major criticism against the use of questionnaires is the poor design rather than the questionnaire per se. Equally, the wording of the questions is not only one of the most difficult features of questionnaire design, but also one of the most important to get right (Denscombe, 1998: 97).

Therefore, to overcome the difficulty of poorly-constructed questionnaires, items should deal with meaningful research problems, questionnaires need to be structured carefully and administered effectively to qualified respondents (Denscombe, 1998: 97; Bryman, 2001: 132). To this end, the aim of the questionnaire was to gather information about the support for capacity building of the senior public servants as well as effective implementation and assessment of the SMS competency framework in the public service. A theoretical framework



presented in Chapter Three largely contributed to the development of the questionnaire.

2.4.3.2 Format and content of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was divided into six sections (see **Annexure F**) according to their focus. These are listed below.

Section A (questions 1.1 to 1.6.1). The purpose of these questions was to gather biographical information about the gender, age range, positions, experiences and educational achievements of the respondents.

Section B (questions 1 to 26). The purpose of these questions was to collect information about the expectations and knowledge of the respondents. The items for these questions were developed from the literature, and for each item the respondents were asked to indicate on a three point dimension (no, yes or not sure), their own knowledge.

Section C (questions 1 to 5.1). These questions focused on the approaches to management development. The reason behind these questions was to obtain information relating to on-the-job and off-the-job approaches to managerial development and training.

Section D (questions 1 to 17). These questions were asked to determine the attitudes of the senior public servants about management



development in the public service. The items for these questions were developed from the literature, and for each item the respondents were asked to indicate on a three point dimension (no, yes or not sure), their own knowledge.

Section E (questions 1 to 19). The purpose of these questions was to collect information about the application and assessment of the Senior Management Service (SMS) competency framework. The items for these questions were developed from the literature, and for each item the respondents were asked to indicate on a three point dimension (no, yes or not sure), their own knowledge.

Section F (questions 1 to 7). These questions were constructed to determine the support for, and the barriers to, managerial development and training in the public service. The respondents were also able to rate on the scale (1=a little, 2 = a moderate amount and 3 = a great deal) the level of skills and expertise they required in order to remain effective.

2.4.3.3 Pre-testing the questionnaire

A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary investigation designed to acquaint the researcher with flaws and problems that need attention before the major study is conducted (Treece and Treece, 1986: 382). It offers the researcher an opportunity to pre-test the instrument. The



major purpose of the pilot trial is to detect the problems that must be solved before the major study. Most of the flaws of the measuring instrument are detected during the pilot study (Schnetler, 1989:92). With regard to this study, the questionnaire was pre-tested using a sample of (n=4) senior public servants in order to determine any ambiguity, flaws and problems. The four senior public servants were asked to complete the questionnaire and to indicate whether some questions seemed ambiguous to them, and to comment on the other points that might need to be considered to improve the instrument.

The pre-test results were checked and the suggestions made by the respondents were taken into consideration to improve the questionnaire. The four senior public servants in the pre-test were concerned about the open-endedness of some of the questions and suggested that if they were left in that form this might negatively affect the quality of information from the respondents and the general response rate. The population of the pre-test was not used in the final study.

2.4.3.4 Final questionnaire

Thereafter, the final questionnaire was successfully administered to 50 senior public servants.



2.4.3.4.1 Covering letter

The covering letter is a tool employed to introduce the questionnaire to the respondents with the aim of persuading them to respond to the questionnaire. It gives the respondents direction in the completion of the questionnaire, as well as directions about returning the completed questions and it guarantees anonymity (Borg and Gall, 1989:436). A simple covering letter (**Annexure E**) that explained the purpose of the study and the approval by the Director General accompanied the questionnaire to the respondents. The letter also reassured the respondents that all the information provided would remain confidential and that the analysis will be based on aggregated data.

2.4.3.4.2 Administration procedures

Several steps were followed before the questionnaires were distributed. First, the researcher visited the websites of the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development with a view to obtaining information relating to their Senior Management Levels.

Next, the researcher visited the HR directorates of these departments. The purpose of these visits was to request information relating to appointed and vacant personnel in the SMS categories. The permission granted by the Director General assisted, as many suspicious questions were asked about the purpose and level of the study. With the



exception of the Department of Education, other departments took more than five days to provide information.

On the basis of the information provided and the observations made, the researcher appointed an assistant to help him with the distribution of the questionnaires to selected senior public servants. With the assistance of the contact persons in each department, questionnaires were returned either directly or indirectly to the researcher. A few copies of the questionnaires were returned within a week, while others took more time than anticipated, up to five weeks.

2.4.3.4.3 Follow-ups

A major disadvantage of the questionnaire is non-response. The respondents may simply decide not to respond to the questionnaire. Because of the low number of responses within a week, the researcher made personal and telephonic follow-ups to the contact persons in the departments. This resulted in an increase in the number of completed questionnaires returned.

2.5 Population sampling and response rate

According to Wimmer and Dominick (1987: 70), two kinds of sampling methods exist, namely probability and non-probability methods. A probability sampling is selected according mathematical guidelines whereby the chance for selection of each unit is known. A non-probability method of sampling is not focused on the guidelines of



mathematical probability. However, the most significant characteristic distinguishing the two types of sampling is that probability sampling allows researchers to calculate the amount of sampling error present in a research study, while non-probability sampling does not.

A sample of 50 respondents was targeted for this study. To select the actual respondents from each department convenience/ availability sampling was utilised. This is a non-probability sampling technique in which the researcher chooses the closest persons who are willing to participate in the study as respondents (Leedy, 1997:204). As applied in this study, the use of availability sampling involved the researcher administering the questionnaires only to those senior public servants willing to participate in the study. The major disadvantage of utilising availability sampling is that it has negative effects on sample representativeness (Descombe, 1998: 17-8) which undermines the capacity of the study findings to be generalisable across the population studied. However, the purpose of the study is to evaluate the institutional support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants and not necessarily the senior public servants (respondents). Furthermore, the technique had the advantage of saving money and time which were concerns for the researcher. Through it, it was possible to complete the data collection within a short time.



In all, the three case study departments were covered by the study: the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development and involved three categories of staff: Deputy Director General (DDG), Chief Director (CD) and Director (D). Table 2.1 presents the distribution of the sample population.

Table 2.1: Distribution of the sample population and response rate

Departments	Position	Population	Sample population	Response rate
Health	DDG	2	2	2
	CD	2	2	0
	D	20	14	10
Social Development	DDG	1	1	1
	CD	2	2	0
	D	11	8	8
Education	DDG	1	1	0
	CD	8	5	2
	D	25	17	8
Total		72	50	31

(Response rate by the Senior Public Servants, July 2006:
North West Provincial Government)

Table 2.1 shows the distribution of the population, sample population and the response rate per department. It reveals that 50 (69%) senior public servants out of 72 were identified to participate in the study. Out of the 50 senior public servants who were identified to participate in the study, only 31 (62%) successfully completed and returned their questionnaires. In this regard, more than 82% of the respondents were drawn from the director's level. Notwithstanding, it is worth reporting that a total of 20 (representing 28%) of the senior public servants in



these Departments were in their acting capacities and decided not to participate in the study. Despite this submission, some of the senior public servants who did not complete the questionnaires offered explanations which form part and parcel of the limitations of this study, as per Section 2.8.

2.6 Methods of data analysis

Taking into account the purpose of the study in Chapter One and the case study research design followed, the methods of data collection employed necessitated appropriate methods of data analysis. Three approaches to analysing case data can be followed. These are: interpretational analysis, structural analysis and reflexive analysis (Gall et al, 1996). Interpretational analysis refers to examining data for constructs, themes and patterns that can be used to describe and explain the phenomenon being studied. Structural analysis refers to searching the data for patterns inherent in the discourse, text, events or other phenomena, with little or no inference made as to the meaning of patterns. Reflective analysis refers to using primarily intuition and judgement to portray or evaluate the phenomenon. Given the structured nature of the interview protocol performed and the need to relate the responses from the Human Resource Development (HRD) with those of the senior public servants, these approaches have been followed to a greater extent.



Furthermore, the data provided by the senior public servants were analysed utilising the SPSS-PC quantitative data analysis software. The analysis was mainly descriptive and involved the computation and utilisation of descriptive statistics especially frequency distributions and percentages. These were used to establish a linkage with the data provided through the structured interview and to construct a descriptive profile of the departments studied within the public service.

2.7 Ethical considerations

In carrying out this study, the academic freedom of scientific research as entrenched in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa; 1996 (Act 108 of 1996) section 16 (1) (d) has been applied within the context of ethical considerations. This was very important because Macburney (1994: 373-374) argues that the decision to conduct research often presents a conflict between three sets of values. The conflict is between the commitment of the researcher to expand knowledge and the potential benefit the research may have for society or a section of society and the cost of the research to the participants. This conflict could best be addressed by ethical considerations. Thus, institutional approval should be regarded as an important ethical consideration, in that the researcher should obtain approval from the host institution prior to conducting research. With regard to this study, the Director General of the North West Province gave permission on 9th December 2005 as per Annexure B and an ensuing directive as per Annexure C.





Another major ethical consideration of any research is that respondents should not come to any harm. By its nature, this study did not focus on a subject that was likely to expose the respondents to any hazard. Indeed, several steps were taken to guarantee respondents confidentiality (or anonymity). Firstly, respondents were instructed not to indicate their names on the surveys. Secondly, no information that could be used to identify particular respondents was employed in reporting research findings and all surveys will be destroyed at the end of the study. Thirdly, answers to all questions were kept completely confidential. More specifically, no responses from a particular respondent were analysed (or reported) separately. Rather, responses were combined and used with the responses from other participants. Finally, the respondents were informed about the objectives of the study and what the information was to be used for.

2.8 Limitations

Research work is never without limitations, and this study is no exception. As such, a number of factors could be considered to undermine the quality of the findings in this study, as well as the conclusions drawn from its findings. The first of such factors is that the research is limited to the senior public servants employed at the public service of the North West Province. Yet, it is evident from Chapter One that the public service in South Africa has a very long history of existence and ongoing transformation process which affects all levels of



government. Notwithstanding, the period of the study that has been taken into account is from the year 2000 to 2006. This period is important to enhance the current policy and practical imperatives that affect the support for managerial capacity building in the public service.

In addition, a case study approach hinders the selection of all senior public servants within a department or all departments of the North West Province. However, capacity building is not only an individual issue; the public service must institutionalise it, and be supported from the policy to practice point of view, regardless of the nature or size of department. By following a case study approach, the study suggests that the findings, conclusions and recommendations may be replicated in the public service of the North West Province. Again, the researcher had limited time and budget with which to execute the study; this might have affected the depth of the analysis conducted.

A constructive culture of research is a fundamental prerequisite for effective scholarship and sustains the interest and commitment of the researcher beyond the scope of research work. However, the dominant research culture in the public service somehow worked against the research purpose and the timeframes. For instance, all the official requests for research information were entertained six weeks later and after frequent follow ups, despite the permission to conduct the study from the Director General (DG). Some senior public servants voluntarily



chose not to participate in the study. These are some of their comments: “I am not being paid to complete this questionnaire” “This is not part of my job” “I am very busy, I will complete it if I have time”. In many instances, the researcher had to visit a single participant more than fifteen (15) times with empty promises being made consistently. On account of this kind of reluctance to co-operate, the period of data collection took two months and two weeks with only thirty-one questionnaires successfully returned, though it had been planned for only two weeks maximum.

A final limitation of the study relates to the fact that some senior public servants were often very wary about the intentions of the researcher and this made it difficult for the researcher to administer the questionnaires, notwithstanding. The suspicion that characterised some respondents undoubtedly impacted on the quality of information realised by the study. It is possible, accordingly, that some respondents might not have been objective while completing the questionnaire. For example, one responded in the process of completing the questionnaire by saying “I cannot consistently rate my department low”. Notwithstanding these limitations, the results of the study were very useful in revealing the state of capacity building support for the senior public servants, and may have several implications for future research, as well as for the design and implementation of effective management and



leadership development programmes and strategic human resource planning and management in general in the North West Province.

2.9 Summary

This chapter laid down a methodological framework within which this study could be successfully conducted. In particular, a case study as a methodological framework was justified for this research. However, an evaluative research of this nature requires that data be obtained from more than one source. For this reason, it was indispensable to triangulate data from official documents, structured interviews and questionnaires with a view to ensuring that the results and the conclusions would be scientifically valid and reliable. With the aid of the restructured interviews, a case study on the support for managerial capacity of the senior public servants is presented in Chapter Four. The next chapter provides a review of the literature.



CHAPTER THREE LITERATURE REVIEW

“Our Constitution prescribes that our executive organs must both develop and implement policy. The capacity to implement policy is fundamentally dependent on the organisation and capacity of the public service in general” (Mbeki, 25 May 2005).

3.1 Introduction

The need for public administration to account for the changes in the role and practices of government during the last few decades has been widely recognised and in South Africa it is as evident in Chapter One. Within the context of the above statement by the President of the Republic of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, this chapter complements and supplements the orientation of this study in Chapter One by providing a review of the literature. The literature focuses on the need for capacity building support and a framework for capacity building support. The chapter sets the scene by discussing the context of capacity building of the senior public servants within the discipline of public administration, reviewing the functions and objectives of government and examining the management and leadership competencies and performance system in the public service to support senior public servants to perform effectively. This review is necessary to appreciate the concept of capacity building within the public service of the North West Province and the relationship between the Senior Management Service (SMS) competency framework and capacity building.



The chapter further examines how organisations prepare their employees. It examines the capacity building models and approaches, as well as the diagnostic mechanisms used to assess how an organisation functions. The review generally argues that, whilst individual capacity building is very commendable, the public service must also build its own capacity in order to leverage the new knowledge and thinking that are brought to the workplace. In particular, it argues that the approaches to management development result in better human security and development, if they respond effectively to the actual context and skills requirements of the public service, with effective organisational development, human resources development, resource allocation and leadership. The context of capacity building of the senior public servants within public administration is examined in the next section.

3.2 The context of capacity building of the senior public servants within public administration

Public administration has a very long history, one paralleling the very notions of government and the rise of civilisation (Hughes, 1998: 23). As both theory and practice, it has good points and everlasting boundaries. As practice, public administration is concerned with the activities that come directly under the government of any society (Adamolekun, 1986:1). Significantly, it focuses pre-eminently on the institutions, organisational structures and decision/implementation processes of government (Greenwood and Wilson, 1993:2; Peters, 1995: 2). Indeed, it is largely a formal field, concerned with



arrangements and procedures for making decisions. As for Ray (1999: 356) public administration is not an end in itself, it is a means to achieve the ultimate goal of governments to maximise the well-being of its citizens. Similarly, Rosenbloom (1986) argues that public administration is the use of managerial, political, and legal theories and processes to fulfil legislative, executive and judicial governmental mandates for the provision of regulatory and service functions for the society as a whole or for some segments of it. For the purpose of this study, therefore, public administration represents a systematic governmental vehicle which is administratively imperative for the achievement of results, improvement of skills and improvement of accountability in the public service. Indeed, it is vital to assess the internal organizational and management functions of the public service of the North West Provincial government in terms of supporting the capacity building of the senior public servants in order to ensure effective public administration.

Within the above perspective, it can be generally acknowledged that governmental actions have become more complex, difficult, and increased in number (Adamolekun, 1986:1; Lawton and Rose; 1994:1; Flynn, 1997:2; De Toit, et al, 1998: 5; Donahue and Nye, 2003:6; Osborne and Hutchinson, 2004:19; State of the Public Service Reports, 2005 and 2006). South Africa is no exception. Chiefly, scarcity of resources, changing social, cultural values, increasing organisational and



interorganisational complexity made the accomplishment of assigned tasks in the public service more difficult in the 1990s (Peters, 1995: 344). As a consequence of the above developments, the traditional role of government has changed. Similarly, expectations about how government's role is to be fulfilled have changed. This has forced public administration to redefine and reposition itself both in applied practice and as a field of scholarship.

In the South African context, this redefinition and repositioning has found expression in this country's public administration through the introduction of a democratic Constitution (1996), as well as other statutory and regulatory frameworks. Some examples of these are: The Public Service Act 103 of 1994; The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995; The Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997; The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (*Batho Pele White Paper*) 18340 of 1997; The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997; The White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, Notice 422 of 1997; and The Skills Development Act 97 of 1998, to name but a few. These instruments have jointly introduced a paradigm shift in the public service. Thus, the 1994 public institutions and public officials in South Africa are required to be more democratic, accountable, effective, efficient, capable and ethical in discharging their services to the South African population.



To live up to these expectations, senior public servants that function in today's public administration have been required to be prepared and developed with a view to embracing change and strategically meeting the challenges of managing current Public Service. At the same time, there have been growing expectations for senior public servants to have a clearer and stronger sense of vision, mission and focus in their departments. Similarly, the ability of the Public Service to rise to the current socio-economic challenges depends critically on human resource capacity and its management (State of the Public Service Report, 2006: 15). Thus, effective support for capacity building is vital for a degree of order and consistency in the effective and coherent implementation of public policy.

According to the World Bank (1991), senior public servants make a major contribution towards the well-being and development of their nations in a particular economy. For this contribution to be realised in South Africa, the public service should be well structured and utilise policies, strategies, systems, processes and culture to support the preparation and development of its senior public servants effectively. These issues have not been adequately addressed, especially within the national and provincial contexts. Therefore, the assessment of the support for capacity building of the senior public servants is an effort to generate the capacity and knowledge (both institutional and human) essential for systematically and effectively driving government policy in



the North West Province. The functions and objectives of government are examined in the next section.

3.3 The functions and objectives of government

Senior public servants must have a clear and strong sense of vision, mission and focus in the departments of the public service (Mafunisa, 2003: 64). This obligation can be met if they appreciate the functions and objectives of government of the day. According to the World Bank (1997:42), there are five fundamental tasks that lie at the core of every government's mission. These are: establishing a foundation of law; maintaining a non-distortionary policy environment, including macroeconomic stability; investing in basic social services and infrastructure; protecting the vulnerable; and protecting the environment. Another relatively pragmatic set of government roles is set out by Anderson (1989:19-22), who identifies seven basic functions of government, namely, providing economic infrastructure; provision of various collective goods and services; the resolution and adjustment of group conflicts; the maintenance of competition; protection of natural resources; provision for minimum access by individuals to the goods and services of the economy; and stabilisation of the economy.

Moreover, the North West Province provides public goods and services which must be measured through achievements of the following objectives (Berne and Schramm (1989: 4-7). First, the provincial





government must try to raise and spend resources effectively – in the lowest cost, highest benefit fashion. This requires that the provincial government should strive to minimise the levels of resources used, or the costs of these resources, in carrying out its constitutional obligations. This objective prompts the provincial government to evaluate continually how it is raising its money (grants, taxes, levies, and fees) and how it is spending its money (personnel, materials, equipment) to reduce its use of resources and their costs. It also requires that the provincial government review the goods and services it provides to be sure it is maximising the total benefits provided to those it is serving.

This criterion diagnoses the public sector as bloated, wasteful, over-bureaucratic and under-performing; hence the introduction of Public Financial Management Act (1999) and the Senior Management Service Handbook (2003), which respectively aim to strengthen the financial function, control and reporting; and to professionalise the Public Service through a consistent approach to human performance throughout the national and provincial levels by helping to drive and support all human performance initiatives, especially at senior management level. Second, the provincial government should try to raise and spend resources equitably – distributing the costs and benefits of government activities fairly among the individuals and groups it serves. The equity criterion does not ask whether costs are minimized, or benefits maximized, by



the provincial government's action, but rather whether these costs or benefits are distributed fairly.

Third, the provincial government should try to maintain a healthy financial condition – being able to meet its financial obligations as these become due, in both the short run and the long run, while raising resources and providing public goods and services. In this respect, the North West Province has not been established to make profits or to amass fortunes, but it must take those steps needed to ensure that it has the financial strengths to carry out its public responsibilities. This criterion also requires that the provincial government should be more ethical and promote good governance in carrying out its public functions for the heterogeneous South African population.

Finally, the provincial government must have public accountability as an objective – responding to the government's clientele and the requirements of its environment in an open, informative, and participative fashion and being held responsible for its actions. Within the precept of the Public Service Act, 1994, heads of department are responsible for the efficient management and administration of their departments. Heads of department, in turn, are responsible for cascading the process to senior public servants in the department. Senior public servants are then accountable for the key activities or outputs reflected in their performance agreements. Although accountability may



be regarded as the main value in public administration, the problems that governments generally experience are the result of the failure of mechanisms of scrutiny to develop or to be developed in an appropriate fashion – accountability gap (Pyper, 1996:223; Sangweni, 2004:2). In this regard, Analoui (1995:52) identified the presence of a natural tendency in the literature of management to overcompensate when faced with the rigidity and inflexibility created by the advocates of traditional management. Therefore, the accountability objective requires that a provincial government should develop the information needed to evaluate its operations, put this information in an understandable and accessible form, and provide mechanisms for the appropriate public review of its activities.

Generally, these objectives require that the North West Province should ensure that its philosophy, systems, processes, practices and resources provide holistic and effective support for the development, and maintenance of managerial and leadership competencies. Similarly, they serve as benchmarks for the performance of the senior public servants, so that the latter are able to provide strategic direction, co-operate more effectively and improve public service delivery. Increasingly, these objectives are at the heart of the Constitution (1996) and therefore serve as principles of good governance.



Within this perspective, leadership is identified as the flesh on the bones of the Constitution and must be effectively exercised by, among others, senior public servants. Indeed, it is the only way in which the government's multifaceted objectives for the public sector can be achieved (Storey, 2004:174). Equally important, addressing the capacity challenge in the Public Service requires dedicated leadership from the executive and senior management levels (State of the Public Service Report, 2006: 10).

However, the theoretical literature of leadership is voluminous, obscure and contradictory (Yuki, 1989: 149; Robbins, 2005: 157). But, given the context of the public service in Chapter One, the transformational leadership approach may be aptly relevant because it is more effective than efficient management or transactional leadership alone (Bass, 1998). Besides, the transformational leadership approach focuses on humanistic rather than authoritative, patriarchal and conformist styles and is founded on the belief that inner development is the first step toward leadership action (King, 1994:2).

According to transformational leadership theory, followers identify heroic or extraordinary leadership abilities when they observe certain behaviours (Robbins, 2005:166). There have been a number of studies that have attempted to identify personal characteristics of the transformational leader (Conger; 1991; Bass and Avolio, 1993;



Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1996; Conger and Kanungo, 1998; Robbins, 2003). These are noted below.

1. **Vision and articulation.** The leader has a vision – expressed as an idealized goal – that proposes a future better than the status quo; and is able to clarify the importance of the vision in terms that are understandable to others.
2. **Personal risk.** The leader is willing to take high personal risk, incur high costs and engage in self-sacrifice to achieve the vision.
3. **Environmental sensitivity.** The leader is able to make realistic assessments of the environmental constraints and resources needed to bring about change.
4. **Sensitivity to follower needs.** The leader is aware of others' abilities and responsive to their needs and feelings.
5. **Unconventional behaviour.** Leaders engage in behaviours that are perceived as novel and counter to norms.

Similarly, transformational leaders share the following characteristics: they identify themselves as change agents; they are courageous; they believe in people; they are value-driven; they are lifelong learners; they have the ability to deal with complexity, ambiguity and uncertainty, and they are visionaries (Luthans, 1998: 396-397). A transformational leader instils feelings of confidence, administration and commitment in the followers. In brief, transformational leaders transform followers by



creating changes in their values, needs, beliefs and aspirations (Kreitner and Kinicki, 1998: 509). Research reveals that transformational leadership, as compared to transactional, is more strongly correlated with lower turnover rates, higher productivity and higher employee satisfaction (Robbins, 2005: 168). In this regard, Bass (1990: 383) concluded that leaders manage and managers lead. Therefore, for the public service environment to be effective senior public servants should be strategically capable of leading and managing with sufficient freedom, and be supported and challenged by others within and beyond the North West Province. Put differently, the support for capacity building of senior public servants is a fundamental ingredient necessary for releasing public service capital and achieving sustainable competitive leadership advantage in the Public Service. To this end, the next section addresses the managerial and leadership competencies which call for effective support for systematic development and maintenance of the public service.

3.4 Managerial and leadership competencies

Improving public service and product delivery to the public can only be achieved with the competencies of the senior public servants and the resources that public institutions have (Du Toit, et al, 1998: 196). According to Hoevemeyer (2004), a competency is a behaviour, knowledge, skill or capability that describes the expected performance in a particular work context. They are characteristics that individuals



have and use in appropriate, consistent ways in order to achieve the desired performance (Grobler and Warnich, 2006: 482). In fact, the competencies of persons enable them to perform the appropriate actions (Boyatzis, 1982:12). In other words, competencies represent a comprehensive and expert way in which management and managers are knowledgeable and therefore open to new forms of intervention, analysis and modification. In context, when competencies are appropriately developed, they are the standards of success that support the strategic plan, vision mission and goals of the organisation.

Against this backdrop, the following list of broad abilities provides a basis for defining some of the competencies that are necessary for an effective senior public servant (Meyer, 1993: 66):

- (1) The ability to locate and interpret relevant information from written, electronic and people resources and apply it to solve complex, multidimensional problems using processes of analysis, synthesis and systemic thinking.
- (2) The ability to communicate effectively with diverse groups of people and individuals on complex issues.
- (3) The ability to apply scientific and mathematical concepts and use relevant technology effectively.
- (4) The ability to operate effectively in multifunctional teams.
- (5) The ability to use time effectively to manage a variety of tasks and



- (6) The ability to manage one's own, often multiple career and balance occupational, family, community and other demands effectively.

The foregoing discussion suggests that competencies can be identified with a view to distinguishing high performing senior public servants from average performers in all areas of the senior public service management in the North West province. From a human resource management point of view, however, they can be used as the foundation for recruitment, selection, training and development, rewards and other aspects of senior management service. In the same vein, Kreintner and Kinicki (1998:8) have identified the comparable competencies exhibited by an effective senior public servant as follows:

- (1) Clarifies goals and objectives for everyone involved.
- (2) Encourages participation, upward communication and suggestions.
- (3) Plans and organises for an orderly work flow.
- (4) Has technical and administrative expertise to answer organisation-related questions.
- (5) Facilitates work through team building, training, coaching and support.
- (6) Provides feedback honestly and constructively.
- (7) Keeps things moving by relying on schedules, deadline and helpful reminders.



- (8) Controls details without being overbearing.
- (9) Applies reasonable pressure for goal accomplishment.
- (10) Empowers and delegates key duties to others while maintaining goal clarity and commitment and
- (11) Recognises good performance with rewards and positive reinforcement.

In the same vein, Virtanen (2000: 333-336) suggests five competence areas in which senior public servants should perform to be effective as follows: task competence, professional competence in subject area, professional competence in administration, political competence and ethical competence. From this discussion, the characterisation by Bennis (1998: 152) that managers are people who do things right and leaders are individuals who do the “right thing” is appropriate, especially in this era because the field of management generally requires that the senior public servants should focus on achieving results and taking full responsibility for doing so, instead of merely following instructions (Hughes, 1998:6). In context, senior public servants play key leadership roles in creating a vision and strategic plan for their individual departments and as managers, in turn, are charged with implementing the vision and strategic plan. Bass (1990: 383) accurately concluded that leaders manage and managers lead, but the two activities are not synonymous. Therefore, a holistic and effective managerial capacity building support framework is necessary for successful leadership in the



North West Province. At this point, the question that remains is: what are the critical competencies that relate to senior managerial positions and which must be cultivated and supported throughout the public service?

According to Salaman (2004: 60), management competencies are distinguished by their advocates from previous attempt to define the nature and requirements of management through a focus on what managers have to do and be in order to do their jobs well, rather than on the qualities or qualifications necessary to enter a managerial role: that is, on behaviour rather than qualities. Managerial and leadership competences are used to establish job descriptions, performance standards and route maps for career planning, to establish the requirements and standards of jobs by providing generic standards by which jobs could be defined and compared, performance could be assessed, personal development organised, training designed and promotion decided (Salaman, 2004: 61). In context, the foundation of an organisation's capabilities is the competences of its individual members, whose routine skills must be constantly built and modified to produce improved organisational performance (Winterton and Winterton, 1999: 20). The next section presents the instruments within the South African public service which apply to the managerial and leadership competencies of the senior public servants.





3.5 The performance management and development system (PMDS)

One of the major challenges facing government is the acceleration of service delivery improvement to ensure a better life for all South Africans. For this, management capacity has to be strengthened by creating a distinct and professional Senior Management Service (SMS) in the provincial and national spheres. To facilitate this, a performance management approach in government was adopted in the public service. Performance management is the interrelated processes which ensure that all the activities and people in government contribute as effectively as possible to its objectives; and that all activities and objectives are systematically reviewed in a way which enables government to learn and thereby to improve its services to its population (Rogers, 1990:12). Moreover, the effective performance of a manager has to be appraised to ensure the ongoing management of both outcomes and behaviour. Thus, performance appraisals have an evaluative and a developmental objective (Grobler, et al, 2006: 265). In short, appraisal is about being able to demonstrate accountability. It is also about being able to evaluate and make judgments about performance so that developmental objectives can be set and achieved (Cardno, 2005: 298). It follows, accordingly, that an effective appraisal system is one that has gained the commitment of senior public servants, allows them to engage in dialogue that leads to learning and change and is the pivot for embarking on management development



programme that can meet their needs and the expectations of the public service.

In South Africa, a Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) for all SMS members was accepted and established in 2000. The system introduced mandatory assessment of demonstrated managerial competence by means of Core Management Competencies (CMC); a standardised rating scale to which performance-related rewards must be directly related; a two-tier reward system consisting of pay progression and performance bonuses and personal development plans as new elements to the Senior Management Service (SMS) performance appraisals (Senior Management Service Handbook, Chapter Four, 2003:1-36).

It is expected of all members of the SMS to enter into Performance Agreements (PAs), which apply for a particular financial year and are reviewed annually. The PAs of individual senior public servants should be based on a department's strategic/operational plans and the milestone agreed upon by the relevant executing authority. The CMCs are included in the PAs to promote service delivery. A Personal Development Plan that is linked to the CMCs and Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the Performance Plan, where applicable, are also included as part of each PA. The eleven CMCs used in the PDMS relate to how senior public servants do their jobs – they do not describe the results



that should be achieved are presented according to the Senior Management Service (SMS) Competency Framework (SMS Handbook, 2003, Chapter Five: 1). These are listed as follows:

- (1) **Strategic capability and leadership** refers to the ability to provide a vision, set the direction for the organisation and inspire others in order to deliver on the organisational mandates.
- (2) **Programme and project management** refers to the ability to plan, manage, monitor and evaluate specific activities in order to deliver the desired outputs.
- (3) **Financial management** refers to the ability to compile and manage budgets, control cash flow, institute risk management and administer tender procurement processes in accordance with generally recognised financial practices in order to ensure the achievement of strategic organisational objectives.
- (4) **Change management** refers to the ability to initiate and support organizational transformation and change in order to implement new initiatives and deliver on service delivery commitments successfully.
- (5) **Knowledge management** refers to the ability to promote the generation and sharing of knowledge and learning in order to enhance the collective knowledge of the organisation.
- (6) **Service delivery innovation (SDI)** refers to the ability to explore and implement new ways of delivering services that contribute to the



improvement of organisational processes in order to achieve organisational goals.

- (7) **Problem solving and analysis** refers to the systematic ability to identify, analyze and resolve existing and anticipated problems in order to reach optimum solutions in a timely manner.
- (8) **People management and empowerment** refers to the ability to manage and encourage people, optimise their outputs and effectively manage relationships in order to achieve organisational goals.
- (9) **Client orientation and customer focus** refers to the ability to deliver services effectively and efficiently in order to put the spirit of customer service (Batho Pele) into practice.
- (10) **Communication** refers to the ability to exchange information and ideas in a clear and concise manner appropriate for the audience in order to explain, persuade, convince and influence others to achieve the desired outcomes.
- (11) **Honesty and integrity** refers to the ability to display and build the highest standards of ethical and moral conduct in order to promote confidence and trust in the public service.

To ensure effective organisational performance, among others, the competency framework for SMS provides a description of the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes in a competency model, in order to allow both the individual and the organisation to know what



knowledge and skills are needed to be effective in a given role (SMS Handbook, 2003, Chapter Five: 3). From this discussion, it can be argued that the SMS competency framework is the instrument designed to link the performance of senior public servants to the strategy and service objectives of their departments. Within the context of performance management, it crucially supports the government in setting departmental, service, team and individual objectives, recognising achievement, identifying training and development needs and then using the knowledge gained to modify objectives and methods where necessary. In lieu of this, it must be tied in with other service management and human resources policies, systems, plans in order to be effective and all-embracing. However, there are concerns about the development, introduction and implementation of the competency framework. The following table provides a summary of the problems with competency frameworks (Miller, et al., 2001):



Table 3.1: Problems reported in developing, introducing and implementing competency framework

Problem	% reporting
Language/terminology used	65%
Employees' understanding of the concepts	65%
Line managers' understanding of the concepts	62%
Assessment of individual's competencies	60%
Resources required, time, cost, other resources	54%
Developing the definition of competencies	48%
Getting employees' and managers' commitment to the use of competencies	47%
Keeping the competencies relevant	45%
Relating the competencies to the corporate culture	44%
Complexity of the competency framework (paper work)	42%
Incorporating emotional intelligence concepts	25%
The attitude of trade unions to competencies	10%
Other	5%

Miller, et al., (2001)

An indication from this report is that the development, introduction and implementation of the competency framework require effective institutional support with a view to validating its relevance, significance and impact. Principally, this is critical because the core managerial skills and competencies are not readily transferable from the private sector to the public sector; the nature of the tasks undertaken is fundamentally different (Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1991). An important corollary is, thus, that patterns of work and key managerial skills may indeed significantly depend on organisational context even within the private sector (Hales, 1986). Based on the discussion to this point, the pertinent question that arises is how does the public service prepare its senior public servants so that they live up to the constitutional and managerial expectations of the Republic of South Africa? The next two sections attempt to provide



answers to this question by discussing importance of induction and the fundamentals of the induction programme.

3.6 The importance of induction

The most popular process for preparing the employees to learn more about their jobs and the organisation is induction, also known as orientation or socialisation (Robbins, 2003: 532-35; Robbins; 2005: 234-235; Grobler, et al, 2006: 206). According to Robbins (2005: 234), induction is the process that adapts employees to the organisation's culture. Grobler, et al (2006: 206) describe induction as the process of integrating the new employee into the organisation and acquainting him or her with the details and requirements of the job. It can thus be regarded as a process by which the senior public servants are transformed from complete outsiders into participating and effective members of the department of the North West Province. However, to be successful, an induction process needs careful, systematic, and ongoing attention by management as well as by the HR department (Klein and Weaver, 2000: 49). It is imperative that attention be paid to the objectives of induction. These are: acquainting new employees with job procedures; establishing relationships with co-workers; creating a sense of belonging among employees by showing them how their job fits into the overall organisation; acquainting new employees with the goals of the organisation; indicating to the employees the preferred means by which these goals should be attained; identifying the basic



responsibilities of the job and indicating the required behaviour patterns for effective job performance (Mondy, et al, 1999:285).

From this discussion, it can be appreciated that the main objective of induction is the integration of the new senior public servant into the department within the public service without delay, so that she or he can become an effective worker as soon as possible. Without doubt, an effective induction programme reduces the adjustment problems of new public servants by creating a sense of security, confidence and belonging in them.

Thus, an effective induction programme brings benefits such as higher job satisfaction; lower labour turnover; greater commitment to values and goals; higher performance as a result of faster learning times; fewer costly and time-consuming mistakes; a reduction in absenteeism; better customer service through heightened productivity; improved manager-subordinate relationships and better understanding of the organisational policies, goals and procedures (Jackson and Schuler, 2000: 352). On the contrary, the reasons for the lack of effective induction must be noted (Fogarty and Dirsmith, 2001: 249).

- (1) The supervisor responsible for the task either lacks the time or ability to fulfil this obligation.



- (2) The organisations do not regard anxiety and stress, owing to insecurity and unfulfilled expectations as a primary cause of labour turnover among new employees. They therefore dismiss induction to reduce anxiety and stress as unnecessary.
- (3) The organisation regards effective recruitment, selection, training and development as substitute for induction.
- (4) Where induction programmes are introduced, the key components are lacking.
- (5) Induction is aimed at inducing new employees to adhere to organisational practices and procedures while little attention is paid to instilling loyalty and commitment to the organisation.
- (6) Employees who are transferred or promoted within the organisation do not participate in induction programmes.
- (7) Induction programmes are not followed up.
- (8) Induction programmes often concentrate on promoting the image of the organisation.

Generally, the reasons for the lack of effective induction affirm the need and importance of strategic and effective human resource management in the public service, especially considering the fact that the public service is a different environment (political, legal, managerial and technological and etc), which presently is characterised by multiplicity and complexity as indicated earlier in this chapter. Therefore, proper induction of the senior public servants is absolutely important with a

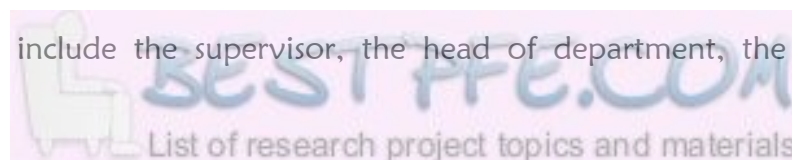


view to ensuring that they do not only function effectively in the public service but are also able to adopt and adapt to new practices and attitudes for future demands and challenges. In this sense, a rigorous comprehensive programme of activities and training tailored to suit the role and functions of the senior public servants within a system of changing government priorities and objectives is enviable. Most fundamentally, this gives rise to these questions: What should the induction programme contain? How it should be implemented and by whom? On what timescale does the programme occur? The answers to these questions will be given in the next section. This discussion should be appreciated here because induction training effectively constructs a sense of ownership and/or purpose, sound working relationship, cultural alignment, organizational effectiveness and the need to stay tuned to current and future public affairs.

3.7 The fundamentals of the induction programme

In this section, the responsibility for induction, who should be given induction training, how long the induction should be, planning an induction programme, designing the induction programme and an evaluation of the induction programme will be examined.

According to Dessler (2000: 249), in larger organisations such as the North West Province, the people who may be involved in the induction programme include the supervisor, the head of department, the HR





department, a mentor, the shop steward/staff representative and the new employees. It is important that all these people participate in organised training sessions to develop induction proficiency. Indeed, the training of these employees should also be strictly monitored, if the programme is to be successful (Grobler, et al, 2006: 210). Moreover, there are many categories of employees who will benefit from induction training. Mathis and Jackson (1988: 250) have identified three categories of employees. These are listed below.

- (1) **New employees.** A manager should not assume that new employees would immediately know what it has taken others months or years to learn. It is thus important that all new employees should receive proper induction training.
- (2) **Transferred/promoted employees.** It is also important that current employees who have been transferred or promoted within the organisation should receive induction training, especially if the transfer or promotion involves a significant change of environment.
- (3) **All current employees.** A re-induction programme involving all current employees should take place periodically. This type of programme is especially important if significant changes in organisational policies or structures have taken place.

To achieve the induction training objectives effectively, sessions not exceeding two hours at a time are recommended (St John, 1980: 375).



This is vital because employees are limited in respect of the volume of information that they can absorb, digest and retain during the initial induction process (Grobler, et al, 2006: 212). The period of induction should be linked to the length of time it takes to become effective on the job and to learn and understand the new activities (Grobler, et al, 2006: 212). Planning an induction programme is an indispensable requirement for an effective induction programme. Some of the key planning considerations are: induction policy; budget; and other considerations such as time needed to plan and implement the programme, programme goals, topics to be included, methods of organising and presenting them, duration of the induction sessions, material, facilities and personnel to be involved and the general organisation topics versus department and job topics to be covered (St John, 1980: 374).

Furthermore, the induction programme should be designed to include all the information that the newcomers will need to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. The information should not be given in one session, but should be divided into need-to-know and nice-to-know information (Tinarelli, 2000: 70). The need-to-know information is essentially information that the newcomer requires as soon as possible to fit in and be effective; nice-to-know information can be given over a period of time as the newcomer settles in (Tinarelli, 2000: 70).



The steps that are involved in implementing the induction programme are important because a high turnover among newcomers is often attributed to unrealistic and inflated expectations of job applicants. In this respect, Robbins (2005: 235) proposed three steps: pre-arrival, encounter and metamorphosis. The first stage encompasses all the learning that occurs before a new member joins the organisation. In the second stage, the new employee sees what the organisation is really like and confronts the likelihood that expectations and reality may diverge. In the third stage, the relatively long-standing changes take place. The new employee masters the skills required for his or her job, successfully performs his or her new roles and makes the adjustments to his or her work group's values and norms. This three-stage process has an impact on the new employee's work productively, commitment to the organisation's objectives and his or her decision to stay with the organisation (Robbins, 2005: 235). As part of the last stage, an interview should be arranged by the end of week six with the HR department where the newcomer can give feedback. This will enable the HR department to monitor the induction process to ensure that everything has been covered (Grobler et al., 2006: 215).

Thus, the induction programme must be evaluated with a view to ensuring that the organisation is spending its money wisely and achieving positive results and that that the methods used to assist new employees to integrate and become effective worker in the organisation



are the most suitable (Grobler et al., 2006: 215). By making use of questionnaires, surveys, exit interviews and course evaluation forms, qualitative information can be gathered (Skeats, 1991: 28-56). From the foregoing, it can be deduced that the induction of senior public servants must be well planned, designed and implemented to ensure proper integration. Evaluation of the induction programme is critical to reveal whether the new senior public servants perform well within a reasonable time. This is one way of improving the performance of the department. In the next section, capacity building support from a managerial development and support perspective is examined.

3.8 Capacity and capacity building

Many organisations nowadays claim to pursue capacity building with a view to developing skills and competencies and achieving their objectives and goals. Yet, there is no complete agreement on what capacity or capacity building is. For instance, Tyler (2004: 154) defines capacity as the wherewithal to use and improve capabilities to achieve an individual or organisational goal. An earlier definition can be found in Jurie (2000:71), who sees the concept of capacity as the inherent endowment possessed by individuals or organisations to achieve their fullest potential. Capacity also involves empowerment: “we cannot realize our values or goals without power. Power is the capacity to act publicly and effectively, to bring about positive change, to build hope” (Lappe and DuBois, 1994: 47). From the foregoing definitions, it is clear



that the concept of capacity is used at times interchangeably with capability (Jurie, 2000: 271). Capability broadly includes issues of attitudes, beliefs, ethics and behaviours (Friedman, 2004:101). So, capacity and capability are inseparable from skills, competencies and knowledge (Friedman, 2004:101; Horton, 2000:309), and they are fundamental to achieving superior public service performance (Du Toit et al, 1998: 196; Hill and Jones, 1998: 4; Tyler, 2004: 155).

From this discussion, capacity is essential to any organisation aiming to achieve its objectives and goals. The absence of capacity necessitates that the organisation build it. By definition, *capacity building is the institutionalised process coherently pursued to generate knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the development of structures, processes, technical and management systems, values and norms with a view to achieving superior organisational performance.* It differs on the level at which it exists, from one institution to the other. However, to explain how it occurs, three models and approaches to capacity building have been advanced. First, there is the cognitive capacities model. Secondly, there is the capabilities model. Lastly, there is the behavioural model. These are described below.



3.8.1 Cognitive capacities model

Bloom (1965) has developed a taxonomy of cognitive capacities for education with a view to describing a range of capacities. The key dimensions of this model include the features listed below.:

- (1) **Knowledge** is demonstrated by the recall of previously learned material; able to define, identify and list.
- (2) **Comprehension** is demonstrated by being able to grasp the meaning of new material; able to explain, discuss, review and interpret.
- (3) **Application** is demonstrated by the use of learned material in new and concrete situations; able to relate, show and demonstrate.
- (4) **Analysis** is demonstrated by being able to break material down into component parts; able to analyse, compare, contrast and investigate.
- (5) **Synthesis** is demonstrated by being able to put parts together to form a whole, able to design, formulate, develop and organise.
- (6) **Evaluation** is demonstrated by being able to judge the value of material for a given purpose; able to assess, evaluate, argue, validate and criticise.

A benefit of the cognitive capabilities is the simple modelling of a hierarchy, a hierarchy that can be applied to a range of performance domains and learning contexts. Knowledge is the most basic foundation, with evaluation being the most complex. Some kinds of performance rely only on knowledge; some rely on a capacity to evaluate. The



performance of senior public servants has to be based on evaluation as they go along. However, as a content model of cognitive capacities, there are problems with the Bloom model. This whole model of cognitive capacities assumes that for people information is passively received by the senses, and that the more complex cognitive capacities are restricted to certain kinds of activity, tasks and situations. The overall function of cognition is assumed to be to help people discover an objective reality; that is, a reality that exists externally, and independent of the person sensing it. These assumptions about cognitive capacities inherent in the Bloom model are contestable.

3.8.2 Capabilities model

The fact is that ‘knowing how’ does not always translate into ‘being able to’ (cognitive capacity, from knowledge through to critical evaluation capacities does not ensure effective performance); the individual must have constituent capabilities as well (Gibbs, 2002: 69). Capabilities are to be defined as the discrete abilities involved in effective performance. Three levels that constitute the tripartite model are underpinning capabilities, intermediate capabilities and overarching capabilities. Underpinning capabilities are those which are expected as a consequence of primary and secondary education. Intermediate capabilities are those most associated with capacity building at work, capacity building in occupation – specific roles, in generic capabilities relevant to most jobs and in personal development. The overarching



capabilities are associated with productive people and productive organisations. Their essence is that they all relate to people taking responsibility rather than being instructed. They are capabilities that need to be developed in concrete workplace situations; they cannot be learned and developed in other circumstances. They are relevant to all employees and are confined to management (Parsons, 1997). The tripartite model confirms the levels of capabilities that are essential for employability, that can be taught and that are required for improving organisational performance. However, the problems of measurement, accuracy and verifiability are possible (Harvey, 1999).

3.8.3 Behavioural model

According to Le Doux (1996), effective performance is a consequence not only of what people know and think and what they can do, but also of how they actually behave because of how they feel. The affective influences on people, and therefore performance, can often make the critical difference between effective performance and poor performance. If the affective side is so critical for performance, it is then essential that it has to be assessed in the design of capacity building experiences and the setting of objectives. In this context, three constructs of this model are:

- (1) **changing attitudes** defined as patterns of personal likes and dislikes which can be measured and changed;



- (2) **developing values** defined as the basic beliefs about right and wrong which will influence what people will pursue and what they will or will not do; and
- (3) **emotional intelligence** defined as the effective handling of emotions to enable effective interpersonal relations.

From these models, it is clear that there are different schools of thought concerning the explanation of capacity building. Importantly, these models indicate that capacity-building initiatives must be planned and designed for effective support and desired organisational performance. This requires the establishment of appropriate aims, goals, objectives and learning systems. These need to relate in a balanced way to the aptitudes, capabilities, behaviours, and competencies required for desired performance.

These models give explanation and justification for different approaches to building capacity. Amongst the approaches that have been advanced, the following are notable: formal education and training, on the job training, action training and non-formal training. These approaches are generally viewed within the context of management development (Cardno, 2005; Lancaster, 2005; Noe, 2005), as special forms of professional development. According to Woodall and Winstanley (1998), management development is related to the specialised knowledge and skills that emerge from the discipline of generic



management and the associated field of educational administration, management and leadership. The purpose of management development is to assist the personal and professional growth of managers so that they develop competencies and cognitive capabilities to perform their role effectively (Cardno, 2005: 301). It is important for the maintenance of the human resource base of the organisation and must be viewed as an integral part of the core organisational strategy, rather than an ad hoc operation issue (Rowley, 1995: 5). It incorporates management training, management education and management support.

Management training is described as a process by which managers develop hands-on or skill development through practice guided by formal structured means (Cardno, 2005: 301). It includes short courses and practical training sessions which individuals attend usually delivered off site. Training activity usually has an individual focus, although consultants can deliver tailor-made management training courses. Management education differs from management training in that it describes the type of learning that takes place in a structured, formal, institutional framework and leads to a qualification. Clearly, management education is inherently an individual-orientated form of management development but it is often supported by the institution (public service) that realises the potential of educated managers' coaching and mentoring others and contributing to the better overall better management of the institution (Kerrigan and Luke, 1989; Noe,



2005; Swart et al, 2005). Management support refers to opportunities both on-the-job and off-the-job that lead to professional growth. But the most effective management support is often delivered by means of the one-to-one processes of coaching and mentoring and relies on experienced managers being able and willing to assist new managers to reflect on their practice and learn (Rudman, 1999; Price, 2004: 582).

Consideration is now given to on-the-job support opportunities. These are those that are provided in various forms, but the coaching that occurs in a formal relationship between the manager and the person they report to in an appraisal process is deemed to be most relevant and effective learning opportunities. Through on-the-job training, the organisation is able to realise the value of career planning for staff with potential to understudy roles to which they aspire. Developing a pool of staff who can step into vacated senior roles is a form of management support that benefits both the individual and the organisation (Gibb, 2002: 133; Cardno, 2005: 302). These opportunities include job rotation, enlarged and enriched job responsibilities and job instruction training (Grobler and Warnich, 2006: 314).

On the other hand, off-the-job support opportunities are those that increase learning opportunities for a manager. Mentoring, which is a form of collegial guidance less formal than coaching, can be provided by colleagues inside or outside the public service. Management mentors



are senior, experienced staff who are willing to build learning relationship with a junior colleague without the formal need to judge their performance. In addition to mentoring, a raft of other activities promotes management development. These are: membership of local and national and international educational associations, attendance at professional and research conferences that include presentation of papers on the public service issues, membership of professional associations that reflect the specific interests of one's specific management level, subscribing to educational management periodicals and reading in the area to keep abreast of research and best practice (Kerrigan and Luke, 1989: 912; Cardno, 2005: 303; Grobler and Warnich, 2006: 314). Grobler and Warnich (2006: 314) also proposed behaviour modelling and sensitivity training. Behaviour modelling utilises role-playing and focuses on individual skill modules that address a common problem most senior managers face. Through sensitivity training, on the other hand, individuals become more aware of their feelings and learn how one person's behaviour affects the feelings, attitudes and behaviours of others. The goals of sensitivity training include (Grobler and Warnich, 2006: 319): becoming more competent in one's personal relationships; learning more about oneself as a person; learning how others react to one's behaviour; and learning about the dynamics of group formation, group goals and group goals. A review of these approaches is given in the next section.



3.9 Review of the approaches to capacity building and support

The approaches to capacity building in the preceding section require that senior public servants adopt the attitude of an acceptance of the need for continuous professional development throughout their working lives (Harrison, 2002; Marchington and Wilkinson, 2002; Lancaster, 2005:10). Through continuous training and education, senior public servants can achieve increased organisational capability. However, there are common themes and these are observation and learning, and a supportive climate, but one that supports challenges to existing order; responsiveness (Tyler, 2004: 155). Howe et al, (1998:79) believe that approaches to capacity building must engage senior public servants, challenge the way they think or act, be responsive to needs and issues as they arise, use the right language, build credibility skills and networks and secure incentives, rewards and recognition for actions. Crucially, the public service must utilise individuals' new capacity (Rist, 1995: 17), but this may be inhibited by the public service policies and practices (Crisp et al, 2000:39).

Essentially, Postma (1998:79) believes that assessment of capacity is itself capacity building. In this sense, capacity building is the salient feature of the learning organisation, described by Marsick et al, (2000:58) with characteristics such as continuous learning at the systems level, knowledge generation and sharing, systemic thinking capacity, employees' participation and accountability and the culture and



structure for rapid communication and learning. Senge et al, (1999) conceptualise three reinforcing processes which produce organisational learning capability. They envisage an increase in learning capacity occurring through the individual, diffusing via informal networks and being established in new organisational practices which then sustain growth in capability. Specifically, Symon (2002) argues that, for leadership and management development programmes to be most effective, the public service needs to leverage new knowledge as it enters the workplace, or must learn to do so if the purpose of a programme is new knowledge rather than socialisation and enculturation. Thus, Roth and Marubecheck (1994) argue that transfer of knowledge into and within the public service needs to be complemented by organisational learning capabilities. Simply, public service needs to understand the role of core knowledge in achieving their goals - the philosophy, systems, approaches to problem solving and decision-making - as well as how to deploy skills to acquire, organise, codify and deploy knowledge. Roth and Marubecheck (1994) identified a number of key principles that organisations need to embrace to do this: a learning philosophy, stretched goals, opportunities for (low) risk-taking, systems for encouraging knowledge and learning, stimulating core knowledge processes and systems for crossing functional boundaries. Watkins and Marsick (1996) identified core practices which had an impact on performance: creating continuous learning opportunities; promoting inquiry and dialogue; encouraging



collaboration and team learning; creating systems to capture and share knowledge; connecting the public service to its environment; and providing strategic leadership for learning.

The approaches to capacity building affirm that the public service must utilise a new stock of knowledge, as it is required to challenge the status quo. However, the capacity of the public service to utilise new knowledge is but one part of the equation. According to Garvin (1993), the building blocks towards a learning organisation are precisely those which pertain to the individual. These are: systematic problem-solving; experimentation with new approaches; learning from one's own experience and past history; learning from others' experience and best practice (e.g. benchmarking); and transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently. In those circumstances where learning is predominately driven by course assessment (Gibbs, 1995; Knight, 2000) education programmes must be scrutinised in relation to these learner attributes. Facilitators need to help adult learners to learn how to learn to acquire the disciplines and habits of critical analysis and reflection, making sense of issues and the search for meaning (Entwistle, 1998). This constitutes a deep approach to learning (Biggs, 1987, 1999). However, this approach is context sensitive, influenced by the demands of assessment, time, workload, interest, age, anxiety and relevance of content (Biggs, 1987; Richardson, 2000; Sadler-Smith, 1996). It is also related to educators' approaches to teaching. Thus, the educational provision must be



effective in building the capacity of the learner, the learner must be sufficiently receptive and motivated and the context needs to conducive to the right kind of learning.

However, attempting to move beyond the learning context is challenging. According to Lave and Wenger (1991), learning is embedded in the context of learning. Indeed, the extent to which new knowledge can be applied in the workplace will be influenced by organisational context and the affording of processes and systems through which skills and knowledge are exercised and embedded. Is the climate supportive and responsive enough to allow challenges to the existing order? Are systems capable of transforming individual knowledge into organisational results? (Lusthaus et al, 1999). Day (1996) believes that building capacity within externally focused organisations such as the North West Province involves improving organisational capabilities for meeting client needs and that this depends on internal responsiveness and flexibility. Drawing from the capabilities model, the capabilities of the senior public servants alone are inadequate to locate this capacity in organisations. In fact, organisations need to position resources and ensure there is sufficient capability to use the resources effectively. Koys (2001) has established the direction of influence between human resources (HR) outcomes and organisational outcomes and concludes that it is likely to be the case that organisation policy and strategy, undertaken through the HR practices, will influence employee



attitudes and result in a positive organisational impact. Similarly, Grobler and Warnich (2006:5) maintain that the organisational goals and human needs are mutual and compatible and offer certain principles for a human resource approach. These are listed below.

- (1) Senior public servants are investments that will, if effectively managed and developed, provide long-term rewards to the public service in the form of greater productivity.
- (2) Policies, programmes and practices must be created that satisfy both the economic and emotional needs of senior public servants.
- (3) A working public service environment must be created in which senior public servants are encouraged to develop and utilise their skills to the maximum extent.
- (4) HR programmes and practices must be implemented with the goal of balancing the needs and meeting the goals of both the public service and the senior public servants.

For the senior public servants, it can be accepted that the quality of strategic leadership by necessity requires strategic learning which must be provided in the public service environment that values and sustains Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM). In this direction, therefore, learning itself can be seen as a dynamic capability because it is purposeful adaptation and reconfiguration of attributes (including knowledge and skills) and a capacity to renew previous competencies to



maintain congruence with changing requirements in the public service. Thus, the public service of the North West needs to consider and appreciate ways in which leadership capability of the senior public servants can be learned and relearned from time to time. Above all, this is vital because leadership is a very fluid concept, as is the role of being a leader in the public service. Therefore, this calls for a paradigmatic shift, one that extends beyond a mode of thought restricted in a mentality of 'either/or' to one that embraces the possibilities embedded in the multiplicities of connections permitted even by seemingly oppositional forces (a both /and mentality).

By and large, the foregoing discussion on capacity building suggests that there are consequences that the public service may face if it fails to build capacity. According to Lancaster (2005: 11), individuals who are unwilling or unable to accept the need for continuing professional development are quickly likely to find that their skills and knowledge are outmoded and irrelevant to the real world of organisations. In addition, individuals who resist change in this respect are unlikely to progress through the management hierarchy to the highest levels of executive activities.

Furthermore, capacity building cannot occur in a public service culture that is unaware of what it is, and unprepared to resource it so that it can flourish. Indeed, training and learning that is anticipated, but is not



supported by, the structure and culture of the organisation makes it difficult (if not impossible) to transfer newly learnt skills and attitudes to the workplace (Swart et al, 2005: 251). If management development and training event reflects poor financial investment, this may convey important messages regarding the extent to which senior managers are committed to learning and development (Swart et al, 2005: 250). Therefore, a clearly defined human resource development budget can assist the organisation in prioritising learning and development events.

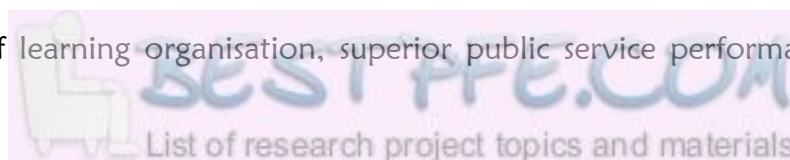
Moreover, there is an inextricable link between the leadership style of the top group of managers and the culture of the organisation (Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe, 2004:185) For example, several findings by Alimo-Metcalfe (2000) into why, despite the substantial expenditure on management/ leadership development initiatives by public sector organisations, most failed after a few years, relate to the attitudes of the most senior managers, in particular in relation to three aspects. The first was their reluctance to participate themselves, believing that they had little need for it, even though they thought that managers at lower levels did need such development. The second barrier was created as a result of middle level managers' greater understanding of the nature of leadership as a result of their development experiences and a heightened awareness of the lack of appropriate role models amongst the top managers. The third impediment was the lack of general support by the top managers for their initiatives, and in particular a lack of



support for the proposals made by those managers who had participated in such programmes or initiatives. As a result, cynicism amongst those at lower levels increased, and any enthusiasm for applying the development acquired waned.

Human Resource Development should create learning opportunities which are linked to the strategic objectives of the organisation. However, organisations which hamper or stunt the free development of their members or constituents may not only limit their own effectiveness, but may also ultimately impede realisation of overarching constructs such as social justice or the public interest (Fromm, 1965; Freire 1993). In this context, the public service should view capacity building as an aspect of professional development that demands time and money to demonstrate that there is real commitment to growing management capacity. But this requires a clear policy on capacity building with systems, resources and commitment for effective institutional and individual support.

Therefore, capacity building is a necessary ingredient for successful human resource planning and development. In this regard, it is argued that, if the SMS Competency Framework has been created on the basis of the public service core activities, then it should be applied to a wide range of activities, task, and services, and through the enduring processes of learning organisation, superior public service performance





should be realised. The value of the human resources in the public service can be realised if the senior public servants are prepared and developed effectively. In brief, the management development activities in the public service should be carried out within the established framework of skills and competencies that strategically address its challenges and needs and increase its capability. In this regard, the performance appraisal interview is widely viewed as one of the main instruments for identifying training and development needs at the individual level. Implementation of a training and development plan is vital for the facilitation of management development and training.

Contextually, management development and training approaches and strategies should effectively appeal to the strategic needs identified in line with the SMS Competency Framework and for its strategic human resource meaning and purpose. This approach ensures that the training and development activities are predicated on the strategic direction and are shaped by specific individual and organisational needs. It also ensures that management development and training interventions results in better human security and development by responding positively to the actual skills requirements of the public service. Within this context, it may be deduced that capacity building policy is indispensable with a view to enhancing both personal and organisational development systematically and strategically and ensuring superior performance by senior members of the public service.



3.10 Diagnostic mechanisms to support capacity building

An important element in developing a high performance public service in the North West Province is the identification of areas for improvement or problems generally, and capacity building problems in particular. Organisational diagnosis provides information which allows a faster reacting organisation to emerge, one which can deal proactively with changing forces. Importantly, organisational diagnosis is a systematic approach to understanding and describing the current state of the organisation. It is aimed at providing a rigorous analysis of data on the structure, administration, interaction, procedures, interfaces and other essential elements of the organisation (Harvey and Brown, 1996:123-4). By specifying the nature of the exact problem requiring solution, identifying the underlying causal forces and selecting change mechanisms, diagnosis provides a basis for structural, behavioural or technical interventions to improve public service performance. A prominent method in the diagnostic process is to determine the performance gap – the difference between what the organisation could do by virtue of its opportunity in its environment, and what it actually does in taking advantage of the opportunity. This leads to the gap analysis approach (Harvey and Brown, 1996:125). The performance gap may occur when the organisation fails to adapt to changes in its external environment (Robbins 1998: 571-73; Grobler et al, 2006: 265).



Organisation development practitioners use diagnostic models to assess an organisation (Nadler, 1980: 119-31). Indeed, the models described below may be used to analyse the structures, processes, systems, culture and behaviour of the public service, specifically supporting the capacity building of the senior public servants.

3.10.1 The Analytical Model

The analytical model also known as the differentiation-integration model stresses the importance of a sound analytical diagnosis as the basis of planned change in organisations (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969: 11-14). The model was developed to study and understand interdepartmental issues by conducting a careful diagnosis of an organisation's problem areas. An organisation is composed of differentiated function or units that must be integrated into a unified effort, if the organisation is to be effective. The various tasks that the units work on can be examined in the light of four characteristics of the organisation's environment: the degree of departmental structure; the period of induction of members; the interpersonal induction of members toward others and organisation members' orientation toward goals.

3.10.2 The Emergent-Group Behaviour Model

The emergent-group behaviour model is based primarily on the work of George Homans and provides a conceptual scheme for analysing



behaviour in work groups, particularly the interdependence of groups (Homans, 1950). According to this diagnostic model, a complex pattern of behaviour, consisting of activities, interactions, sentiments and norms, develops from the set of behaviours and relationships required to perform the work of the group. Moreover, there are complex sets of behaviours that emerge in addition to those required, such as social activity. The emergent-group behaviour model helps in understanding how teams operate. This model is used to gather observations and information on these four characteristics and uses these data to diagnose problems among or within teams.

3.10.3 The Management Consulting Model

The Management Consulting diagnostic model was developed for use in management consulting with six basic factors identified (Armstrong and Wheatley, 1989).

- (1) Basic planning – do they have a mission, vision and goals?
- (2) General Business Practices – do they have appropriate management systems?
- (3) Finance – are they operating with timely and accurate financial data and plans?
- (4) Advertising and promotion – are they aware of the link between advertising and sales?



- (5) Market Research – are they aware of competitor’s strategies and policies and the needs of customers?
- (6) Personnel – do they have appropriate systems for recruiting, training, and retraining human resources?

Armstrong and Wheatley (1989) further suggested that it is possible to ask a few basic questions in each area to gain an indication of where the client’s problems may be located.

3.10.4 The Sociotechnical Systems Model

The sociotechnical systems model was developed to analyse the organisation as a sociotechnical system interacting with its external environment (Emergy, 1959). According to this model, there exists in the organisation a social system consisting of the task, activities and tools used to accomplish the basic purpose of the organisation. The two systems – the social system and the technological system – are interrelated and interdependent. The diagnostic model then determines how these systems interrelate, and particularly the type of feedback or lack of feedback between the various subsystems.

3.10.5 The Force-Field Analysis Model

The force-field analysis model is a general-purpose technique developed to understand the dynamic balance of forces working in opposite directions (Lewin, 1974: 5-42). In any organisational situation, there are



forces that push for change, as well forces that hinder change. Those forces acting on the organisation to keep it stable are called restraining forces and put pressure on the organisation not to change. Opposite forces, called driving forces, put pressure on the organisation to change. If the forces for change and the forces against change are equal, the result is organisational equilibrium and the organisation remains stable. This technique assumes that at any given moment, an organisation is in a state of equilibrium. Change takes place when there is an imbalance between the forces, and continues until the opposing forces are brought back into equilibrium. The imbalance can be planned and specifically brought about by increasing the strength of any one of the forces, adding a new force, by decreasing the strength of any one of the forces, or by a combination of these methods.

With reference to this thesis, all the above models are equally important for a number of reasons. First, they can be used to enhance the capacity of the public service to assess and change its approaches to supporting the managerial capacity building of its senior public servants. Second, they can provide an opportunity for the North West Province (legislative and administrative) to acquire new insights into the dysfunctional aspects of their culture and patterns of behaviour as a basis for developing a more effective public service. Finally, they are equally important to ensuring that all departments in the North West Province remain engaged in a process of continuous improvement.



Therefore, they are very critical for strengthening the support for managerial capacity building of senior public servants.

3.11 Summary

The worldwide realisation that public service functions are more complex and require managerial than administrative interventions does not exclude the North West Province and its senior public servants. Moreover, the public service faces the challenge of restoring integrity to its own procedures, building public confidence in its capacities and reinvigorating its commitment to democratic ideals. It emerged from the literature that, for the public service to be effective, accountable, efficient and economical, it should develop policies, construct systems and processes, and position resources with a view to ensuring that there is sufficient capability to use the resources effectively and that new knowledge and thinking that are brought to the bureau are well leveraged at individual and organisational levels.

As recognised, induction is a vital process for the successful placement and subsequent processes of training and development training of senior public servants. An effective induction programme ensures the integration of newly appointed senior public servants into the public service, thereby creating a sense of security, confidence and belonging for them. Successful induction programmes lead to better motivated senior public servants and improved productivity within the public



service. However, it is important that the HR department give feedback to the newcomers and monitor and evaluate the induction process with a view to ensuring that the expectations of the public service and the newcomers are reached effectively and in a balanced and cost-effective fashion.

Evidence that senior public servants have accepted the need for continuous professional development and training is vital for the success of the public service and for the general capacity to provide goods and services in modern times. Indeed, the approaches to management development and training require effective, coherent and sustainable support in terms of policies, strategies, systems, and resources. These elements are important in building a culture of learning and ensuring that public service performance is a sum of the capacities of the individual senior public servants. The importance of diagnostic mechanisms in providing a rigorous analysis of information relating to the structure, administration, interaction, procedures, interfaces and other essential elements of the public service cannot be overemphasised. The review of the literature has answered the basic question at the heart of all governance-related research by Lynn, et al., (2000:1): “How can public-sector regimes, agencies, programs and activities be organised and managed to achieve public purposes?” The case study on the support for the institutional capacity building of the senior public servants is presented in the next chapter.



CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE STUDY ON THE SUPPORT FOR CAPACITY BUILDING OF THE SENIOR PUBLIC SERVANTS

“We cannot sustain a public service cadre that is only able to restate the vision, but does not have the skills and leadership capabilities to translate this vision into active institutional practice and service delivery. In the spectrum of leadership development, our emphasis has to be on establishing the capacity amongst senior civil servants to translate the vision into active demonstrable practice” Minister for Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, 2005: 12).

4.1 Introduction

The uninterrupted period in power of the African National Congress (ANC) party, from 1994 until the present time after many decades of conventional public administration (typically too descriptive, reductionist, fragmentary and suffering from racial and gender imbalances historically associated with apartheid) has institutionalised a public management programme which generally redefines and repositions the role of government and specifically transforms and challenges the mandate of public institutions in South Africa. This changing governance landscape increasingly necessitates that the senior public servants who function in today’s public administration be effectively prepared and developed with a view to embracing change, setting direction and meeting the challenges of strategically managing public service.



However, according to the Minister for Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi (2005: 11), a component of the challenge of ensuring a responsive senior public sector leadership resides in attracting and retaining the people who have the required skills and who are committed to service in a complex and changing environment. The Public Service Commission (PSC) recently made a similar observation that limited capacity continues to impact on government's performance and its ability to realise its developmental objectives (The State of the Public Service Report, 2006: 12).

In particular, Levin (2006: 62-63) and Diphofa (2006: 88) maintain that capacity problems in the public service are often aggravated by a lack of integration of key processes such as strategic planning, budgeting, human resource planning, human resource development, human resource management, organisational structures, monitoring and evaluation. Be that as it may, managerial and leadership capacity of the senior public servants is required to build on the existing, legislative normative and regulatory frameworks (The State of the Public Service Report, 2006: 10), and promote good governance by managing effective public service delivery in the North West Province.

Given the unprecedented treatment of the performance of government in the last decade and the need to improve service delivery, there arose a need to conduct the study in the North West Province where the





researcher lives to evaluate the support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants. As mentioned in Chapter Three, effective support for capacity building is vital for a degree of order and consistency in the effective and coherent implementation of public policy. Indeed, capacity building improves the ability of the public service to develop its structures, systems, personnel and competencies in order to achieve constitutional and institutional mandates strategically and effectively. However, there is a relative lack of evaluative studies in this regard, and there is a dearth of self-adverting reports published by the provincial government which address the issue of support for managerial capacity building of senior public servants from an evaluative institutional viewpoint.

This chapter presents the issues relating to managerial capacity building support of the senior public servants in the North West Province, with special reference to three cases: the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education. Based on the information largely gathered through the structured interviews with the senior HRD staff of each department, it presents the prevailing state of institutional support for managerial capacity building of senior public servants in these departments with particular reference to strategies and plans, policies and guidelines, programmes and approaches, processes and systems, communication and feedback, resources, monitoring and evaluation, quality assessment and assurance.



Before venturing into these domains of managerial capacity building support, however, a brief overview of the major strategic features of these departments is given below.

4.2 Summary of the organisational environment and challenges

In its Annual Performance Plan for 2006, the vision of the Department of Health is optimum health for all individuals and communities in the North West Province. Its mission is to ensure access to affordable, equitable, quality, caring health services for all in the North West Province through community involvement and partnerships, Batho Pele Principles, Patients' Rights Charter, innovation driven performance and by valuing people and their diversity.

The Department of Health in its Annual Performance Plan for 2006-2009 has identified the organisation strengths as expertise: people who have grown through the ranks; systems and policies exist; good management principles exist; history of successes; benchmark for others/ culture of risk taking; decentralized health system; active community participation; decentralized authority: procurement, finance and human resources; managers are assertive; reduction of vacancy rate at management level; improved financial management; strategic plan in place; ongoing Human Resource Development; introduction of Middle Management Service; improvement in condition of services: i.e. subsidized vehicles etc; partnership with NGOs and mobilized



communities; established structures with District and Hospital management teams; have been able to retain managers and performance review at organizational and individual level as its organizational strengths (See Department of Health's Annual Performance Plan, 2006: 14-30).

Furthermore, the Department of Health has disclosed its weaknesses in its Annual Performance Plan for 2006-2009 as follows: still working in silos, lack of process ownership; lack of sufficient integration of services; integrated management and ability to lead; non-delivery on some critical mandates; training efforts not always leading to improved service delivery; insufficient funding; staff establishment at clinic levels not sufficient; financial management at hospital level; inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems; inadequate management of labour relations; non-integrated information management; PMDS not adequately implemented; lack of technical support to managers; availability and maintenance of medical equipment; failure to implement transport procurement and replacement policy; recruitment and retention of professionals; inequitable distribution of finance and human resources among Districts and lack of targeted training of management (See Department of Health's Annual Performance Plan, 2006: 14-30).



The strengths and weaknesses of the Department of Health clearly reveal the realities of the new South African public service and further confirm the complexity and multiplicity of the nature and scope of government activities and functions. Therefore, it is very imperative that those who are at senior management level must be properly inducted, competent and be supported by reconfiguring their competencies with a view to contributing towards the main objectives and functions of the North West Province.

Moreover, the vision of the Department of Social Development is fostering a caring self-reliant society that upholds human dignity. Its mission is to provide integrated developmental social services in order to realise a better life for all. Its strategic goals and priorities are to ensure social protection services, community development programmes and internal departmental business excellence. In its Strategic Plan for 2006, the Department of Social Development has identified child care programmes, programmes for the aged; strategic positioning, financial management and supply chain management as its strengths. Equally, the Department asserts that there is increasing need for the deepening of the social transformation process and the improvement of service delivery by strengthening institutions for service delivery. More importantly, there is a need for effective and efficient management of resources. Specifically it has identified business management or leadership around issues such as structure, corporate governance, culture, business



performance management, service delivery management and business communication. Internal resource management weaknesses facing the Department include deficiencies in HR management and information management (See Department of Social Development's Strategic Plan, 2005-2010:3-6).

The overview of the strategic environment and challenges facing the Department of Social Development confirms some of the findings of the Provincial Review Report of 1997 with regard to dysfunctional organizational management and practices in the public service in Section 1.3 in Chapter One. Since the birth of democracy in 1994, the current state of affairs challenges the reality of the transformation of the public service and the capability of the North West Province to achieve the vision of the public service of South Africa.

Furthermore, the Department of Education in its Annual Performance Plan 2006/7-2008/9, states its vision as "an Education Department that is accountable and accessible to all, rendering a sustainable and quality service, promoting lifelong learning opportunities and people's self-reliance while continually contributing towards a democratic society and economic growth". Its mission is to provide quality education and training through the implementation of policies, strategies, programmes and projects within the principles of equity, redress and affordability.



In its Annual Performance Plan for 2006/7 to 2008/9, the Department of Education has mentioned four organisational challenges which are: recruitment, internal development, information systems and administration. At the corporate centre, critical posts in finance are unfilled and this has resulted in poor financial management across the system. Although the structure created a post for Human Resource Development, internal capacity building has largely remained unconsolidated. The restructuring process absorbed people into posts they had never held before and capacity building to bring them “up to speed” with the new functions has been very weak. Information Systems in the Department has not been able to provide the kind of information required by different sections of the department. Incorrect data is affecting delivery of service because it directly affects planning. There is a general weakness in the business processes of the department e.g. Human Resources Management is also battling with capturing of leave forms. These need to be urgently attended to because they can be costly to the department, if systems are not put in place or corrected soon (See Department of Education’s Annual Performance Plan 2006/7-2008/9:9-10).

Generally, these challenges confirm the view expressed in Chapter Three that governmental actions are very complex, enlarged and increasingly affect the performance of these departments in unpredictable ways. For example, the Department of Health claims that the lack of skilled



personnel, difficulty in attracting and retaining required skills, continuous induction of new staff members and the lack of strategic guidance from incorrectly placed personnel affect its vision and mission. In this regard, the question that arises directly from the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (1995: 48-51) is: to what degree are senior public servants in these departments being empowered, challenged and motivated to be leaders, visionaries, initiators and effective communicators and decision-makers capable of responding proactively to the challenges of the change process at all levels, rather than acting as the administrators of fixed rules and procedures? In fact, are these departments and their senior public servants actually committed to and genuinely embracing transformation of the Public Service after twelve years of democratic governance in South Africa?

Thus, it follows that the senior public servants in these departments now need specific competencies to enable them to manage and lead effectively into the future, while maintaining – and even improving – effectiveness and efficiency (Schwella and Rossouw, 2005: 762). Effective preparation and development of the senior public servants is an added way to improving their chances of managing and leading successfully in the North West Province. A conducive atmosphere is vital for the enhancement and application of competencies critically associated with the coherent and successful implementation of public



policy. In this sense, the next section examines the linkage between strategic planning and human resource planning.

4.3 Linkages between strategic planning and human resource planning

Strategic management is concerned with policy decisions affecting the entire public service, with the overall objective of being able to position the public service to deal effectively with its environment, and is seen as a vital ingredient in achieving and maintaining effective performance in a changing environment (Gunnigle and Moore, 1994: 63). For this reason, successful public management inevitably requires a feel for strategy because it is broader, more integrative, and less defined by functional expertise than is public administration (Bozeman and Straussman, 1990:214). Where public management is to a large extent management of the external environment of the public service, public administration is within the context of the public service. Turning to the specific links between strategic planning and HR planning and policies, strategic management is seen to be mainly concerned with mission and strategy – the identification of an organisation’s purpose and plan on how this can be achieved; formal structure – for the organisation of people and tasks to achieve mission and strategy and HR systems – recruitment, development, evaluation and reward of employees (Gunnigle and Moore, 1994: 63). With regard to the linkages between strategic management planning and human resource management planning in the case study departments, there are no particular linkages,



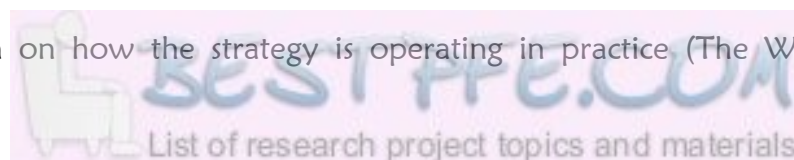
as there are no written HR plans in place. Equally, there are no HR plans specifically for senior public servants. However, the Departments of Health and Social Development argued that the HR plans are still in a draft format. Yet, Bohlander et al (2001: 123-124) argue that linking HR planning with the departmental strategic planning process facilitates the ability to successfully pursue a given number of strategic objectives and initiatives and as a result create a competitive advantage.

Likewise, Jackson and Schuler (2003: 177) maintain that the overriding reason for integrating HR planning with strategic planning is to ensure that the HR programmes and policies function in such a manner that they achieve immediate and long-range departmental goals. Indeed, HR programmes work better when they have been shaped by departmental goals. The precepts of the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the public service (1997: 16) are that human resource planning ensures that an organisation obtains the quality and quantity of staff it requires; makes the optimum use of its human resources; is able to anticipate and manage surpluses and shortages of staff; and develops a multi-skilled, representative and flexible workforce, which enables the organisation to adopt rapidly to a changing operational environment.

Similarly, strategic human resource planning helps to ensure that the department is neither over-nor understaffed, that employees with the



appropriate talents, skills and desire, are available to carry out their tasks in the right jobs at the right time (Grobler, 1993: 14). In this respect, three approaches can be used to link strategic business plans and HR plans. The first is the formal approach, which ensures linkage through explicit and institutionalised processes. The second is the informal approach which ensures linkage through interpersonal interactions of top management strategists and those responsible for strategic planning for HR. The third is a combination of formal and informal approaches in which the linkage depends on formal methods and informal leader relations (Nel et al., 2001:64-65). The White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997: 16) has suggested three main steps for human resource planning. These are: an assessment of the human resources required to deliver the operational objectives in the department's strategic plan; an assessment of the department's existing human resource capacity and a plan for how the gap between existing human resources capacity and the future human resource requirement is to be filled, within the financial resources available. In particular, the last step means that each department must live up to the expectation of its vision and drive human resource management activities by drawing up a human resource strategy. Its effectiveness depends on its continuing relevance in the light of experience and it needs to be supported by human resource management information systems which provide accurate and timely information on how the strategy is operating in practice (The White





Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 1997: 17).

Indeed, the linkages between strategic planning and HR planning create conducive HR environment for approaching and undertaking proper induction of senior public servants.

4.4 Induction of senior public servants

As acknowledged in Chapter Three, induction is the process of integrating the new employees into the organisation and acquainting them with the details and requirements of the job. It can thus be regarded as a process by which senior public servants are transformed from complete outsiders to participating and effective members of the department. It has also been noted that, before the induction programme can be developed, an induction policy; budget; and other considerations such as the time needed to plan and implement the programme; programme goals, topics to be included, methods of organising and presenting them, duration of induction sessions; materials, facilities and personnel to be used; general organisations topics versus departmental and job topics to be covered, must be effectively considered. With reference to the case study departments, however, there are no induction policies and itemised budgets in place for the effective design and implementation of the induction programmes for their senior public servants. There is no written plan for the induction for senior public servants in these departments to guide



the design, implementation and evaluation and generally align the process to their visions and HR strategic purposes and mandates.

In the Department of Social Development, however, the induction programme for senior public servants entails explanation of the vision and mission, foreword by the MEC, HR policies and procedures and public service regulations. The programme can begin any time of the year, as the department appoints staff throughout the year and last for five days only. All line managers including the HR manager, the Chief Directorate Social Work, Finance, Supply Chain and Support Services are involved in the programme. Moreover, the induction programme for its senior public servants covers the departmental and job requirements. In the case of the Department of Health, the programme runs twice a year depending on the number of new employees. It lasts for two days and it is target specific, i.e. senior management or middle management. In the case of the Department of Social Development, the induction programme for senior public servants is conducted once upon appointment. As far as the Department of Education is concerned, the senior public servants are inducted informally on assumption of duties. The induction has no specific time frames and follows a one-on-one approach. The main barrier to effective induction programme identified by the Department of Social Development is that senior management do not attend the programme as scheduled. This difficulty is also expressed by the Department of Health which is further confronted by



low attendance of new appointees. There are no barriers to the effective induction programme of senior public servants that the Department of Education has articulated.

In addition, evaluation of the induction programme is important to ensure that the department is spending its money wisely and achieving positive results and that the methods used to assist new employees to integrate and become effective in the department are the most suitable. However, the departments do not evaluate their induction processes for senior public servants. There is no formal process of receiving feedback about the expectations, roles, responsibilities and employment security from the senior public servants. The final point regarding the induction of the senior public servants in the case study departments is that the induction processes and programmes are not quality assured for effectiveness and impact assessment.

4.5 Training and development of senior public servants

It is very important that the training efforts be linked to the department's objectives, goals and business strategies if they are to add value. Undeniably, employees training and development is seen as a key factor in meeting the employer's strategic, business and operational goals (Lambert, 1997:24; Thorne and Mackey, 2003: 91). As a result, Mathis and Jackson (2003:276) argue that training is strategic when it develops essential worker capabilities; encourages adaptability to



change; promotes ongoing learning in the organisation; creates and disseminates new knowledge throughout the organisation and facilitates communication and focus.

With the above in mind, the case study departments have training policies and plans which generally apply to all employees regardless of employment category. However, they do not have training and development strategies for their senior public servants. Moreover, to obtain training and development needs for senior public servants, the Department of Social Development uses a questionnaire. The Department of Health conducts training needs analysis exercise (i.e. skills audit and perceived needs). The Department of Education obtains training and development needs from the Performance agreements/files and personal growth plans of the senior public servants. The Department of Education employs gap analysis technique and obtains personal growth plans/files of the senior public servants to conduct training and development needs. The Department of Health follows the identified critical training needs, whilst the Department of Social Development obtains information from the questionnaire and job requirements.

In the Department of Education, the Superintendent General, Deputy Director General, Chief Director of Human Resource Management and Development and the HR managers are involved in the identification of



training and development needs of senior public servants. In the Department of Health, the Chief Training Officer and Training and Departmental Training Committee are involved in the identification of training and development needs of senior public servants, whereas in the Department of Social Development the Human Resource Development Sub-Directorate is involved in the identification of training and development needs of senior public servants. The responsibilities of senior public servants in these departments are equally to identify training/skills gaps and make recommendations.

In the last three years, the categories of training and development needs for the senior public servants in the Department of Social Development are finance for non financial management, project management, diversity management, fraud and ethics management and coaching and mentoring, the Public Financial Management Act and risk management. In the Department of Health, the categories of training and development needs are record financial management, policy formulation, performance management, strategic and change management, project management and computer training. In the Department of Education, the categories of training and development needs involved MPA, PhD, Project management and Personal training for monitoring.



With regard to financial support, the departments do not have a separate budget for the development and training of the senior public servants. However, the programmes or courses in which senior public servants participate are fully funded from tuition, and transportation to accommodation. Time spent out of the offices by senior public servants when participating in the programmes or courses is regarded as official hours.

4.6 Approaches to management training and development

After a needs assessment has identified a performance gap (the difference between the desired and the actual performance) or another specific set of developmental needs, and after particular objectives have been set which a training and development approach should accomplish, the department is ready to seek or design a training and development programme (Grobler and Warnich, 2006: 310). However, as argued in Chapter Three, the approaches to managerial capacity building require that individuals adopt an attitude of acceptance towards the need for continuous professional development throughout their working lives (Harrison, 2002; Marchington and Wilkinson, 2002; Lancaster, 2005:10). Indeed, through continuous training and education, individuals can achieve increased organisational capability.



With regard to the training and development approaches, the case study departments use in-house training, workshops and seminars from external providers. The Department of Health additionally mentioned mentoring and coaching. In the Department of Health, the programmes that have been offered to senior public servants are project management, policy formulation, financial management, performance management, supply chain management and disciplinary skills training. Project management, financial management, MPA and PhD are developmental opportunities available for senior public servants in the Department of Education. The Department of Social Development offered training on PFMA, ethics and anti-corruption management and risk management to its senior public servants.

With reference to other approaches to managerial capacity building, particularly off-the-job support opportunities, there are no formalised mentoring or coaching programmes. There are no secondments or formal network exchanges in the category of senior public servants in these departments. Although the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) has an online journal releasing Service Delivery Review (SDR), there are no formalised arrangements for the senior public servants to read and network within and between the departments with a view to keeping abreast of research and best practice. The last point with regard to the approaches to managerial capacity building is that there is no support in terms of facilitating the



membership of the senior public servants to professional associations or bodies.

4.7 Delivery and assessment of training and development

In the provincial departments, the training and development function is the responsibility of Human Resource Development (HRD). Most if not all training and development needs for senior public servants are undertaken and supported by external service providers, locally, nationally and internationally. However, there are no electronic databases naming and maintaining current accredited service providers to promote and support sound institutional public private partnership in the light of the challenges and needs of these departments. Bearing in mind that the purpose of training and development assessment in the training process is to determine whether trainees actually learned new skills and attitudes or a body of knowledge as a result of the training and development programme (Grobler et al., 2006: 322), the system that is used to ensure that the approaches and programmes effectively satisfy the HR and the Department's vision and mission is the Annual Training Report for the Department of Health. For other departments there are no systems in place. By and large, the departments do not ensure that the new skills and knowledge learned or acquired by the senior public servants are well applied, as there are no systems for information sharing, reporting and recording in place. Moreover, there are no systems to transfer the skills and knowledge learned or acquired



by the senior public servants. Interestingly, there are no systems in place to transform individual knowledge into public service results.

4.8 Implementation and assessment of the competency framework

It was argued in Chapter Three, that the development, introduction, implementation and assessment of the competency framework require effective institutional support with a view to validating its relevance, significance and impact. The institutional support for the competency framework is also vital because the core managerial skills and competencies are not readily transferable from the private sector to the public sector. The nature of the tasks undertaken is fundamentally different (Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1991). Against this backdrop, this section seeks to find out how the SMS competency framework was implemented and assessed in the public service of the North West Province. In the case study departments, the SMS competency framework was only communicated through circulars to senior public servants. Since the implementation of the SMS competency framework, the Department of Health has indicated that managers and some employees do not fully understand what it is all about and the reasons behind it.

Furthermore, there are no follow-ups and proper monitoring of the implementation of the SMS competency framework. The Department of Health further reported that its Human Resources Department is not



responding to these challenges as the challenges still persist. The Department of Social Development has no record of how the SMS competency framework is functioning for its senior public servants; reference was made to the Office of the Premier, which does not respond to the strategic needs, and expectations of the senior public servants attached to the Department of Social Development. Moreover, since the introduction of the SMS competency framework in the public service of North West Province, no department has done an assessment of it. Interestingly, there is no information in place regarding how the SMS competency framework supports the individual and collective performance of the senior public servants in these departments.

4.9 Diagnostic mechanisms to support capacity building

From Chapter Three, it has been found that organisational diagnosis provides information which allows a faster reacting organisation to emerge, one which can deal proactively with changing forces. In fact, diagnostic mechanisms systematically enable organisations to understand and describe the structure, administration, interaction, procedures, interfaces and other essential elements. Taking into account the discussion about the diagnostic models in Chapter Two, the case study departments equally stressed that the Performance and Management Development System is applicable. In the process of organisational diagnosis, however, there are no explicit measures within the HR





Directorates of these departments to support the development and performance of their senior public servants.

The Department of Social Development confirmed that the management development and training initiatives succeed in building the competencies associated with the essential outcomes for the work performed at senior management level. However, the department was unable to indicate how well their senior public servants compare to the output of the public service's best performers or even how well their public servants' performance matches the public service and service delivery requirements essential to the achievement of *Batho Pele White Paper*.

Furthermore, the Department of Social Development confirmed that there are no HR systems in place to support its functions towards a competency-based approach. The same picture was painted by the Department of Health and the Department of Education. Besides, HR units of these departments indicated that they do not benchmark their competency approach relating to senior public servants' training, development and appraisals. Quality assurance is not a remarkable feature of the HR environment in these departments especially regarding the diagnostic measures to support the managerial capacity building of the senior public servants.



Although the analysis and interpretation of this chapter will be given in the next chapter, it is opportune to reiterate the critical question which was asked by the President of South Africa in October 2004: do we have the necessary capacity and appropriate organisation to deliver on the state's social and economic objectives?

4.10 Summary

The purpose of this chapter has been to present a case study on the support for capacity building of senior public servants, with special reference to the Department of Health, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education. The case study departments have commonalities and differences in areas that relate to how they support their senior public servants for effective capacity building. These, however, vary from superior to extremely lax practices in institutional support areas such as policies, strategies, plans, systems, processes, approaches and resources. In this regard, Kotter (1999: 52) reminds that, without good management, complex organisations such as the public service of the North West Province tend to become chaotic in ways that threaten their very existence. In particular, he claimed that people who think of management as being only the implementation part of leadership ignore the fact that leadership has its own implementation processes: aligning people to new directions and then inspiring them to make it happen. Likewise, people who think of leadership as only part of the implementation aspect of management



(the motivational part) ignore the direction-setting aspect of leadership (Kotter, 1990: 5).

As contended in Chapter Three, organisational capacity is strongly influenced by individual capabilities; it is more than the sum of individual capability. The Department's capacity is determined by how well it structures and uses its human resources, and by its strategies, systems, processes and culture. In this regard, it is feasible that the departments which pay attention to building these broader departmental factors will provide a framework within which individual capability can be developed. Similarly, while departmental capacity building will have an effect on inter-organisational capacity and performance, the way in which these external arrangements are structured is likely to affect the development of departmental capacity. In conclusion, the ability of the public service to rise to the current socio-economic challenges depends on human resource capacity and its management (State of the Public Service Report, 2006:15). Chapter Five builds on this chapter by critically analysing and interpreting the state of capacity building support of the senior public servants. The analysis also reports the views expressed by the senior public servants as well as the implications for the North West Province.



CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND INTERPETATION

“Although many of us have initiated programmes that seek to enhance the willingness of public servants to take responsibility and embody the vision and commitment of the political leadership, we continue to confront many instances where the commitment and the provision of resources does not translate into adequate action on the part of the public service. In building responsive governance, the challenge has shifted from responsive governance towards ensuring that we have a responsive senior leadership cadre in the public service”, Minister for Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, 2005: 12).

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters the changing environment of the public service, which is characterised by complexity, impermanence and multiplicity has been delineated. In particular, the pressing need and effective support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants has become evident. This calls for effective preparation and management development of the senior public servants, as well as profound institutional investment in the strategies, procedures, structures, systems and resources. Undoubtedly, these ingredients are essential for a degree of order and consistency to achieve effective and coherent implementation of public policy.



To this end, therefore, this chapter builds on Chapter Four by providing an analysis and interpretation of the support for capacity building of the public servants in the North West Province. The theoretical literature in Chapter Three and the feedback from the senior public servants are the guiding forces for this analysis and interpretation. For effective analysis, however, the responses from the senior public servants will be used to support the arguments that relate to a particular issue. In this respect, the narrative, graphical and tabular data presentation styles are adopted. This chapter concentrates on the three main themes of capacity building support as premised in Chapter One. These are preparation, development and diagnostic mechanisms for systematic and holistic institutional support of the senior public servants. The linkage between strategic planning and human resource planning is the key to understanding these three themes.

5.2 Linkages between strategic planning and human resource planning

The linkages between strategic planning and human resource planning in the South African public service have been identified and championed by the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service (15 November 1995) and the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service (1997). In this regard, it has been established in Chapter Four that all the departments have written strategic plans. This was confirmed by all the respondents 31 (100%). Although the HR plans are not yet available in the departments, 14



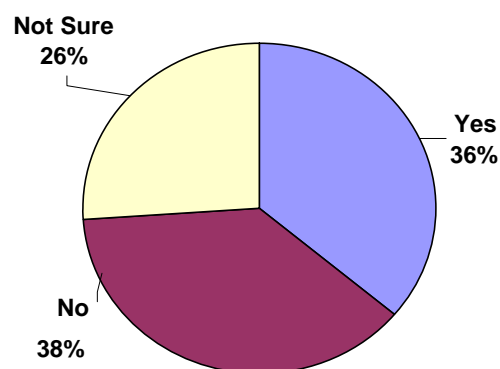
(45.2%) of the respondents said that their departments have written HR plans, 10 (32.3%) said their departments do not have the HR plans, whilst 7 (22.6%) respondents are not sure about the existence of the HR plans in their departments. The same picture is painted by the respondents with regard to the existence of an HR strategy in their departments, though their departments do not have a written HR strategy. However, the linkage between the HR functions and the strategic planning within a department is essential to create a focus, consistency and purpose. This, in turn, is crucial for plans, patterns and perspectives that guide strategic actions and facilitate effective organisational and public management.

Matching the philosophy, policies, programmes, practices and processes exemplifies a fundamental alignment, stimulation and reinforcement of the core public administration values that are associated with increased performance at individual and collective levels. Therefore, HR systems and the organisational structure must be managed in a way that is congruent with the department's strategy and, by and large, the North West provincial strategy. However, the dearth of linkages between strategic planning and HR planning generally or HR plans specifically for senior public servants suggests an institutional disorganization, a cultural misalignment and misfit in the department, dysfunctional and conventional HR practices and the paucity of long term strategic leadership for the public service. For example, 17 (54.9%) of the senior

public servants are not optimistic about the existence of the HR plans or HR strategies in their departments, yet they are involved in the strategic planning process for their departments. Therefore, a discrepancy of this nature between the external environment and the internal organisation of the department, especially at the strategic level, may negatively influence the performance expectations of its members and misdirect its core purpose, and the growing service demands and challenges may remain unaddressed.

With the advent of public management and now that the public service is consequently showing more concern with longer-term strategy than ever before, the HR plan is a fundamental institutional support apparatus for addressing and positioning the needs and expectations of the different categories of the public servants at senior, middle and junior levels. For this reason, when the respondents were asked if their departments had written HR plans for senior public servants, they reported the following as shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1: Does your Department have a written HR plan for senior public servants?





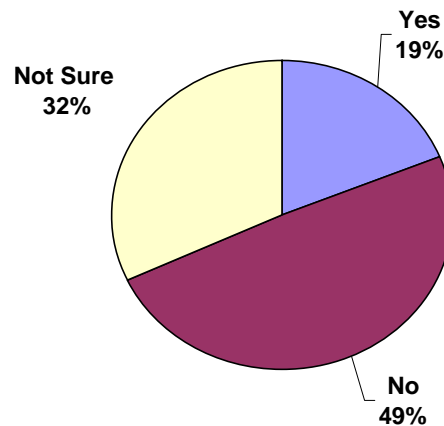
The majority of the respondents representing 64% of those who are not sure and those who said no regarding the availability of an HR plan for the senior public servants is generally not positive. However, these responses are consistent with the reality presented in Chapter Four that all the case study departments do not have written HR plans for their senior public servants. In essence, without the HR plan for senior public servants, it is difficult to develop and foster current and future leaders who can manage the challenges inherent in a changing environment. The HR plan for senior public servants allows the public service to link their conditions of employment with the vision, mission, and strategic objectives of the department. Therefore, effective capacity building support requires HR plans to address the changing business of government, the evolving employment relationship and the shifting demographics of the SMS group.

Furthermore, the HR plan for senior public servants is also important to establish human resources management strategies and programmes to support and develop leadership capabilities within the public service. Equally important, the plan should be a twelve-monthly cycle for managing important processes such as succession planning and performance management. In terms of this plan, education, training and development opportunities would be related not only to the current core competencies for SMS, but would also constantly adapt to the changing core business priorities of government.

5.3 Induction of senior public servants

As indicated in Chapter Three, induction is a systematic process by which the senior public servants are transformed from complete outsiders to participating and effective citizens of the department. In Chapter Four, the case study departments indicated that they do not have induction policies and itemised budgets to design and implement effective induction programmes for the senior public servants.

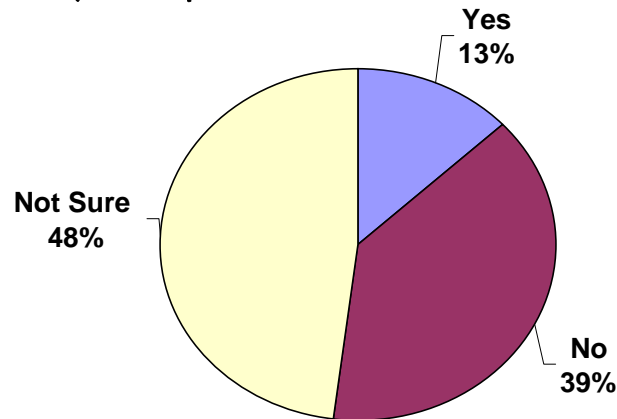
Figure 5.2 Does your Department have a written induction policy?



From Figures 5.2, it can be seen that the knowledge of the majority of the respondents is consistent with the views already expressed by the departments in the previous chapter with regard to the absence of induction policies. In the absence of induction policy, this figure suggests that the managerial expectations and needs of the North West public service and the personal expectations of the senior public servants may be incongruent, inconsistent and the importance of the induction policy in supporting the human resource function in the North West public service may not be realised.

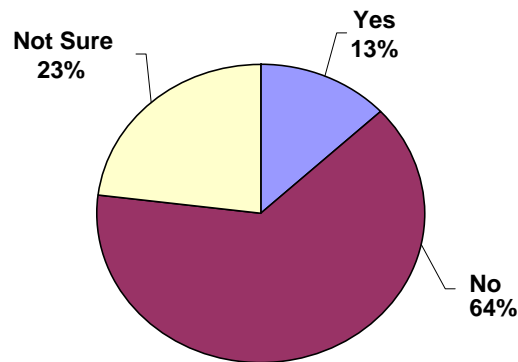


Figure 5.3 “Does your Department have an induction budget?”



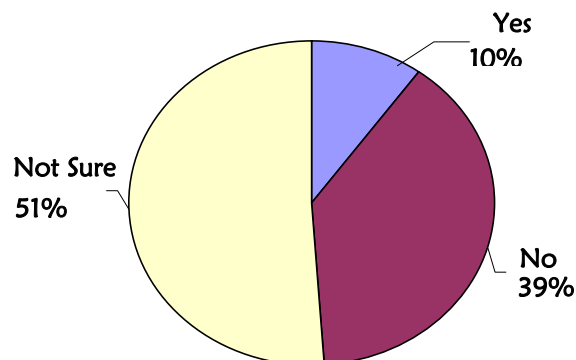
With regard to figure 5.3, the knowledge of the majority of the respondents is consistent with the views already expressed by the departments with regard to the absence of a dedicated (specific) induction budget. Furthermore, 7(22.6%) of the respondents said that their departments have an induction plan, 15 (48.4%) said that their departments do not have induction plan and 9 (29.0%) were not sure about the existence of an induction plan in their departments. Unless and until the key components that are associated with induction plan and budget are included in and form part of the organizational practices and procedures, the expectations of the senior public servants and the challenges that face the public service may not be two sides of the same coin that do not have equal and high value. This figure relates to some of the reasons for the lack of effective induction as expressed by Fogarty and Dirsmith (2001:249) in Chapter Three.

Figure 5.4 “Does your Department have a standard induction



With regard to Figure 5.4, the majority of the respondents (64%) agree that their departments do not have standard induction programmes. Notwithstanding, the lack of informed knowledge about the organizational processes, practices and programmes within the human resource departments (23%) clearly is a concern and call for strategic and effective human resource management in the public service. There is no substitute for a standard induction programme in the public service of the North West Province. The respondents were further asked if their departments evaluate the induction programme in terms of the following figure.

Figure 5.5 Does your Department evaluate its induction programme?





In terms of figure 5.5, the knowledge of the respondents about their departments is consistent with the views expressed by the departments in Chapter Four. The majority of the respondents (51%) are not sure if their departments evaluate the induction programmes. Similarly, 39% of the respondents indicated that their departments do not evaluate the induction programme. It is very important that the senior public servants report the same experience about the systems and practices that influence and are influenced by their operations and purposes in the public service. By evaluating the induction programme, the North West public service will be in a position to obtain feedback about how effective is the induction programme in supporting the goals and vision of the public service and ensure that information is obtained with a view to adjusting and improving HR services so that the induction policy can be supported effectively. Indeed, proper induction training is important for proper alignment and integration of the behaviour, actions and conduct of the senior public servants to the core functions and purpose of the public service.

In terms of figure 5.2 until figure 5.5, it may be reasoned that the current induction arrangements in the North West public service induce the senior public servants to adhere to public service practices and procedures of either the pre-1994 or post-1994 eras, with little or no real attention being given to instilling loyalty and commitment in the public service. Of course, the absence of a proper induction in the



public service may imply that the newly appointed public servants are left to be socialised within a culture of the pre-1994 homeland dispensation.

An ineffective induction programme increases the adjustment problems for the public servants by creating a sense of insecurity, and a lack of confidence and belonging for them; hence many respondents provided either no or not sure responses. Also, the implications of the lack of proper induction are also serious at the strategic public service level because the senior public servants are not only expected to adhere to the organisational practices and procedures, but also to display loyalty and commitment to the promotion of good governance and effective public management.

Without effective induction policy and programme, it is highly possible that, in a transforming public service, the pre-1994 culture may be a barrier to effective implementation of performance management in the public service. This point is raised because Robbins (2005:233) also argues that once a culture is in place, practices within the organisation act to maintain it by exposing employees to a set of similar experiences. For instance, 23 (74.2%) respondents reported that the HR department did not provide orientation programme dealing with the SMS handbook. This practice reduces the day-to-day value of the SMS handbook by making it ineffective to drive the general performance of



the senior public servants in the North West Province. Further, this limitation in the induction within the department generally suggests that, as and when major changes are taking in the public service, none of the public servants are being re-inducted. This picture, however, inexplicable validates the fact that induction is a much-neglected area of human resource management in the public service (Balkin et al, 1998: 258-260).

From the above picture, there is a need to ensure proper integration of the core HR functions that support the department and count for effective knowledge management in the public service. A proper induction is vital for the proper integration of the senior public servants into the right public service culture, so that the public service can monitor and evaluate their performance in the short, medium and long terms. It is also important that serious efforts be made to evaluate the induction programme with a view to determining whether objectives have been achieved and resources have been used appropriately. This, above all, is important to secure accountability, effectiveness and improvements necessary for proper induction in the public service.

Therefore, HR department must play a strategic role in helping the senior public servants to adapt to the new culture of public service performance management by implementing systematic induction training. There is also a need for the proper induction of public servants



who are transferred, promoted or demoted within and between the departments in the North West Province public service. Arguably, an effective induction is vital to create a fit between the expectations of the senior public servants about the current and future public service and the expectations of the public service about the current and future senior public servants by showing them how they fit into the job and how their jobs fit into the overall vision of the government of South Africa.

5.4 Training and development of senior public servants

From the beginning, it is very important that the training and development efforts be linked to the department's objectives, goals and business strategies, if they are to add value to the maintenance and achievement of the processes, practices and systems. Although the case study departments have training policies and plans which generally apply to all employees regardless of employment category, 15 (48.4%) respondents agreed, nine (29.0% respondents' disagreed and seven (22.6%) respondents were not sure about the existence of a written training and development policy. With regard to the existence of a written training and development plan, 17 (54.8%) respondents agreed, seven (22.6%) disagreed and seven (22.6%) were not sure about the existence of a written training and development plan in their departments. It is evident that the respondents do not have similar knowledge or experience about the internal training arrangements and



organisation in their departments. This may be attributable to the lack of an effective induction and policy communication in the departments.

In addition, training is strategic when it: develops essential worker capabilities; encourages adaptability to change; promotes ongoing learning in the organisation; creates and disseminates new knowledge throughout the organisation and facilitates communication and focus (Mathis and Jackson, 2003:276). However, 13 (41.9%) respondents said that their departments had a written training and development strategy, 10 (32.2%) disagreed and only eight (25.8%) were not sure about the existence of training and development strategy in their departments. However, it has been found in Chapter Four that there are no training and development strategies for the senior public servants. In the absence of any HR plan, and specifically for senior public servants, it is unlikely that the departments can establish their training and development strategies that accommodate their training and development needs at organisational and operational levels. Furthermore, without a training and development strategy the departments are unable to reflect on and evaluate the impact of training and development on the performance of the senior public servants, and how new knowledge and skills are affecting and contributing to their goals, objectives and missions. This highlights the concern about the lack of knowledge and understanding about what senior public servants



expect from their departments and similarly what they think the public service expects from them.

Given this picture, when asked if they experience links being established between training and development activities and their work and career, 18 (58.1%) said yes, 10 (32.3%) said no and three (9.7%) said were not sure. Furthermore, when the senior public servants were asked if they are consulted about the training and development policy, strategy, plan and budget in their departments, 18 (58.1%) said yes, 12 (38.7%) said no and one (3.2%) was not sure. Notwithstanding the numbers of those who are consulted or not consulted, there is a need to ensure that the internal elements accomplish the strategic objectives of the departments by ensuring that the interrelationship between them is sound and effective.

Furthermore, five (16.1%) of the respondents trust that their departments have a written quality assurance policy which supports the induction, training and development of staff, 15 (48.4%) said no and 11 (35.5%) were not sure if their departments have a written quality assurance policy which supports the induction, training and development of staff. Similarly when asked if their departments have a written quality assurance manual which supports induction, training and development of staff, three (9.7%) respondents agreed, 15 (48.4%) respondents disagreed and 13 (41.9%) were not sure. The majority of



the respondents believe that there are no written quality assurance policies and manuals that support the induction, training and development of staff.

However, an indispensable element of effective managerial capacity building and support is the alignment between the philosophy, policies, programmes, practices and processes in the public service. The need for an overarching quality improvement regime cannot be overemphasised as part and parcel of institutional monitoring and evaluation systems. Given this reality, 18 (58.1%) of the respondents believe that their departments are committed to effective management development and training of the senior public servants, nine (29.0%) disagreed and four (12.9%) are not sure about the commitment of their departments to effective management development and training.

With regard to the training and development of the senior public servants, the examination gives an indication that gaps do exist between the championed policies relating to training and development and the operational management practices in the public service. In Chapter Four it has been established that the Human Resource Development (HRD) is responsible for the successful development and implementation of the training and development policy. In this regard, the HRD in these departments has engaged, to some extent, in the process of setting objectives for the successful implementation of training and

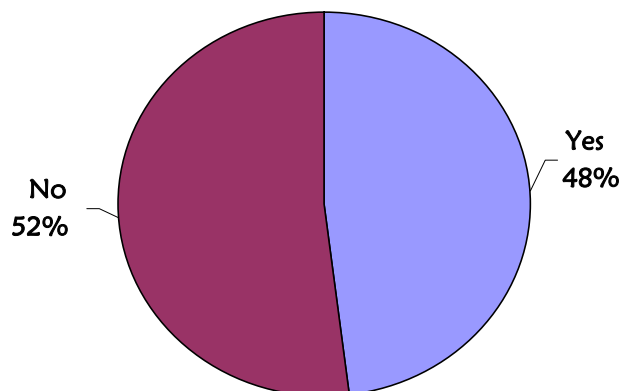


development, yet is unable, to any great extent, to evaluate achievements in relation to the strategic focus and purpose of the departments. Consequently, the experience of the respondents with regard to the planning and facilitation of development would tend to support their lack of confidence in the relevance to their needs of their departments' approach to management development.

5.4.1 Approaches to management training and development

In Chapter Three, it was established that the approaches to capacity building require that senior public servants accept the need for continuous professional development throughout their working lives. In addition, it was argued that the public service must utilise individuals' new capacity (Rist, 1995: 17), but this may be inhibited by the public service policies and practices (Crisp et al., 2000:39).

Figure 5.6: Are you presently studying for a further qualification?



Almost 50% of the respondents are presently studying for further qualifications. The qualifications that are presently being studied and the total number of participants are as follows:



- (1) Master of Public Administration, MPA (6).
- (2) Doctor of Philosophy, PhD (3).
- (3) Master of Business Administration, MBA (2).
- (4) Master of Philosophy, MPhil (1).
- (5) Master of Education, M.Ed (1) and
- (6) Certificate in Accounting, CIA (1).

Table 5.1 “The management or executive programmes that the respondents attended in the last two years”

Programmes	No of respondents
Project Management	6 from 2003 to 2006
Financial Management	6 from 2003 to 2006
Mentoring	1 from 2005 to 2006
Change Management	1 from 2005 to 2006
Excellence in Budgeting	1 from 2005 to 2006
Management and Leadership for Women	1 from 2005 to 2006
Event Management	1 from 2005 to 2006
Skills Development Fund	1 from 2005 to 2006
Internal Audit Management Procedures	1 from 2005 to 2006
Public Finance Management Act	1 from 2005 to 2006
Finance for Non Financial Managers	1 from 2005 to 2006
Contract Management	1 from 2005 to 2006
Presidential Leadership Course	1 from 2005 to 2006
Harvard Senior Executive Programme	1 from 2005 to 2006

Table 5.1 reveals that some of the programmes that the participants attended in the last two years fall within the competency band of the SMS, for example Project Management, Financial Management and





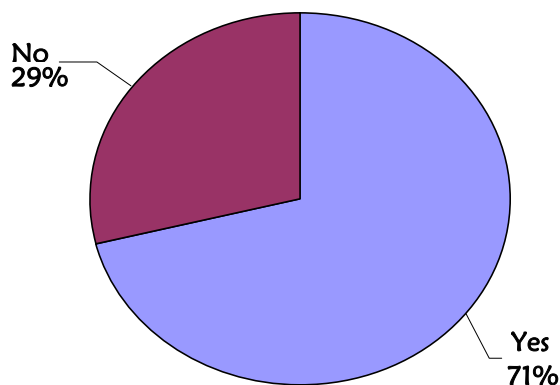
Change Management, and the Presidential and Harvard Senior Executive Programmes. However, there are more than ten respondents who have not attended any executive programmes in the last two years. It is vital to reiterate the central argument that has been advanced above: strategic management aims to extend the strategic vision and objectives throughout all units of the North West Province, fundamentally encompassing every administrative function and system. It recognises the central role played by individuals and groups and the influence of the organisational culture (Toft, 1989: 6-7). However, without long-term strategic direction, integration, and alignment, the training and development needs are achieved only at personal level and the learning assumptions, priorities and ambitions may not holistically serve and address the needs of the public service. There is a need for a comprehensive needs assessment that provides coverage of the SMS competency and enables the department to build collective training and development profiles and subsequent training and developmental approaches for the senior public servants. This approach confirms the commitment to long-term planning and successful HR planning within the public service. This point is made here because 15 (45.2%) of the respondents reported that they decide on the management development and training as development opportunities arise, seven (22.6%) each year for that year, nine (29%) each year for the next three to five years.



Given the above picture, it is argued that an overarching concern for establishing management development and training programmes should be the extent to which the long-term goals of the departments both influence, and are influenced by, the development of senior public servants. This argument certainly places a much required emphasis on the need for a management development and training approach or programmes that are comprehensive and holistic with the potential to impact on strategic improvements within the public service of the North West Province.

The respondents were also asked a number of questions to determine the support they receive from their departments with regard to on-the-job approaches to development and training. These are set out in terms of figures 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11 and 5.12 as follows:

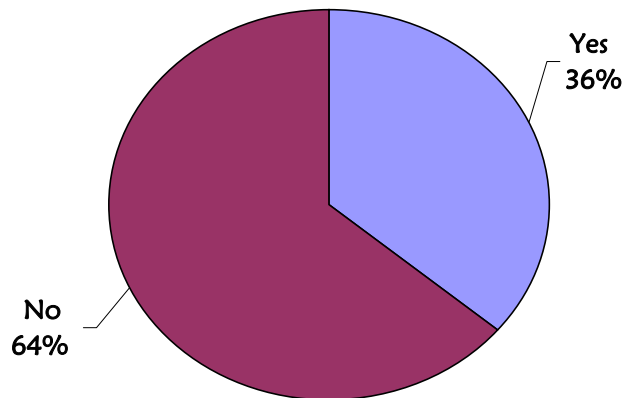
Figure 5.7: Have your job responsibilities ever been enlarged or enriched since you joined the Department?



In terms of Figure 5.7, the majority of the respondents (71%) agree that their job responsibilities have been enlarged or enriched since they

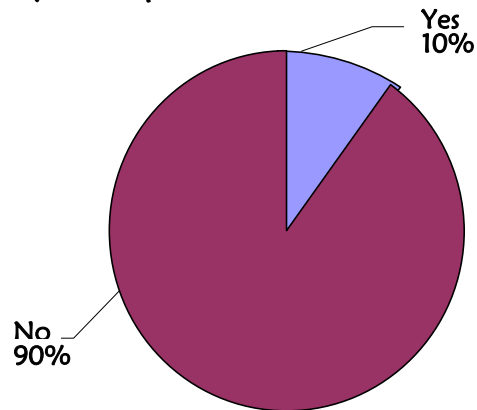
joined their departments. This figure shows that job enlargement strategy which is directed at increasing the number of tasks that the senior public servants perform is highly valued in the public service. This strategy is desirable because of the fact that the government is characterised by complexity and multiplicity which incessantly require enlarged set of tasks at senior management level.

Figure 5.8: Have you ever been rotated to any sections since you joined your Department?



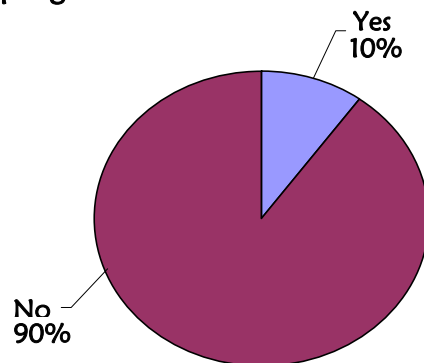
Contrary to the previous figure, the majority of the respondents (64%) report in terms of Figure 5.8 that they have never been rotated to any section since they joined their departments. Job rotation can be a good public service strategy especially when managed as part of the training and career development system of the senior management service.

Figure 5.9: Have you ever been assigned a Departmental coach since you joined your Department?



In terms of Figure 5.9, the majority of the respondents (90%) have not been assigned a departmental coach since they joined their departments. The importance of coaching does not relate to seniority but to the public service's objective of managing the performance of its senior management personnel with a view to achieving its goals and objectives. Through coaching, performance problems may be noticed and analysed at an early stage. This is very important given that the performance of all senior public servants must be reviewed and evaluated effectively and systematically in order to assist them to perform their jobs collectively, strategically and effectively.

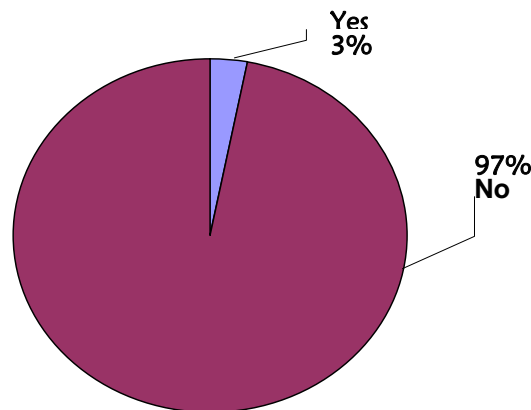
Figure 5.10: Does your Department have a formal mentoring programme?





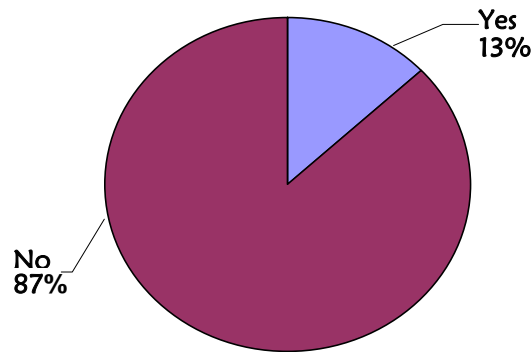
Similar to the previous Figure, the majority of the respondents (90%) reported that their departments do not have a formal mentoring programme. The views of these respondents are consistent with the views expressed by the Departments in Chapter Five. Indeed, mentoring offer an active learning approach to senior public servants learning as indicated in Chapter Three.

Figure 5.11: Have you ever been assigned a mentor since you joined the Department?



The fact that the case study Departments do not have mentoring programmes in place is evident from Figure 5.11 which clearly indicates that (97%) of the respondents have never been assigned mentors since they joined their departments. The views of the respondents represent the state of affairs with regard to mentoring in these Departments and further confirm that mentoring is a much-neglected learning approach at the senior management level in the public service of the North West Province. Mentoring does not only contribute towards a culture of collective learning, but also offers the possibility of improving both the overall availability and access to learning in the public service.

Figure 5.12: Have you ever been seconded to any Department since you started your career in the public service?



Furthermore, figure 5.12 represents the views of the respondents regarding secondment in the public service. The majority of the respondents (87%) have not been seconded to any departments since they started their careers in the public service. The views of the respondents are consistent with the case study in Chapter Four and further confirm that the public service is not yet integrated and is unable to create opportunities that allow senior public servants to collectively learn and relearn within and between the departments.

Based on Figures 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, 5.11 and 5.12, it is worth making further critical observations. The views of the respondents about on-the-job management development and training reveal considerable discrepancies, which are associated with the lack of formalisation of these approaches in the public service. The high level of those who indicated that they had not been mentored or coached when they joined their departments, shows a missing link between induction and development and the need to ensure that there is proper adjustment and socialisation. Without a framework for training and development



of the senior public servants, it is hard to provide holistic and consistent institutional support for the development and enhancement of the competencies in the public service. Along these lines, however, it should be very easy to answer if the senior public servants are well empowered and more prepared to facilitate change and service delivery.

Further questions were asked with regard to off-the-job approaches to management development, as per Figures 5.13, 5.14, 5.15 and 5.16 as follows:

Figure 5.13: Does your Department arrange in-house seminars or workshops or conferences?

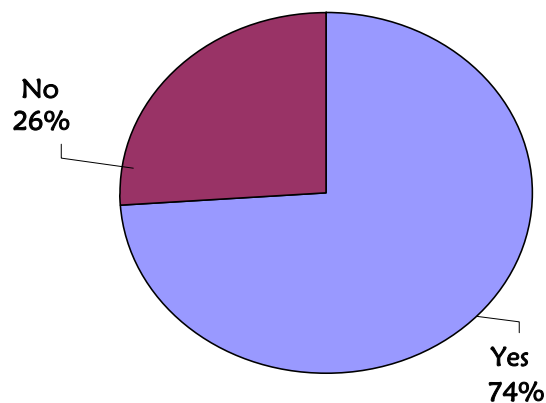
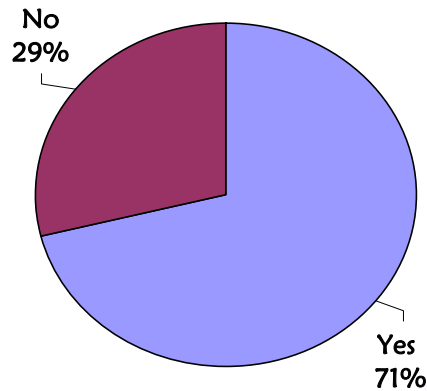


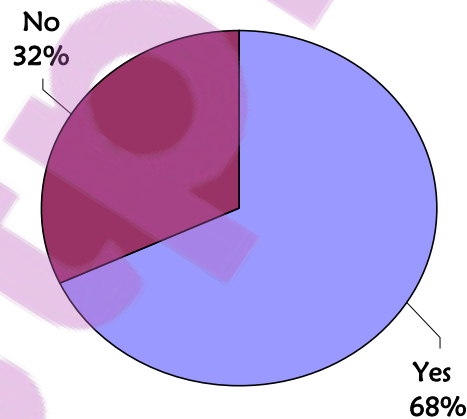
Figure 5.13 reports the views of the majority of the respondents (74%) that their departments arrange in-house seminars or workshops or conferences. The figure suggests that seminars, workshops and conferences are highly valued by both the departments and their senior public servants. However, those who do not agree (26%) either do not have knowledge or experience that directly relate to seminars, workshops or conferences.

Figure 5.14: Do you participate in external workshops/seminars/conferences for your Department?



In line with Figure 5.13, the majority of the respondents (71%) participate in external workshops, seminars and conferences. They are important for obtaining, sharing and exchanging information and are highly valued by the Departments.

Figure 5.15: Have you conducted any seminar/conference/workshop for your Department?



With regard to Figure 5.15, the majority of the respondents (68%) have conducted a workshop, seminar or workshop for their Departments. In this regard, respondents do not only attend workshops, seminars or conferences but they are given opportunities to share and exchange information with their colleagues. Therefore, by following this



approach, the Departments are able to promote a learning culture and save time and money. This approach must be made a requirement in order to allow (32%) of the respondents to also contribute their experience and knowledge collectively, systematically and effectively.

From a quality perspective, the arrangements for organising, participating in and conducting workshops, seminars and conferences must be supported by policies and plans with a view to ensuring that they contribute to the rigour of the SMS competency framework (decision-making and communication skills, for example), successful mentoring programmes and leadership succession planning within the public service. Furthermore, the systematic acquisition, transfer and utilisation of new knowledge is an inevitability for successful policy implementation in the public service.

Figure 5.16: Are you a member of any professional body or organisation?

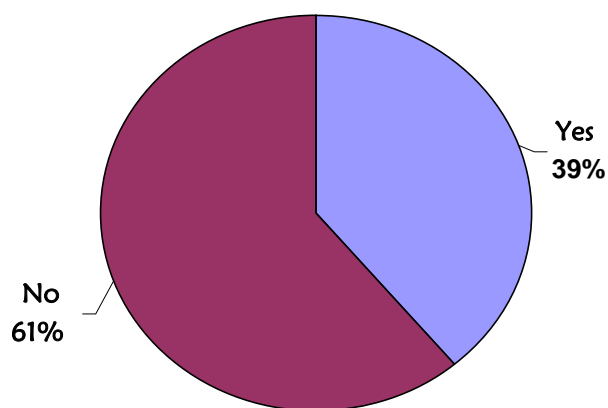


Figure 5.16 reports that the majority of the respondents (61%) are not members of any professional body or organization. Public administration is a professional discipline which must be practiced based



on professional knowledge and accumulated experience. As indicated in Chapter Three, it is important that senior public servants are members of a professional body in order to promote their own development and commitment to careers in the public service. The professional bodies create many opportunities for learning, networks, and exchanging information which relates to the trends and best practices in the management of the public services. Such bodies are also guardians of the ethical conduct and behaviours of public officials. For this reason, there is a need to promote a culture of sharing information, development and enhancement of leadership competencies and effective knowledge management through a tailor-made professional body for the public servants (considering that 39% respondents who currently belong to their own professional bodies).

Generally, the approaches to management development and training should occur in a public service culture that is aware of what they are and prepared to resource them so that they can prosper. In fact, these approaches to management development and training require investment in planning, time and money to demonstrate that there is a real commitment and accountability to growing management and leadership capability at SMS level, or even across the public service. With a clear vision and coherent framework, the institutional support relating to these approaches may be strengthened. In other words, the approaches to managerial capacity building require a value-orientated





approach concerned with effectiveness, efficiency, value for money and time as well sustainability with a view to realising their purposes and impact on the vision of the public service.

Furthermore, when asked if they got time to consider their own development needs, 20 (64.5%) respondents said no and 11 (35.5%) said yes. When asked what was most likely to stop them from spending time on their own development, 13 (41.9%) said workload; seven (22.6%) said no money in the budget; four (12.9%) said lack of support/interest from their seniors; three (9.7%) said lack of support from the HR department; three (9.7%) said lack of career opportunities; and one (3.2%) said no opportunity to apply what acquired. Without effective internal management and organisation, it is possible that the workload in the public service may be uneven. For example, at the time of collecting data from the HRD, a total of twenty (20) SMS positions were vacant in these departments. This could be a contributing factor to the increasing workload within the SMS level in the departments which could impede the current senior public servants from spending time on their own development. In this respect, there is an urgent need for the departments to realise the value of career succession planning as this will create opportunity for public servants with potential to understudy roles to which they aspire. Of course, developing a pool of public servants that can step into vacated SMS



roles is a form of management support that can benefit both the individual and the public service.

Above all, it is argued that with greater integration between planning, management control and the organisational structure; greater integration between financial, communication and information support is possible. But the perceived lack of support/interest from the seniors, Human Resource Department support and career opportunities may detrimentally impact on how management development is being approached in the public service (at individual or organisational levels) and increasingly raise major issues about how careers are determined, planned and shaped in the public service. Considering the constitutional principles that currently advocate public management in South Africa in Chapter One and these barriers to effective management development and training, there must be a clear context and understanding of what it means to be a senior manager in the public service of the North West Province.

5.4.2 Delivery and assessment of training and development

It was established in Chapter Four that the Human Resource Development (HRD) is responsible for the training and development function in the provincial departments. It was also established that most, if not all, training and development needs for senior public servants are undertaken and supported by external service providers, and there are



no electronic databases exhibiting current accredited service providers to promote and support sound institutional public private partnership in the light of the challenges and needs of these Departments. It was also noted that the departments do not ensure that the new skills and knowledge learned or acquired by the senior public servants are well applied, as there are no systems for information sharing, reporting and recording in place. Moreover, there are no systems to transfer the skills and knowledge learned or acquired by the senior public servants. Again, there are no systems in place to transform individual knowledge into public service results. With this picture in mind, it was also necessary to determine the attitudes of the senior public servants towards management development. When asked if they did agree management development and training objectives with their seniors, 22 (71.0%) said yes, six (19.4%) said no and three (9.7%) were not sure. Likewise, when they were asked if the HR practitioners play a role in this respect, out of 31 respondents, 12 (38.7%) said yes, 13 (41.9%) said no and six (19.4%) were not sure.

Accordingly, a large number of respondents 22 (71.0%) agree personal objectives with their seniors before embarking on any development opportunity, seven (22.6%) did not agree with their seniors, while two (6.5%) were not sure. With regard to the diagnostic methods used to determine if it is time for the senior public servants to be trained and developed, 12 (38.7%) said there are systems in place, 15 (48.4%) said



that there are no methods and four (12.9%) were not sure if the are methods in place to determine if it is time for them to be trained and developed.

Although the respondents have positive understanding and relationship with their seniors about training and development, their perceptions about the support from HR and the systems for triggering development and training are not positive. The importance of systematic integration and alignment of the management development and training function within the public service of the North West Province is fundamental with a view to matching desired outcomes with the processes to achieve them. An effective training and development needs assessment process must be supported by the HR with learning systems that enhance the development and attainment of new knowledge and competencies required for effective performance in the public service. There is a need to ensure that the performance management system is linked to and contributes to the development, maintenance and evaluation of the desired competencies in the public service. Importantly, this will ensure that what the public service accomplishes through the strategic management process and HR planning, as well as systems, and how quickly these accomplishments are to be achieved, are tied to its capability. This point leads to the next section on the analysis of the diagnostic mechanisms to support holistic and effective capacity building of the senior public servants.



5.5 The diagnostic tools to evaluate the support for capacity building

It is evident from Chapter Four that the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and the Senior Management Service (SMS) competency framework are highly regarded tools in determining and evaluating the performance the senior public servants to achieve the vision of the North West public service. The views of the respondents regarding the two tools are analysed at this point.

5.5.1 PMDS: linking development and performance

As far as performance review is concerned, 29 (93.5%) respondents remarkably review their performance with their seniors; two (6.5) respondents do not review their performance with their seniors. Furthermore, 22 (71.0%) respondents maintained that the performance appraisal process helps them to identify their professional training and development needs, eight (25.8%) said no and one (3.2) was not sure. When asked if the development activities they take part in are assessed in relation to their performance on the job, 17 (54.8%) respondents agreed, 12 (38.7%) disagreed and two (6.5%) were not sure. Similarly, 17 (54.8%) respondents reported that the Performance Management and Development System has made a difference to how their development needs are addressed, 12 (38.7%) said it has not made differences and two (6.5%) were not sure if the system has made a difference to how their development needs are addressed.



Performance appraisal is about being able to demonstrate accountability. It is also about being able to evaluate and make judgements about performance so that developmental objectives can be set and achieved. In this respect, the majority of the respondents review their performance with their seniors (93.5%) and maintained that the performance appraisal process helps them to identify their professional training and development needs (71%). With regard to the development objective of the system, only 17 (54.8) respondents appreciate that the development activities they take part in are assessed in relation to their performance on the job. However, an effective performance appraisal system is one that has gained senior public servants' commitment and is valued. It is in the partnership roles of appraisee and appraiser that genuine professional mentoring and coaching can occur. Therefore, PMDS requires strategic training and development support with plans and approaches that enable the public to understand the linkages and relationships between development and performance of the senior public servants as well as to measure the impact of development on the achievement of the objectives of the public service.

Another salient feature of the PMDS is that the senior public servants must sign performance agreements. In this regard, 24 (77.4%) have signed performance agreements with their departments, seven (22.6%) have not signed the performance agreements with their departments.



Similarly, when asked if their departments abide by the terms of the performance management agreement they have signed, 20 (64.5%) respondents said yes, eight (25.8%) respondents said no and three (9.7%) respondents were unsure if their departments are abiding by the terms of the performance management agreements they have signed.

Bearing in mind the analysis about the importance of effective induction training for building loyalty and commitment, it is further argued that if the North West public service expects to nurture and communicate its vision and as well as long-term plans, then it should, unquestionably, be able to rely on performance appraisal information to judge the capacity of its departments to implement plans and to indicate gaps that could be addressed in a holistic management development and training programme, thus catering for many dimensions of individual and organisational development.

It was argued in Chapter Three that the management development and training activities must result in new skills and knowledge that can be used and reused in the future, and effectively impact on the strategic and operational objectives of the departments. Therefore, the respondents were asked if the management development activities they undertake make any difference to the achievements of their performance targets. Out of 31, the majority (20 or 64.5%) said yes, seven (22.6%) respondents said no and four (12.9%) were not sure if



the management development activities they undertake make differences to the achievements of their performance targets.

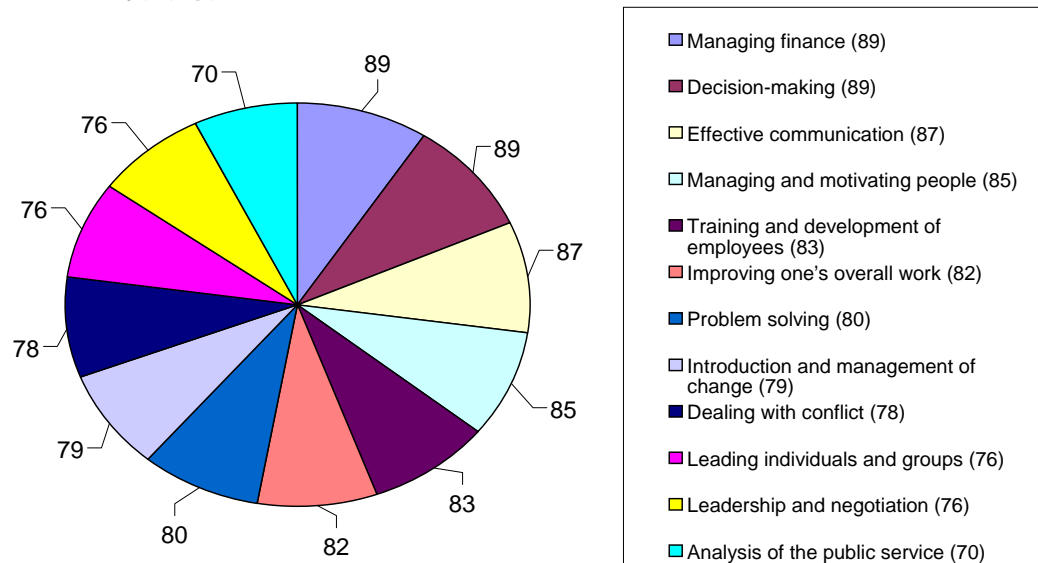
However, when asked if the development activities they undertake are assessed in relation to the work they may do in the future, 15 (48.8%) said yes, 13 (41.9%) said no and three (9.7%) were not sure. Thus, 17 (54.8%) respondents said that the departments' approach to management development is relevant to their needs, nine (29.9%) said no and five (16.1%) were not sure if their departments' approach to management development is relevant to their needs. Likewise, when asked if their departments made use of the management development they have undertaken, 15 (48.4%) said yes, 12 (38.7%) said no and four (12.9%) were not sure. With regard to career progressions, 23 (74.2%) respondents indicated that the development activities they undertake are related to the skills they need to progress their careers, seven (22.6%) respondents disagreed and one (3.2%) was not sure.

Generally the implications of the above responses are evident. When the senior public servants are unable to trust or value the performance appraisal system and opportunities for growth and development are circumvented, then direct links between the motivation in the department and the senior public servant cannot be established. Lack of proper integration and alignment within the HR with a systematic long-term approach that promotes effective linkage to selection, induction,



development and performance within the public service is a major barrier for effective implementation of the PMDS. Consequently, the approaches to training and development lack measurable and sustainable impact on the performance of the senior public servants and generally the capability of the public service. Moreover, there are interrelationship problems, which indicate that there is a lack of effective communication and feedback between the senior public servants and their departments. Therefore, rather than mere compliance with systemic requirements in the public service, the performance management system requires the commitment of the departments to the ideal of integrating accountability and developmental purposes to serve both the senior public servants and the North West public service. Here, the images of effective public service leadership must be connected to the notions of defining the vision and setting team goals, gaining commitment in implementing planned change and fundamentally understanding the contribution of organisational culture to the achievement of the North West provincial strategy. Furthermore, the respondents were asked what level of skills and expertise they required in order to remain effective in the public service. In this regard, descriptive statistics was employed and revealed the following skills and expertise as set out in Figure 5.17.

Figure 5.17: “The level of skills and expertise which the senior public servants require in order to remain effective in the public service”



From Figure 5.17, it can be seen that the respondents attached a high value to the task orientated skills, people orientated skills and self-development needs with a view to being effective in the public service. In this regard, there are clear indications that the respondents are aware of their own training and developments needs. Equally, it can be said that all the skills are perceived as those which contribute to their effectiveness at work and which allow them to display their increased level of competence. Managerial effectiveness is largely determined by the degree of effectiveness of the support system, which is available to them. In this respect, it is possible to explore these training and development needs and suitable tailor-made management training programmes to reflect the need for a balanced and progressive mixture of the above skills.



5.5.2 The SMS competency framework

It has been established in Chapter Four that there are no follow-ups and proper monitoring of the implementation of the SMS competency framework. It was also established that since the introduction of the SMS competency framework in the public service of North West Province, no department has done an assessment of it. Moreover, there is no information in place regarding how the SMS competency framework supports the individual and collective performance of the senior public servants in these departments. The pertinent question relating to this section is: what features does the SMS competency framework reveal about the building of contemporary South African senior public servants? Put differently, is the SMS competency framework a living HR tool for the development and performance of the senior public servants in the public service?

In order to provide answers to the above question, the respondents were asked a number of questions to ascertain their responses with regard to the introduction, implementation and assessment of the SMS competency framework in their departments. When asked if they had been given a copy of the SMS handbook by their departments, 20 (64.5%) said yes and 11 (35.5%) said no. Out of 31 respondents, 23 (74.2%) reported that the HR department did not provide an orientation programme covering the SMS handbook, only seven (22.6%) said yes and one (3.2%) was not sure if the HR department



had provided an orientation programme for the SMS handbook. With regard to the assessment of the SMS competencies, 16 (51.6%) indicated that the HR department had not communicated information regarding the assessment of the competencies based in the competency framework before the actual assessment, 14 (45.2%) said yes and one (3.2%) was not sure. Similarly, 24 (77.4%) respondents said that the HR department did not inform them about the assessment of the competencies before they were assessed, seven (22.6%) said they were inducted. In general, the views expressed by the departments in Chapter Four regarding the introduction of the SMS competency framework are consistent with those of the majority of the respondents. The implications are given below.

Out of 31 respondents, 21 (67.7%) reported that the assessment of competencies is informed by the strategic plan of their departments, five (16.1%) disagreed and five (16.1%) were not sure. Equally, when asked if the assessment of competencies is informed by the operational plan and processes, 23 (74.2%) respondents said yes, five (16.1%) said no and one (3.2%) was not sure. The respondents were also asked if the assessment of the competencies is linked to their actual performance in their departments. Out of 31 respondents, 25 (80.6%) said yes, five (16.1%) said no and only one (3.2%) was unsure. The same question was extended to the actual performance of other senior public servants in their departments and 19 (61.3%) said yes, eight (25.5%) said no and



four (12.9%) were not sure if the assessment of the competencies is linked to their actual performance of other senior public servants in their departments. With regard to feedback about the assessment of the competencies in their departments, 19 (61.3%) said yes they obtained feedback, 11 (35.5%) said no and one (3.2%) was not sure. Similarly, when asked if they had SMS competency assessment reports covering the results of the previous assessment, 13 (41.9%) respondents said yes, 17 (54.8%) said no and only one (3.2%) was unsure (It must however be noted that the data were collected during the assessment therefore the situation has changed).

When asked if the assessment of the competencies is quality assured by their departments, a larger percentage of the respondents 15 (48.4%) said no, six (19.4%) were unsure and 10 (32.3%) said yes. Although 26 (83.9%) of the respondents said that they have personal development plans and five (16.1%) said they do not have the personal development plans, 20 (64.5%) reported that their HR departments do not assist them in meeting the actual performance level after the assessment of their performance, eight (25.8%) said the HR departments assist them and three (9.7%) were not sure. Thus, nine (29.0%) respondents considered their internal HR personnel competent to assess their competencies, 14 (45.2%) respondents considered their internal HR personnel incompetent to assess them and eight (25.8%) were not sure



if the internal HR personnel were competent or incompetent to assess their competencies.

The evidence above suggests a number of problems with regard to the introduction, implementation and evaluation of the SMS competency framework in the public service of the North West Province. This evidence is consistent with some of the research findings by Miller et al (2001) in Chapter Three. The SMS competency framework should be used in the recruitment and selection of the senior public servants and their personal and career development in the public service. It is the starting point for the vacancy profile. The SMS competency framework is also an instrument, which can be used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the senior public servants, if highly valued by the HR department. This information can be used in constructing personal development plans. Of course, coaching, training and learning by experience are the most important elements of the personal development plans. Above all, the competency framework can be used in the context of career development. Senior public servants can discuss their future careers, starting from an appreciation and evaluation of the different competencies in the framework. These benefits of the SMS competency framework cannot be realised by the public service of the North West Province if it is perceived as not orientated towards the current and future the needs of the public service.



Furthermore, the SMS competency framework starts from a new vision of the public service and the requirements for senior public servants. Therefore, senior public servants should not only be experts in the policy field, but should have management and leadership skills and capabilities. This implies a change in the organisational culture within the North West public service. In particular, there is a need for a major paradigm shift from a functional to a competency-based approach within the HR divisions in the North West public service.

5.6 Summary

This chapter outlined the findings of the study conducted to evaluate the support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Province. The major findings of the study reveal that the institutional support requires a coherent and effective framework for capacity building of the senior public servants. There is evidence that the public service is supporting senior public servants with induction, development and training and assessment of their performance in the public service. However, the absence of proper alignment, planning, strategies and systems counteracts the significance, sustainability and impact of the institutional support, which could contribute towards overcoming the challenges and the achievement of the vision of the public service.



Some of the findings of this research are consistent with the examination already made by the Provincial Review Report (1997), the State of Performance Management in the Public Service (2001), the Report on the Implementation and Promotion of Batho Pele (June 2004) and the State of the Public Service Reports (2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006). Thus, this chapter has clearly reported the capacity gaps which affect the effective support for managerial capacity building and how these gaps may influence the performance of the senior public servants in the public service of the North West Province.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“The need for an effective system to manage and monitor the performance of managers within the context of a public service in transformation is self-evident. Managers must have the most crucial role to play with regard to the achievement of institutional objectives. The effective monitoring of their performance and competency levels should therefore be accorded a very high priority” (Sangweni, 2003:20).

6.1 Introduction

Taking into consideration the above statement, a brief summary of this study is presented in this chapter. Furthermore, a reflection on the major findings of the study is provided, as well as the recommendations for the improvement of the current policy and practical environment associated with the effective institutional support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Province. These are important in view of the increasing demands for effective public service delivery, the complex challenges facing the public service and the dire need to preserve the constitutional status as well as professional image of the North West Province.

6.2 Summary of the study

Chapter One introduced the study on the managerial support for capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Province of South Africa. It provided the background to the study, followed by the problem statement, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the definition of concepts and the organisation



of the study. The chapter stressed that the new constitutional and democratic order engineered the amalgamation and reordering of government departments as part of the creation of new provinces. However, the establishment of provincial government poses a number of administrative and financial challenges. In this regard, the Constitution specifies that public administration must be development orientated. In view of this, therefore, the senior public servants are central to the success of the transformation programme and the achievement of superior public service performance in the North West Province. The current service delivery challenges raise questions about the capacity of the North West Province, in particular the support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants. Therefore, the study examined the preparation and development of the senior public servants and evaluated the diagnostic mechanisms for supporting managerial capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Province.

Chapter Two, which discussed research methodology, presented methods of research of this study. It emerged from this chapter that this study is a descriptive case study which employs data collection instruments such as document analysis, structured interviews and a questionnaire. The participants came from the Department of Health, the Department of Education and the Department of Social Development and included senior HRD staff from each department as



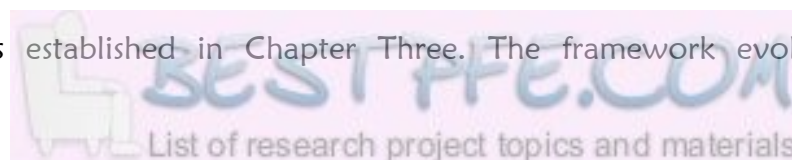
well as their senior public servants. Critical issues that relate to data analysis, ethical considerations and delimitation of the study were also reviewed in this chapter.

The need for managerial capacity building in the public service was examined in Chapter Three. From the literature consulted, it emerged very clearly that scarcity of resources, changing social and cultural values and increasing organizational complexity challenge the scope and nature of governmental actions, thus, forcing public administration to redefine and reposition itself both in applied practice and as a field of scholarship. Within the context of the changing legislative paradigm shift in South Africa, more than ever before, the public institutions and public officials are required to be more democratic, accountable, effective, efficient, ethical and capable when it comes to discharging their services to the South African population. To live up to these expectations, senior public servants who function in today's public administration have been required to be prepared and developed with a view to embracing change and strategically meeting the challenges of managing current public services. At the same time, there have been growing expectations for senior public servants to have a clearer and stronger sense of vision, mission and focus in the departments of the public service.



It emerged from this chapter that the senior public servants play a major role in the establishment and achievement of the strategic functions and objectives of government. These are: raising and spending resources efficiently in the lowest costs and highest benefits fashion; raising and spending resources equitably; maintaining a healthy financial condition to meet their financial obligations; and responding to the needs of society in an open, informative, involving and accountable fashion, among others. These strategic objectives and functions are at the heart of the Constitution (1996), and serve as principles of good governance. Hence, leadership is identified as the flesh on the bones of the Constitution and must be effectively exercised by, among others, senior public servants. In fact, this is the only way in which the government's multifaceted objectives for the public sector can be achieved. Therefore, the development of managerial and leadership competencies for the senior public servants is a fundamental to flesh out the SMS competency framework and encourage systematic organisational performance management and development system (PMDS) within the public service. Thus, the public service must ensure that there is sufficient capability by institutionalising the strategies, policies, processes, systems and resources that develop and leverage new knowledge at individual and organisational levels.

Moreover, a framework for managerial capacity building in the public service was established in Chapter Three. The framework evolved





around three main themes: the induction, management development and training as well as the diagnostic techniques to evaluate the support for managerial capacity building. Induction is a vital process for the successful placement and the subsequent processes of training and development training of senior public servants. An effective induction programme ensures the integration of newly appointed senior public servants into the public service, thereby creating a sense of security, confidence and belonging for them. A successful induction programme leads to better motivated senior public servants and productivity within the public service.

However, it is important that the HR department provide feedback to the newcomers, monitor and evaluate the induction process with a view to ensuring that the expectations of the public service and the newcomers are fulfilled effectively and in a balanced and cost-effective fashion. The approaches to management development and training require effective, coherent and sustainable support in terms of policies, strategies, systems, and resources. These elements are important to build a culture of learning and ensure that public service performance is a sum of the capacities of the individual senior public servants. The diagnostic mechanisms provide the means for a rigorous analysis of information relating to the structure, administration, interaction, procedures, interfaces and other essential elements of the public service. These should not be neglected if the public service desires successful



transformation and a culture of constant service delivery improvements. Above all, the chapter argued, that while individual capacity building is desirable; the public service too must build its own capacity in order to leverage the new knowledge and thinking that are being brought to the workplace.

In Chapter Four, a case study dealing with the institutional support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants allied to the Department of Health, Department of Education and the Department of Social Development in the North West province was presented. Based on the information largely gathered through the structured interviews with the senior HRD staff, the chapter presented the prevailing state of institutional support, particularly regarding the strategies and plans; policies and guidelines; programmes and approaches; processes and systems; communication and feedback; resources; monitoring and evaluation; quality assessment and assurance mechanisms.

Some of the challenges that the departments articulated in their strategic plans have been established, and in fact there are no particular linkages between strategic planning and HR planning, as there are no written HR plans in place. Equally, there are no HR plans specifically for the senior public servants. The importance of the required linkages and the need for HR plans was explained. With regard to the preparation of the senior public servants, the chapter established that the induction process



lacks a written plan which specifically guides the design, implementation and evaluation and generally aligns the process to their visions and HR strategic purposes. Without ensuring that the induction is systematic and evaluated it is impossible to indicate whether the departments are spending their money wisely and achieving positive results, or whether the methods used to assist new employees to integrate and become effective in the department are the most suitable. The consequences of ineffective induction have been outlined, as well as the need to ensure that the induction is effective, efficient and sustainable.

The chapter also established the absence of a linkage between the departments' objectives, goals and business strategies with their approaches to management development and training. In fact, they do not have training and development strategies for their senior public servants. Moreover, the needs assessment methods only apply to the needs of the senior public servants at individual level, with no evidence of organisational and operational needs identification methods. The departments, however, referred to the usage of in house-training, workshops and seminars, external providers, mentoring and coaching. Yet, there are no formalised mentoring or coaching programmes and no secondments or formal network exchanges in the category of senior public servants in these departments. Again, there are no formalised arrangements for the senior public servants to read and network within



and between the departments with a view to keeping abreast of research and best practices.

Most, if not all, training and development needs for senior public servants are undertaken and supported by external service providers. But there are no electronic databases listing current accredited service providers to promote and support sound institutional public private partnership in the light of the challenges and needs of these departments. The departments do not ensure that the new skills and knowledge learned or acquired by the senior public servants are effectively applied, as there are no systems for information sharing, reporting and recording in place. Moreover, there are no systems to transfer the skills and knowledge learned or acquired by the senior public servants. Additionally, there are no systems in place to transform individual knowledge into public service results.

The chapter also considered the implementation and assessment of the SMS competency framework. At the outset, there is no record of how the SMS competency framework was introduced and used to support the development of competencies for senior public servants in the North West Province. In fact, there are no follow-ups and proper monitoring of the implementation of the SMS competency framework. Interestingly, there is no information in place regarding how the SMS



competency framework supports the individual and collective performance of the senior public servants in these departments.

The last section of the chapter focused on the diagnostic mechanisms in the public service to support the development and performance of the senior public servants. In fact, it was argued that the diagnostic mechanisms systematically enable public service to understand and describe the structure, administration, interaction, procedures, interfaces and other essential elements of the organisation. In this regard, the case study departments equally stressed that the Performance and Management Development System is applicable. In the process of organisational diagnosis, however, there are no explicit measures within the HR Directorates of these departments to support the development and performance of their senior public servants. Moreover, the departments were unable to indicate how well the output of their senior public servants compares to the output of the public service's best performers or even how well their public servants' performance matches the public service and service delivery requirements essential to the achievement of *Batho Pele White Paper*. Furthermore, the departments confirmed that there are no HR systems in place to support their functions towards a competency-based approach.

The case study departments have commonalities and differences in areas that relate to how they support their senior public servants for effective



capacity building. These, however, vary from superior to extremely lax practices in institutional support areas such as policies, strategies, plans, systems, processes, approaches and resources. This affects the effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the capacity building initiatives on the SMS and the capability of the North West Province, as a mandated constitutional structure.

In Chapter Five, the case study presented in Chapter Four was analysed and interpreted. The views of the senior public servants were also incorporated into the analysis and interpretation. The analysis was supported with further literature where necessary. Basically, the analysis concentrated on the three main themes of managerial capacity building for the senior public servants, as premised in Chapter One. These are preparation, development and diagnostic mechanisms for effective institutional support of senior public servants.

The linkage between the HR functions and the strategic planning within a department is essential to create a focus, consistency and purpose. These, in turn, are crucial for plans, ploys, patterns and perspectives that guide strategic actions and facilitate effective organisational and public management. Yet, the views of the senior public servants do not reflect this understanding and knowledge about their departments. Therefore, the chapter argued that HR systems and organisational structure must be managed in a way that is congruent with the department's strategy and,



by and large, the North West provincial strategy. Further, without an HR plan for senior public servants, the chapter argued that it is difficult to develop and foster current and future leaders who can manage the challenges inherent in a changing environment. For this reason, an urgent need for HR plans to address the changing business of government, the evolving employment relationship and the shifting demographics of the SMS group was identified. Indeed, such plans are vital to establish human resources management strategies and programme to support and develop leadership capabilities within the public service, and they should contribute to important processes such as succession planning and performance management.

With regard to the induction of the senior public servants, the views of the senior public servants are consistent with the information provided in Chapter Four. They confirm the fact that induction is a much-neglected area of human resource management in the public service. Indeed, an ineffective induction programme increases the adjustment problems for the public servants by creating a sense of insecurity, a lack of confidence and belonging for them; hence many respondents presented either no or not sure responses. The implications of the lack of proper induction are also serious at the strategic public service level, because the senior public servants are not only expected to adhere to the organisational practices and procedures but also to show loyalty and



commitment to the promotion of good governance and effective public management.

The views of the senior public servants about training and development were also analysed. It became evident that the respondents do not have common understanding of the internal training arrangements and organisation in their departments. This may be attributable to a lack of effective induction and policy communication in the departments. It was consistently maintained that, in the absence of HR plan, specifically plans for senior public servants, it is unlikely that the departments can establish their training and development strategies that accommodate their training and development needs at organisational and operational levels. Furthermore, without a training and development strategy, the departments are unable to measure the impact of training and development on the performance of the senior public servants and how new knowledge and skills are affecting their goals, objectives and mission. This highlights the concern about the lack of knowledge and understanding about what senior public servants really expect from their department and similarly what they think their employer expects from them.

With reference to the approaches to management development and training (both on-the-job and off-the-job), the chapter argued that, without long-term strategic direction, integration, and alignment, the



training and development needs may be achieved only at personal level. This principally raises concerns about the learning assumptions, priorities and focus of these approaches, especially bearing in mind that they are offered by the external providers (where there is uncertainty as to whether these are accredited or not accredited). Therefore, it can be accepted that these approaches to management development and training must occur in a public service culture that is aware of what they are and prepared to resource them so that they can prosper. Moreover, these approaches to management development and training require investment in planning, time and money to demonstrate that there is a real commitment to growing management and leadership capability at SMS level, or even across the public service.

With regard to the management of performance in the public service, the views of the public servants reveal little value for, or commitment to, the Performance and Management Development System (PMDS) in the public service. By and large, when the senior public servants are unable to trust or value the performance appraisal system, and when opportunities for growth and development are circumvented, then direct links between the motivation in the department and the senior public servant cannot be established. Rather than mere compliance with systemic requirements in the public service, the chapter argued that a performance management system requires the commitment of the departments to the ideal of integrating accountability and



developmental purposes to serve both the senior public servants and the North West public service.

With regard to the introduction and the implementation of the SMS competency framework, the chapter revealed that the framework lacks HR ownership in the public service; hence its relevance, significance and impact are dubious, especially when incorporating the views of the senior public servants. The SMS competency framework should be used in the recruitment and selection of the senior public servants and their personal and career development in the public service. Furthermore, the SMS competency framework is also an instrument which can be used by the HR to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the senior public servants. This information can be used in constructing personal development plans. Coaching, training and learning by experience are the most important elements of the personal development plans. Above all, the competency framework can be used in the context of career development. Senior public servants can discuss their future careers, starting from an appreciation for, and an evaluation of, the different competencies in the framework. The chapter has accurately reported the capacity gaps which affect the effective support for managerial capacity building and how these gaps generally influence the performance in the public service of the North West Province. It concluded that there is an urgent need for a major paradigm shift from functional to a





competency-based approach within the HR divisions in the North West Province.

6.3 Findings of the study

The study was aimed at achieving three objectives which are reported below:

With regard to objective 1, to determine how the North West Province prepares its senior public servants, the findings are as follows:

- (a) The common approach used to prepare staff, and which is applicable to the senior public servants in the North West public service is induction or socialisation or orientation.
- (b) However, the induction for the senior public servants lacks institutional support in terms of policy, specific budget, plan and evaluation and feedback methods.
- (c) As a result, the induction programmes for the senior public servants lack a careful, systematic and ongoing attention.
- (d) The shortcomings concerning the induction of the senior public servants negatively affect the capacity of the senior public servants to be integrated with loyalty and commitment to the culture of the public service. Thus, the knowledge and understanding of the senior public servants about some of the processes, policies, practices and programmes are inconsistent and vague.



- (e) An ineffective induction of the senior public servants negatively affects their sense of security, confidence and belonging which is necessary for proper relationships, effective communication and improved capacity in the public service.
- (f) An ineffective induction presents serious strategic, policy and operational shortcomings, which ultimately contribute to and support a culture of non performance at SMS level and public service incapability.

The second objective of the study was to determine how the North West Province develops its senior public servants and the issues which emerged are reported as follows:

- (a) Both on-the-job and off-the-job management development and training approaches are used to support the development of the senior public servants. However, they cannot occur in a public service culture that is unaware of what they are and unprepared to resource them.
- (b) Nevertheless, the management development and training approaches are not linked to the departments' objectives, goals and business strategies. The absence of HR plan and HR plans for the senior public servants creates gaps in the needs assessment process. Consequently, the departments are only able to address the



management development and training needs at a personal level with no strategic direction, purpose and focus.

- (c) Furthermore, the management development and training approaches lacks a long-term planning approach with a clear focus on, and development of, the current core competencies which are associated with the SMS competency framework in the public service.
- (d) In addition, the management development and training for the SMS is in most cases handled by the external service providers with no effective and sustainable arrangements for learning partnerships. As a result, the departments are unable to influence the learning focus, priorities and assumptions in view of the changing needs and expectations in the public service environment. Furthermore, the absence of databases makes it difficult for the departments to indicate which service providers are accredited and which ones are not; hence there is no record about the quality, effectiveness and the impact of learning, as well as the contribution of learning towards building the competencies of the senior public servants.
- (e) The departments do not evaluate the impact of management training and development on the performance of the senior public servants and how new knowledge and skills affect their goals, objectives and missions.
- (f) The senior public servants lack knowledge and understanding about what they expect from their departments and similarly what they



think the public service expects from them. In particular, the experience of the senior public servants with regard to planning and facilitation tend to support their lack of confidence in the relevance, significance and impact of their departments' approach to management development and training.

- (g) The absence of effective management development and training challenges the relevance, significance and vigour of the SMS competency framework in the public service.
- (h) The senior public servants do not trust or value the performance appraisal system because they do not perceive development and career growth opportunities.
- (i) Above all, the approaches to management development and training in the public service are not integrated and holistic, and consequently lack a coherent framework for building competencies that fit in with the SMS competency framework and the general performance of the senior public servants.

With regard to objective three, that is, to determine and evaluate the diagnostic mechanisms to support the capacity of senior public servants the issues which emerged are presented as follows:

- (a) The SMS competency framework and Performance and Management Development System (PMDS) are the mechanisms that are used in the North West Province to support the capacity of the



senior public servants. However, neither system is integrated from recruitment to performance evaluation of the senior public servants in the public service.

- (b) The senior public servants are not being informed about the application of the SMS competency framework and the departments do not use this framework during recruitment and selection. Moreover, it is not being used to determine the strengths and weaknesses of individual senior public servants in the public service. Furthermore, the SMS competency framework is not being used in the context of the career development of senior public servants.
- (c) Consequently, the PMDS has not gained senior public servants' commitment and is undervalued in the public service. Rather than mere compliance with systemic requirements in the public service, the PMDS must be approached holistically and requires the commitment of the departments to the ideal of integrating accountability and developmental purposes, to serve both the senior public servants and the North West public service.
- (d) Finally, there are no diagnostic mechanisms for a systematic understanding, description and evaluation of the core administrative elements of the North West public service, such as its structure, administration, interactions, policies, procedures and interfaces. A tradition of systematic monitoring and evaluation of actions, activities, processes, practices and programmes must be institutionalised to support the quest for public service capability.



The evaluation mainly concluded that, in the absence of effective induction, coherent capacity building framework and appreciation of the PMDS as well SMS competency framework (effective diagnostic mechanisms) within the North West Province, the institutional support for capacity building of the senior public servants is ineffective, and is unsustainable as well as not being holistic. Therefore, the research successfully analysed the question: *“to what degree have governance and leadership impacted on the capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Province of South Africa?”* The internal management and organisation within the public service must be strengthened to support the current public service vision of the Republic of South Africa and promote effective public management and administration in line with Chapter 10 of the Constitution of 1996. This requires the adoption of the principles of governance as set out in Chapter One and a sense of political leadership and effective management as well as a culture of good governance.

Strategic and holistic capacity building support can be achieved in the North West by doing the following:

- (1) building provincial ownership and reliance;
- (2) creating a common vision;
- (3) practising genuine partnership;
- (4) maintaining healthy, but team-based relationships;



- (5) appreciating the transformation from functional to competency based public service;
- (6) developing administrative and technical systems;
- (7) mobilising resources for sustainability;
- (8) understanding the context specificity of capacity and its building; and
- (9) exercising the process thinking in all phases of capacity building (developing policies, setting objectives, planning strategies, monitoring systems, taking actions and evaluating results).

6.4 Discussion of the findings

Systematic and effective institutional support for capacity building is a fundamental requirement for stability and consistency in the effective implementation of public policy. For this reason, the public service must ensure that the right senior public servants are allocated in the right place for the right tasks and at the right time. For this altitude to be reached, effective induction training and holistic senior leadership development initiatives must be adopted for the senior public servants.

In Chapter Four, the study exposed the traditional gap between policy making and policy communication on the one hand, and operational management practices on the other hand, and in particular the disorganised nature of induction training, management development and training and the lack of appreciation for the Performance Management and Development System (PMDS) and SMS competency



framework in the public service. From the perspective of public management, it was necessary to appreciate the institutional support for capacity building within the system of governance and leadership.

Thus, numerous barriers to systematic and holistic institutional support for the capacity building support of the senior public servants have been identified. These barriers are:

- (1) lack of alignment between the strategic planning and HR planning, HR plans, HR plans for senior public servants, and HR strategies;
- (2) lack of induction policy and effective induction training;
- (3) lack of proper needs assessments at organisational, operational and individual levels;
- (4) lack of proper awareness, formalisation and utilisation of the approaches to management development and training;
- (5) lack of effective systems for monitoring and evaluation of development and performance, and impact analysis;
- (6) lack of long-term approach to management development training and support;
- (7) lack of databases for development and training (including external accredited service providers), and
- (8) lack of access to best practices through institutional networks and quality management as well as assurance in the public service.



These barriers somehow impact negatively on the capacity, development, motivation and performance of the senior public servants and the public service in general. As a result, the lack of a coherent support framework for capacity building of the senior public servants has resulted in a number of weaknesses in capacity building support. The main weakness being that the public service cannot guarantee value for money, time, skills and success of the current human resource developmental approaches for its senior management service as well as the direct contribution and impact of these approaches and initiatives to the achievement of its vision. Therefore, these require immediate attention of the North West provincial government.

In this respect, however, Smith (1982:91) concluded that the lack of understanding and acceptance of HR management is a major reason for current problems in governance. Indeed, systematic HRM integration into strategic management and planning is essential for effective capacity building support in the public service. The integration is important for three reasons: an integration of HRM with the strategy of each department within the public service, a coherent HRM policy across policy areas, and the adjustment and acceptance and use of strategic HR practices by line managers and employees as part of their everyday work.



Evidently, the adoption of the SMS competency framework (indicative of competency management) by the Department of Public Service and Administration is a step in the right direction towards leveraging the public service to transform its bureaucracies into flexible and efficient divisions. Rightly put, a competency-based approach to HR focuses attention on senior public servants and underlines the importance of human resources in reaching the objectives of the public service. Therefore, competency management can be a tool to change the bureaucratic culture in the public service into a more professional and responsive public service culture. Vertically, for example, competency management might be a tool to define SMS competencies from the mission and strategy. Horizontally, for instance, competency framework might be used for real purposes in HR including selection, appraisal, development and reward. Thus, an integrated human resource management is a primary condition for the introduction of competency management in the South African public service. The structures and systems of the department need to be integrated and the focus placed on the development of the senior public servants as key executive resources of the public service.

Consequently, there is a need for a tradition and culture of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the actions, activities, programmes or projects, with evidence that this is informing policy and practice. Since each department in the North West Province can be viewed as a





number of interrelated, interdependent parts, each of which contributes to the total public service functioning and to the achievement of the goals and objectives, Harvey and Brown (1996:36) argue that the public service must always be system. A system is a set of interrelated parts unified by design to achieve some purpose or goals. Its qualities are listed below (Harvey and Brown, 1996:36).

- (1) A system must be designed to accomplish an objective.
- (2) The elements of a system must have an established arrangement.
- (3) Interrelationships must exist between the individual elements of a system.
- (4) The basic ingredients of the process (the flows of information, energy and materials) are more vital than the basic elements of a system.
- (5) Finally, organisational objectives are more important than the objectives of its elements and thus there is a less emphasis on the parochial objectives of the elements of a system.

The system approach is found effective for institutionalising the support for the managerial capacity of the senior public servants because of the lack of proper arrangements, flow, co-ordination, and grand purpose in the current situation in the public service. In this way, capacity gaps that hinder the performance of the public service at individual and collective levels could be diagnosed and be addressed within a framework of



managing change and successful transformation in the public service, thus maintaining explicit but sustainable linkages between learning, leadership and organisational change. However, the engine that drives organisational change is leadership, leadership and still more leadership (Kotter, 1996: 32). Clearly, it remains within the political ambit of the North West provincial legislature and executive council incessantly to create, shape and develop a public service culture that is in harmony with the constitutional principles and values of the current order in South Africa.

6.5 Conclusions and implications

At this point, the objectives of this study should be reiterated. The basic purpose was to assess the institutional support for capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West provincial government. It has been argued that the legal instruments have jointly introduced a paradigm shift in the public service, and the 1994 South African public institutions and senior public officials are required to be more democratic, accountable, effective, efficient, capable and ethical in discharging their services to the South African population. It has also been argued that the public service in the North West faces unprecedented challenges of meeting the needs and wishes of customers, higher expectations on the part of the general public and pressures to harness new technology and deliver government services in more sophisticated ways.



Therefore, to live up to these expectations, senior public servants that function in today's public administration have been required to be prepared and developed with a view to embracing change and strategically meeting the challenges of managing current Public Service. At the same time, there have been growing expectations for senior public servants to have a clearer and stronger sense of vision, mission and focus in their departments. Thus, effective support for capacity building is vital for a degree of order and consistency in the effective and coherent implementation of public policy. Simply, the North West Province should strengthen the leadership capabilities of its senior public servants and foster new leaders from time to time in order to confront the challenges that face its communities.

Yet, the present political and administrative system of governance in the North West has many weaknesses that relate to its inability to holistically and effectively create a levelled and supportive institutional platform for preparing and developing its senior public servants. Evidence suggests that some senior public servants enter and function within the public service without being inducted. In cases where there is induction training evidence shows that it is very difficult for the departments and their senior public servants to report its coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and impact. In the main, lack of induction evaluation and feedback denies the public service opportunity about the needs and expectations of the senior public servants and those of the



North West Province. Improving the HR environment in the public service with a view to supporting the senior public servants and enabling them to operate as leaders with clear lines of performance and accountability should be a priority in the North West Province.

With regard to how the senior public servants are being developed in the public service of the North West Province, the study reveals that there is much that is nebulous or negative: leadership is ill-defined, there is a shortage of leadership skills, methods of developing senior public servants are hazy and fraught with difficulties linked to lack of framework, lack of strategic direction and guarantees for success and development interventions tend to be reactive, misaligned and somehow untested as there is no evaluation of their impact and their consequences in the public service. The public service needs to approach leadership by setting clear goals that relate to what kind of leadership qualities are needed at SMS level, ensuring that leadership development programmes are linked to the vision for public service leadership, clearing links between the appraisal and its development, allocation of resources for management or leadership development that is planned (strategically) and pertinent (institutionally) rather than merely reactions to external direction and availability of funds opportunities.

The SMS competency framework must be used to sieve, attract and retain the best senior public servants and the public service must



develop sufficiently robust strategies for ensuring that the framework is used during recruitment, selection, placement, development and appraisal. Simply, the SMS competency framework and the PDMS are vital public service tools which must be used jointly and effectively to enable senior public servants to understand their own effectiveness in the public service and ensure that they are supported with appropriate and effective development initiatives in order to grow the importance of leadership across organizational boundaries or to learn between direct sectors and departments of the public service.

Given this account and based on the results of this study, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, the current state of internal management and organisation is not satisfactory and is likely to weaken considerably the vision of the public service, ruin the image of the province and lead to a decline in the standard of employment and service delivery in the public service of the North West Province.

Second, and closely related to the first conclusion is the fact that there are grave HR support system problems in the public service of the North West Province. The level of support, with no policies, programmes, processes, systems and appreciation of the current public service tools, is a threat to the transformation and the institutional capability of the North West province. Given the current challenges of the public services which generally exceed its contributions, the public service cannot and



should not afford a functional HR department in the era of competency based HR. There is an urgent need to transform the current HR situation with a view to ensuring that the core public service policies and practices are competently undertaken and the high-quality results are achieved. This is imperative, since proper induction and sustainable training and development of the senior public servants contribute to their performance and also improve the attainment of results in the public service.

The third conclusion which can be drawn from the results of the study is that the public service requires long-term committed partners who can promote effective institutional public-private partnerships in capacity building. The need for a database of external service providers has been identified. The North West Province should have internal and external service providers who, according to established criteria, are accredited, committed to the vision of the province, are willing to transfer skills and knowledge, and are also willing to ensure that there is ownership and capability within the public service. The approval and engagement of professional consultants must be evaluated against these criteria, if accountability, effectiveness, efficiency and value for money are to be the guiding principles for public management and administration.

A fourth conclusion that can be drawn from the results is that there is lack of integration and alignment within, and between, the



departments. This raises governance and managerial concerns about the reality and impact of transformation in the public service of the North West Province, and requires immediate attention. Indeed, the views of the departments and the senior public servants confirm that there is no unity of purpose or sense of ownership or a common understanding. These deficiencies defeat the culture of public service performance and capability. There is a need to evaluate the impact of transformation on the integration and alignment of the departments, structures and employment conditions. Indeed, the public service is an open system which requires proper design, integration and alignment of its political and administrative structures, systems and personnel, with a view to confronting consistently, holistically and effectively the internal and external challenges that face the North West Province.

Finally, it can be concluded that all the elements of institutional support for capacity building for this study are important for the performance of the senior public servants and the general capability of the North West Province. The North West public service needs to adopt a holistic approach to the problem of induction and management development and training in relation to all the employees. For this reason, a post-induction training programme, and a comprehensive needs assessment, as well as tailored-made leadership executive programmes, must be considered for the senior public servants.



6.6 Recommendations

Guided by the findings of this study, the conclusions drawn by it and notwithstanding the recommendations that have already been made, further policy recommendations are offered and these are as follows:

(a) Political leadership and commitment

A system of political accountability is required by any government, so that it acts in ways which are broadly approved by the community. Certainly, being democratic requires a suitable system of political and managerial accountability (not necessarily excluding other forms of accountability). In the same vein, efficiency, economy and effectiveness (the three E's) are three related, interdependent and dynamic concepts that should guide what government does, and how it goes about achieving its objectives (State of the Public Report, 2004: 14).

Indeed, political leadership is vital to the facilitation of a paradigm shift that allows a balance between democracy, effectiveness and efficiency in the public service. Within the context of public management, political and administrative reforms are very indispensable with a view to appreciating the fact that the bureaucratic model with its tendencies to impose definitions of public needs and delivery, organisational rigidity and unresponsiveness, and centralisation are no longer possible. They should not be repeated after 1994 in the Republic of South Africa and North West Province, in particular. Modestly, this study sets a political



agenda for the leaders in the province seriously to adopt principles of good governance and confront the challenges that face the public service. Within the perspective of the current Public Administration dispensation, the findings of the study challenge the current status and integrity of the province as a constitutional agent for the advancement of socio economic rights in South Africa and its capacity to achieve the concurrent and exclusive functions. In fact, reforms are undertaken with the aim of improvements, but it could be argued that there has been so much reforms, so much changes, that effective public management has deteriorated. In brief, unless and until the transformation agenda is successfully completed; the current organisational culture will counteract the legitimacy and sustainability of the province. Another part of the challenge is to hold the Executive Council accountable for the results that are associated with effective organization and management of the public service (effective public management in general) in the public service.

The departments, structures, systems and processes in the public service must be properly integrated and aligned to promote effective public management practices. Effective public management represents a transformation of the public service and its sustainable relationship with government and society. Therefore, political durability and will of the North West provincial legislature and executive council are still essential to



drive public service reforms successfully through the post-apartheid dispensation.

Succinctly put, without effective policy planning and analysis, the goals of effective management and good governance in the public service cannot be achieved. Therefore, this main recommendation broadly encompasses all aspects of accountable public service leadership development and succession in the public service. Within the same perspective, it also guarantees full ownership of the internal and external public affairs by the North West provincial legislature and executive council. In particular, it ensures that certain subsidiary recommendations are achieved. These are discussed below.

(b) The realisation of the vision for transformation of the public service

It was apparent from the strategic documents of the case study departments, structured interviews with the departments and the responses of the senior public servants that the songs are being sung from absolutely different song sheets. This clearly reveals that there is no proper integration and communication within and between the departments of the North West public service. By the same token, it was also clear from Chapter Five that the external challenges that face the departments surpass their strategies, objectives and approaches, especially in the light of the incoherent internal organisation and management of the departments within the public service. Incidentally,





the 'silo approach' has found expression in the departments' strategic plans; hence, the study identified this approach as being the main reason for the existing accountability gaps in the North West Province. Moreover, the problems that have been uncovered in the study paint a picture of a lack of systematic and holistic approaches to policy planning and implementation as well as communication.

The birth of the new constitutional democracy in 1994 calls for a transformation of the public services and its relationship with government and society. Given the findings of this study, there is an urgent need to review the successes and/or the failures of the transformation of the public service in the North West Province and ensure that the public service realise the achievement of the transformation vision within a system of good governance and effective public management that is effectively consolidated, well co-ordinated and vision critical.

Clearly, the North West Province needs to conduct an organizational analysis that identifies the current situation, problems, and the forces that are possible causes of these problems. The analysis is important to measure transformation results since 1994 and specify the kinds of changes that are generally needed. Critical to the success of this process, is the political support of the Provincial Legislature and the Provincial Executive Council as well as a coherent transformation plan with a view



to promoting and enhancing the values of the public service generally and public administration in terms of the Constitution (1996). In fact, by creating a transformation vision with systematic, but target-specific strategies and outcomes, a comprehensive transformation process may produce a single well-coordinated, flexible and effective public service in the North West Province.

(c) Need for strategic HR with a competency approach

It is evident that the present HR approach in the public service does not only suffer from the lack of strategic management, but is also unable to function within a competency-based environment, and indeed promote competency management in the public service. It is also evident that the HR function in the public service is generally understaffed and lacks a vision, integration and alignment with other core functions within and between the departments. However, HR is a core driver of transformation and a custodian of organisational culture.

Therefore, there is an urgent need to transform the HR departments in the North West Province. As part of the HR transformation, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) must extend the current definition of the competencies to include HR, and eventually establish an HR competency framework for HR professionals in the public service.



The HR competency framework is useful for clarifying and describing the standards and expectations which relate to excellent HR performance in the public service. The HR competencies may include: HR job knowledge/competency, understanding of the mandates of the public service, knowledge of best practices, ability to manage culture, personal creativity, teamwork and co-operation, interpersonal skills, communication, and trust.

(d) Induction training

The public service has changed since the birth of a new democracy in 1994 in South Africa. Indeed, the policy changes, notwithstanding the complexity associated with the nature and scope of governmental activities as well the multiplicity of the actors in the policy process, make the public service operations and functions more managerial and strategic. This requires that those who perform public administration at SMS level be properly inducted so that their role and place can be realised by the society. Indeed, it needs to be emphasised that the senior public servants are vital to economic success and to social cohesion and therefore they must be properly inducted about the public service and the role the public service plays in the public life of every one in the Republic of South Africa.

There is a need to develop an induction policy with elements such as: a vision, purpose, objectives, scope and category of



staff and planning, monitoring and evaluation, to name but a few. The induction programme and training should be guided by the induction policy and should ensure that all staff who are appointed, promoted, transfers and demoted are inducted. The induction training is also necessary during major change process in the public service.

Obviously, the HR must develop a cohesive approach and supporting guidelines and documentation to ensure that appointees joining the public service are given clear, detailed and early guidance on their role, their key relationships and the expected standards of work and procedures relating to their post.

(e) Effective implementation of the SMS competency framework

The study revealed serious problems with regard to the introduction, implementation, utilisation, monitoring and evaluation of the SMS competency framework. These problems dismiss the value of the SMS competency framework in terms of its relevance, significance and impact and its contribution towards ensuring the combined performance of senior public servants and the capability of the public service.

Therefore, the Department of Public Service and Administration should ensure that there is sufficient managerial capacity within



the public service to successfully own and promote the implementation of the SMS competency framework.

Fundamentally, the applicability of competency management in the HR departments must be expedited with a view to ensuring that the SMS competency framework finds proper accommodation in the public service. The SMS framework is an innovative HR tool crucial in appointing the right people at the right place for the right work at the right time. The value of the SMS competency starts with the competency assessments during the selection of the senior public servants in the public service and continuously facilitates the measurement of their capacities. Consequently, the framework should be used in conjunction with other HR tools such as the PMDS in the public service.

(f) Strategic development and training plan

It is very evident from this study that the public service lacks a coherent and strategic training plan that can serve the needs and expectations of its environment and personnel and ensure that training is effective, strategic and brings about sustainable results. The public service must effectively prepare its senior public servants to provide the best possible public services. This requires that strategic training and developmental initiatives be planned, implemented and evaluated according to their contribution to its strategic direction and business needs.



There is a need for a strategic management and development and training plan, which should set out the departmental development and development needs and how the different approaches and methods, as well as programmes, support the vision of the department and yield the required competencies.

There is an urgent need to formalise the mentoring and coaching within the public service by developing programmes that support the senior, middle and the junior public servants.

Providing development opportunities and communicating them to senior public servants is important to ensure that they believe that they have opportunities to grow and learn new skills. Such opportunities are important for attracting and retaining talented senior public servants. As part of this initiative, the public service would be creating an environment that allows the senior public servants to share knowledge about how best to improve public services and quality. Indeed aligning training and development with the strategic direction of the public service ensures that training contributes to its needs and expectations (challenges mentioned in Chapter Four). Above all, a supportive public service environment must be guaranteed for the senior public servants to be motivated to participate in training and learning activities, use what they learn on the job and share their knowledge with others. As part of this recommendation, the public service should develop tailor-made leadership programmes that squarely support the development of



competencies which the departments require in line with their institutional and legislative mandates. The linkages between development and performance must be maintained with support systems and programmes that lead to growth opportunities and successions planning.

(g) Improving communication and feedback

Arising from this study, the importance of communication from policy to practice cannot be disputed. Indeed, strategic communication is vital to direct the conduct of public servants effectively and to foster their motivation by clarifying what is to be done, how well they are doing and what can be done to improve public service performance, among others.

Therefore, there is a need to develop strategies, processes and systems with a view to improving communication within and between the departments in the North West Province.

In this regard, there is a need to ensure that feedback methods are more integrated and systematic with a view to allowing possible adjustment and control, thereby enabling improvements relative to the strategic goals, objectives and vision of the North West Province. Finally, it is important to ensure that there is systematic and effective



communication and feedback both internally and externally within the public service.

(h) Effective knowledge management

According to Robbins (2005:147), knowledge management is a process of organising and distributing an organisation's collective wisdom so that the right information gets to the right people at the right time.

In context, the public service needs an integrated knowledge management strategy and system in order to tap the collective experience and wisdom of the SMS during employment (before retiring or resigning), preserving the current wealth of knowledge and accessing what previous public servants have learned (successes or failures). Indeed, a knowledge management strategy must be developed with a view to enabling the public service to formulate an electronic document system that codifies, stores, disseminates and allows reuse of knowledge.

However, a culture of information sharing is a prerequisite for the success of knowledge management in the public service.



(i) Holistic quality assurance and management

The North West Province must develop a comprehensive quality assurance and management system with a view to ensuring that its strategies, policies, processes and personnel best focus on and accelerate the achievement of the vision of the public service. This is vital in order to ensure that the public service excellently attain customer satisfaction through the continuous improvement of its core processes and builds capacity reserves for future demands.

A successful quality management strategically supports the quest of the public service to achieve consistent improvement in service delivery, and to monitor and evaluate the processes and outputs of each component along the lines of expected quality standards and expectations. With this system, the departments will be able to determine the degree of internal capacity, to tap capacity within other departments and ensure that there is excess capacity required to translate the collective performance of the senior public servants into public service capability.

(j) Flexible monitoring and evaluation systems

Clearly, it is essential for the public service to estimate the results, to measure these results and learn from them. For this reason, the developmental approach to public management and administration

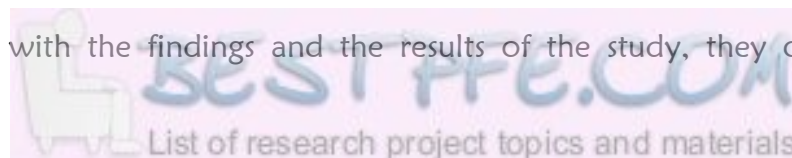


requires a plan for achieving progress and building greater capacity to bring about change in the future. The vision of the public service in South Africa requires the production of specific outcomes that contribute to achieving the institution's strategy underpinned by clear values and principles.

Therefore, the North West Province must institutionalise comprehensive and monitoring and evaluation systems that holistically support and report the current practices and performance of the public service with a view to identifying both where improvements are required, and where policies, structures, systems and institutions are working well.

In this regard, and through networked public institutional partnerships, the Constitutional role of the Public Service Commission (PSC) regarding the monitoring and evaluation of the public service must be promoted and strengthened. Above all, it increases the legitimacy and integrity of the public service to change those attitudes, roles, systems, structures, processes, procedures and policies which do not fit into the new vision of the public service in South Africa.

These recommendations are well-informed by the analysis and interpretation provided in Chapter Five. Notwithstanding their consistency with the findings and the results of the study, they offer





some policy and practice improvement solutions to the current organizational and management challenges facing the public service of the North West Province.

6.7 Suggestions for further research

Generally, the study argued that the institutional support for capacity building of the senior public servants must be effective and sustainable, with a view to contributing to superior performance and the capability of the public service.

One of the major limitations of this study was lack of resources, both in terms of money and time. The researcher had very little time and financial resources to facilitate the completion of this study and this affected the size of the sample analysed as well as the number of departments covered. Given this, it is imperative for more comprehensive studies to be conducted in the future, possibly incorporating all the public employees of the North West Province.

Furthermore, this research sets the groundwork for future empirical studies that may seek to apply its independent and dependent variables to other political and administrative employment categories of the provincial government in South Africa. Indeed, a comprehensive research approach that includes other levels of employment, as well as other provincial governments, must be adopted with a view to



scientifically seeking comparative provincial perspectives and prudently directing research on governance and leadership to the current policy debates about the need, significance and relevance of the provincial government as a constitutional sphere after a decade of democratic government in the Republic of South Africa. Naturally, it is worth considering international comparative approach in such studies.



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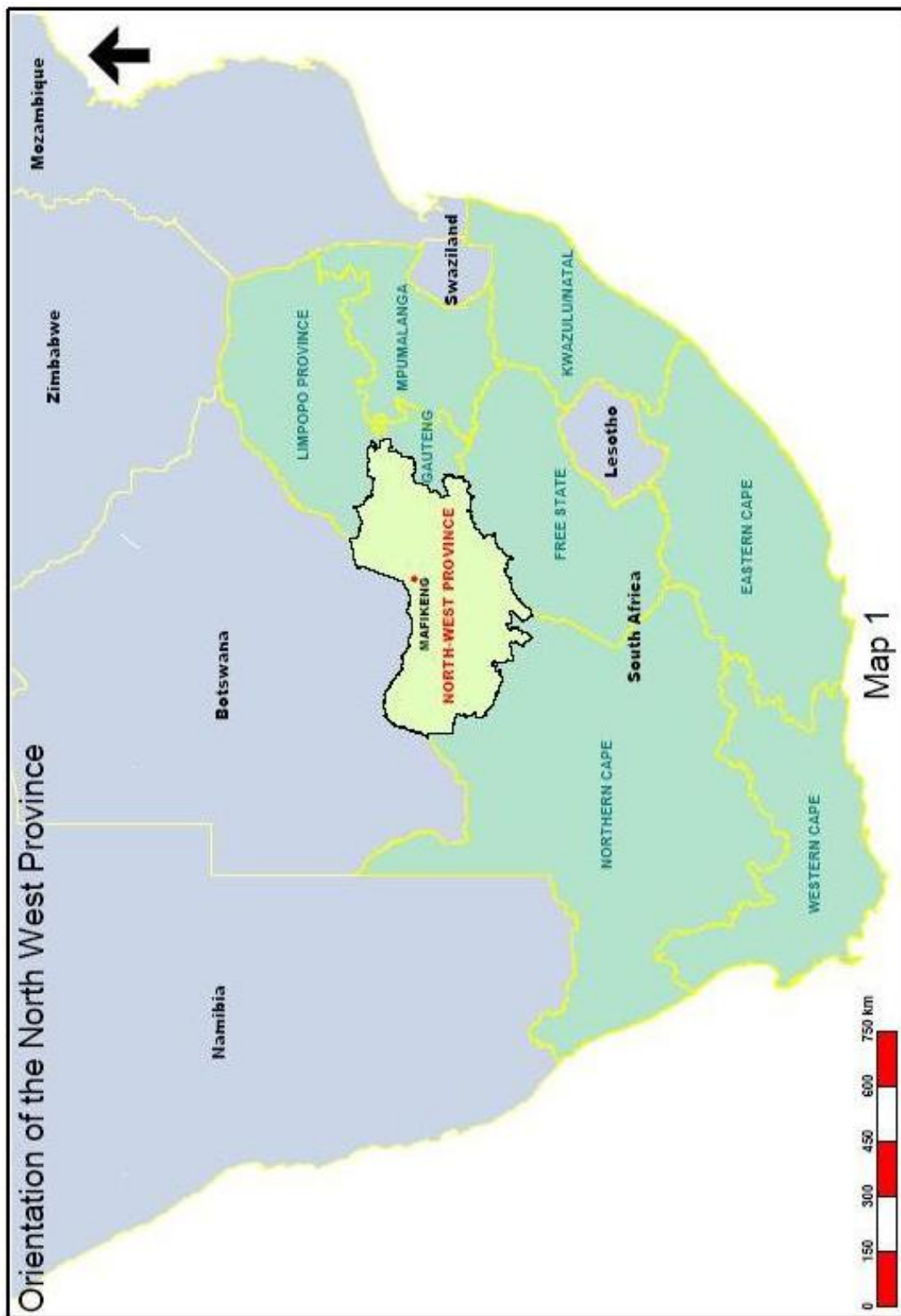
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Annexure A





ANNEXURE B



Office of the Premier

Director General

Enquiries : R.K. Mogorosi
Tel : (018) 3873105
Date : 09 December 2005

Mr. T.S. Matshego
Private Bag X 2046
Mmabatho
2735

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE
NORTH WEST PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**

Kindly be informed that your request on the above mentioned matter has been granted. You're therefore requested to contact Director: Human Resource Management, Mr. K.H. Digoamaje on **(018 387 3106)** for further assistance.

Regards



DIRECTOR GENERAL

2005.12.09
DATE

Cc: Director: HRM
Mr. K.H. Digoamaje





ANNEXURE C



Office of the Premier
The Director General

Enq : Mr. P. Botha
Tel : (018) 387 4286
Date : 20 April 2006

Mr. T. S. Matshego
Private Bag X 2046
Mmabatho
2735

Dear Mr. T. S. Matshego

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE NORTH WEST
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**

The above mentioned matter, refers.

You are kindly requested to contact the Human Resource Components of the departments that you mentioned directly for your research, meaning that the information is directly obtainable from those departments.

I hereby include the contact details of the Human Resource Managers of the said departments.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| • Department of Health | Ms. D. Mafulako | (018) 387 3419 |
| • Department of Social Development | Mr. T. Aphiri | (018) 387 0217 |
| • Department of Agriculture | Mr. S. Morake | (018) 389 5775 |
| • Department of Arts Culture & Sports | Mr. T. Mpuisang | (018) 387 7752 |
| • Department of Education | Ms. P. De Nysschen | (018) 387 3426 |



- 2 -

You are advised to produce the letter of approval for your research proposal that you received from the Director General when approaching these departments for information.

Regards

[Handwritten Signature]
.....
DIRECTOR GENERAL

20/04/2006
.....
DATE



ANNEXURE D

Tel: +27 18 3892215

Fax: +27 18 3892335

E-mail: Matshegot@uniwest.ac.za

ATTENTION: HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT

Your request for completion of an interview protocol on the institutional support for capacity building of senior public servants

Attached is a structured interview protocol which you are kindly requested to complete and return to me as soon as possible. The protocol is part of the study on the support for capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Provincial Government. Effective support for capacity building is generally vital for a high degree of order and consistency in the implementation of policy in the public service. This view has found rightful expression in the speeches of the President, Dr Thabo Mbeki and the Minister of the Public Service and Administration, Mrs Fraser-Moleketi as well as in the newly published State of the Public Service Report by the Public Service Commission (PSC).

Institutional approval for this research was obtained from the Office of the Premier and is co-operating in the study. I know, of course, that I am imposing on your time but kindly appreciate that the purposes of doing so are sound and are in the best interest of the public service. I, however, assure you in the strongest possible terms that the answers you provide will remain completely confidential; neither you nor your Department will be singled out for analysis. The analysis will be done only on aggregated data.

Your completion and return of this questionnaire is of great importance. If you have any further information about this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me at this cellular number: **076 270 3841**. Thank you in advance for your co-operation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

**TABANE MATSHEGO
RESEARCH LEADER**



1.6 Does your Department have a written HR plan?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

1.7 Are senior public servants involved in the HR planning of your Department?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

1.7.1 If yes then what are their responsibilities?

1.8 Are senior public servants involved in the linkage process between the strategic management process and the HR planning process?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

1.8.1 If yes then what are their responsibilities?

1.9 What have been the results of the plan in supporting your Department to achieve its vision?

1.10 Does HR Department communicate or provide feedback regarding 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 and 1.8 to the senior public servants?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

1.10.1 If yes, which methods are used?

SECTION B

2. Induction of senior public servants



2.1 Does your organization have an induction policy for its senior public servants?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

2.1.1 If yes, then what does it entail?

2.2 Does your Department have an induction programme for senior public servants?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

If Yes then

2.2.1 What does the programme entail?

2.2.2 When does the programme begin?



2.2.3 How long does the programme last?

2.2.4 Who participates in the programme?

2.2.5 How do you induct senior public servants?

2.2.6 How often do you induct your senior public servants?



2.3 Is there an annual budget for the induction of senior public servants?

2.4 Does your Department evaluate the induction programme?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

2.4.1 If yes then what elements are measured?

2.4.2 Which measures are used?

2.4.3 Who is responsible?

3.5 How are these training and development needs identified for senior public servants?

3.6 What informs the HR Department to conduct training and development needs for senior public servants?

3.7 Who is involved in the identification of training and development needs of senior public servants?



3.11 What is the level of support in terms of the following?:

3.11.1 Time

3.11.2 Finance

3.11.3 Commitment

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SECTION D

4. Delivery and assessment of training and development

4.1 Who is responsible for training and development of senior public servants?

4.2 Which training and development approaches have been followed in the last four years?

4.3 Which programmes have been offered to senior public servants in the last four years?



4.4 Which systems are used to ensure that the approaches and programmes effectively satisfy the HR and your Department's vision and mission?

4.5 What happens after the training and development event from a senior public servants point of view?

4.6 How do you ensure the application of skills and knowledge learned or acquired by senior public servants?

4.7 How do you ensure the transfer of skills and knowledge learned or acquired by senior public servants?

4.8 What systems are in place to transform individual knowledge into public service results?

4.9 Are the systems mentioned in 4.8 capable of transforming individual knowledge into public service results?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--



4.10 If yes what evidence or results are recorded?

SECTION E

5. Implementation and assessment of the competency framework

5.1 How was the competency framework introduced in the North West Province public service for the senior public servants?

5.2 What actions have been taken by your Department for effective in order to ensure effective implementation of the competency framework for the senior public servants?



5.3 What have been the challenges experienced during the implementation of the competency framework?

5.4 How did the HR respond to the challenges mentioned in 5.3?

5.5 What was the role of senior public servants in the implementation of the competency framework?

5.6 Who is responsible for evaluating the implementation of the competency framework for senior public servants?

5.7 Is the competency framework an HR strategy for the training, and development of senior public servants?

5.8 Is the competency framework an HR strategy for the performance of senior public servants in the public service?

5.9 Since the introduction of the competency framework in the public service has your Department made assessment of it?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--



5.9.1 If yes, how does the competency framework support individual performance of the senior public servant?

5.9.2 How does competency framework support the general performance of the senior public servants in your Department?

SECTION F

6. Evaluation of the mechanisms in place to support the development and performance of senior public servants

6.1 What measures are currently within the HR to diagnose development and performance of the senior public servants?



6.6 If yes, then how well?

6.7 How well do the senior public servants compare to the output of the public service's exemplary performers?

6.8 How well do the public servants performance match the public service and service delivery requirements essential to the achievement of Batho pele White Paper in your Department?

6.11 Does the HR benchmark its competency approach to senior public servants training, development and appraisal with other HR Departments with the North West Provincial Government?

6.12 Are there formal networks for senior public servants exchange which are handled supported by the HR?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

6.12.1 If yes, how are these supported by your Department?

6.13 Are there any secondments in the category of senior public servants approved by the HR in the last three years?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

6.13.1 If yes, what have been the reasons for secondments?



6.13.2 What have been the results?

**Thank you for your understanding and patience in completing
this structured interview protocol**



ANNEXURE E

Tel: +27 18 3892215

Fax: +27 18 3892335

E-mail: Matshegot@uniwest.ac.za

**ATTENTION: DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL
CHIEF DIRECTOR
DIRECTOR**

Your request for completion of a questionnaire on the institutional support for capacity building of senior public servants

Attached is a questionnaire which you are kindly requested to complete and return to me as soon as possible. The questionnaire is part of the study on the support for capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Provincial Government. Effective support for capacity building is generally vital for a high degree of order and consistency in the implementation of policy in the public service. This view has found rightful expression in the speeches of the President, Dr Thabo Mbeki and the Minister of the Public Service and Administration, Mrs Fraser-Moleketi as well as in the newly published State of the Public Service Report by the Public Service Commission (PSC).

Institutional approval for this research was obtained from the Office of the Premier and is co-operating in the study. I know, of course, that I am imposing on your time but kindly appreciate that the purposes of doing so are sound and are in the best interest of the public service. I, however, assure you in the strongest possible terms that the answers you provide will remain completely confidential; neither you nor your Department will be singled out for analysis. The analysis will be done only on aggregated data.

Your completion and return of this questionnaire is of great importance. If you have any further information about this questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me at this cellular number: **076 270 3841**. Thank you in advance for your co-operation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

**TABANE MATSHEGO
RESEARCH LEADER**



ANNEXURE F

This questionnaire is part of research on the evaluation of the institutional support for managerial capacity building of the senior public servants in the North West Province. It consists of six sections which require your biographical data, knowledge and expectations about management development, approaches to management development, attitudes about management development, application and assessment of the Senior Management Service competency framework and the support for management development.

**SECTION A
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA**

1.1 What is your gender?

Male	
Female	

1.2 What is your age range?

25-30			46-50	
31-35			51-60	
36-40			61-65	
41-45			Other	

1.3 What is your present occupation?

Job title		No. of years in the position
Superintendent General		
Deputy Director General		
Chief Director		
Director		

1.4 Before you occupied the position mentioned in 1.3 what were you doing?

Category	Sector (e.g. Public)	Position	No. of years
Employed			
Employed			
Unemployed			

1.5 What are your main educational achievements?

Educational qualifications	Year obtained
1.	
2.	
3.	

1.6. Are you presently studying for a higher qualification?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--



1.6.1 If the answer is yes, then which one? _____

SECTION B
EXPECTATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE

Expectations and knowledge		Yes	No	Not sure
1	Do you expect to be working with your Department in five years' time?			
2	Do you expect to be promoted to a higher grade in the next five years?			
3	Do you have a job description?			
4	Has your job description been reviewed in the last 12 months?			
5	Does your Department have a policy for reviewing job descriptions?			
6	Do you know what Senior Management Service Competency Framework is?			
7	Does your Department have a written strategic plan?			
8	Does your Department have a written Human Resource Strategy?			
9	Does your Department have a written Human Resource plan?			
10	Does your Department have a written HR plan for senior public servants?			
11	Does your Department have a written Induction Policy?			
12	Does your Department have an Induction Plan?			
13	Does your Department have a standard Induction Programme for all staff?			
14	Does your Department have a standard Induction Programme for its senior public servants?			
15	Does your Department have an Induction budget?			
16	Does your Department evaluate its Induction programme?			
17	Do you know who is responsible for training and development in your Department?			
18	Does your Department have a written training and development policy?			
19	Does your Department have a written training and development strategy?			
20	Does your Department have a written training and development plan?			
21	Are you consulted about training and development policy, strategy, plan and budget in your Department?			
22	Do you experience links being made between training and development activities and your work and career?			
23	Does your Department have a written quality assurance policy which supports induction, training and development of staff?			
24	Does your Department have a written quality assurance manual which supports induction, training and development of staff?			
25	Do you believe your organization is committed to effective induction of its senior public servants?			
26	Do you believe your organization is committed to effective management development and training of its senior public servants?			



SECTION C
APPROACHES TO MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

1. List management development or executive programmes which you attended in the last 2 years?

Programmes/Courses	Year attended
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

2. On-the-job approaches to Management Development

On-the-Job approaches to Management Development	Yes	No
1. Have your job responsibilities ever been enlarged or enriched since you joined the Department?		
2. Have you ever been rotated to any sections since you joined your Department?		
3. Have you ever been assigned a Departmental coach since you joined your Department?		
4. Does your Department have a formal mentoring programme?		
5. Have you ever been assigned a mentor and be mentored since you joined the Department?		
6. Have you ever been seconded to any Department since your career in the public service?		

3. Off-the-job approaches to Management Development

Off-the-Job approaches to Management Development	Yes	No
1. Does your Department arrange in-house seminars or workshops or conferences?		
2. Do you participate in external workshops/seminars/conferences for your Department?		
3. Have you conducted any seminar/conference/workshop for your Department?		
4. Are you a member of any professional body or organization?		

- 3.4.1 If the answer is **yes**, then what is the name of the professional body? _____
when did you join it? _____ Does your Department pay membership fee? _____

4. How do you share the knowledge and experience you normally obtain from training and development for your Department? Use the empty space if you have a different option.

Provide a written report		Provide a verbal report	
Conduct a workshop/seminar		Do not share knowledge/experience	

5. Does your Department have mechanisms or systems to evaluate the effectiveness of the approaches to management development it normally pursues?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--



5.1. If your response is **yes**, then kindly mention them here _____

SECTION D
ATTITUDES ABOUT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Attitudes about management development		Yes	No	Not sure
1	Do you agree management development and training objectives with your senior?			
2	Do HR practitioners play a role in agreeing about the management development and training objectives with your senior?			
3	Do you agree personal objectives with your senior before embarking on any development opportunity?			
4	Do you review your performance with your senior?			
5	Does your Department have any control systems or mechanisms to assess if it is the time for you to be trained and developed?			
6	Does the performance appraisal process help you to identify your professional training and development needs?			
7	Are the development activities you take part in assessed in relation to your performance in your job?			
8	Are the development activities you take part in assessed in relation to work you may do in the future?			
9	Are most of the management development activities you take part in of practical use in your job?			
10	Does management development make any difference to you being able to achieve your performance targets?			
11	Do you have signed a performance management agreement with your Department?			
12	Is your Department abiding by the terms of the performance management agreement you signed?			
13	Has Performance Management and Development System made any difference to how your development needs are addressed?			
14	Do you believe that your organization's approach to management development is relevant to your needs?			
15	Do you get enough time to consider your own development needs?			
16	In your experience has your organization made use of the management development you have undertaken?			
17	Are the development activities you undertake related to the skills you need to progress your career?			



SECTION E
KNOWLEDGE RELATING TO THE APPLICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE SENIOR
MANAGEMENT SERVICE (SMS) COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

Attitudes about management development		Yes	No	Not sure
1	Have you been given a copy of SMS Handbook by your HR Department?			
2	Did the HR Department provide orientation programme for the introduction of and expectations from the SMS handbook?			
3	Does your HR Department communicate information regarding the assessment of competencies based on the Competency Framework before actual assessment?			
4	Does the HR induct you about the assessment of competencies before they are assessed?			
5	Do you consider your internal HR personnel competent to assess the competencies of senior public servants in your Department?			
6	Is the assessment of competencies informed by the strategic plan of your Department?			
7	Is the assessment of competencies informed by the HR plan?			
8	Is the assessment of competencies informed by the operational plan and processes?			
9	Do you consider the assessment of competencies to be linked to your actual performance in the Department?			
10	Do you consider the assessment of competencies to be linked to your actual general performance of other senior public servants in the Department?			
11	Are you given feedback about the assessment of your competencies in the Department?			
12	Do you currently have SMS competency assessment report covering the results of the previous assessment for senior public servants in your Department?			
13	Does the HR Department support you in meeting the actual performance level after assessment of your performance?			
14	Do you know when the next competency assessment for senior public servants is going to take place?			
15	Do you have a personal development plan?			
16	Is the personal development plan informed by the actual assessment of your performance on the job and the need to improve performance?			
17	Is the assessment of your competencies quality assured by your Department?			
18	Does your HR Department keep the competencies of senior public servants appropriate to the SMS competency framework?			
19	Would you consider the public service culture specifically in your Department portraying the vigour of the SMS competency framework?			



SECTION F
SUPPORT FOR MANAGERIAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

1. Which of the following best describes you when you decide your management development and training needs?

1. Each year for that year	
2. Each year for the next 3-5 years	
3. As development opportunities arise	
4. I don't decide what my development and training needs are?	

2. What is most likely to stop you spending time on your own development? Use the empty space if there are other options which have not been included here.

1. Work load	
2. Commitment outside work	
3. No money in the budget	
4. Lack of support/interest from your senior	
5. Lack of support/interest from the HR Department	
6. Lack of support/interest from your subordinates	
7. Lack of career opportunities	
8. No opportunity to apply what you learned	

3. In your own opinion what level of skills and expertise do senior public servants require in order to remain effective? Please score the following questions on a three-point scale by choosing one number to each question. Please use the empty space if there are other skills or expertise you would like to add.

A little	A moderate amount	A great deal
1	2	3

Categories:

Analysis of the public service		Decision making	
Managing and motivating people		Improving one's overall work	
Effective communication		Managing finance	
Dealing with conflict		Introduction and management of change	
Problem solving		Leading individual and groups	
Training/development of employees		Leadership and negotiation	



4. What actions do you recommend your Department take in order to effectively prepare its senior public servants for their responsibilities in the public service?

1.1 _____

1.2 _____

1.3 _____

5. What actions do you recommend your Department take in order to effectively develop its senior public servants for their responsibilities in the public service?

1.1 _____

1.2 _____

1.3 _____

6. What actions do you recommend your Department take in order to effectively address its current challenges?

1.1 _____

1.2 _____

1.3 _____

7. Kindly use this section for any further information you would like to offer.

Thank you for your time and patience in this research