

**Testimony for June 24, 2004 Little Hoover Commission Hearing on
Maintaining a Quality State Workforce**

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Question 2: Skills of effective public sector managers. What skills are required of public sector managers and supervisors? Do managers and supervisors in state agencies have access to the training, tools and resources they need to successfully lead public sector organizations?

A. What skills are required of public sector managers and supervisors?

There are four pillars of skills required to be an effective public sector manager:

Character	Competency	Leadership	Management
<p>Integrity: honest, trustworthy, delivers on promises</p> <p>Responsibility: take responsibility for successes or failures, does not shift blame</p> <p>Fairness: treats all with equity; rewards and punishments must fit the behavior</p>	<p>Technical knowledge: program specifics of assigned activity, budgeting, contracting, purchasing, personnel (huge area that includes everything from hiring practices to disciplinary process), legislative and regulatory processes, press policies, internal procedures & policies, protocol. State managers typically come up through the ranks as technical specialists and may lack proficiency in management skills listed above</p>	<p>People: ability to motivate, solve disputes, build esprit de corps, build morale, create teamwork, foster innovations and creative problem solving, support risk-taking, mentoring, negotiating, teaching, all team members are vital to overall success</p> <p>Adaptable: energy, hope, open to new ideas, enthusiasm to makes changes</p>	<p>Planning: strategic thinking, planning and how it relates to budgeting, performance measures, analysis of data relevant to program and department, project management, continuous improvement concepts</p> <p>Accountability: tracks performance, can support program outcome with data</p>

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Character	Competency	Leadership	Management
<p>Humility: knows that others can contribute to overall success – not a one-person show</p> <p>Courage: does what is right regardless of personal cost</p> <p>Respect: treats all with civility and respect</p>	<p>Communications: listening, speaking, understanding, conducting effective meetings, writing ability, public presentations, internal presentations, technical papers for publication if applicable, review of regulatory and legislative concepts, review of staff work</p>	<p>Vision: ability to see the broader context and relationships to internal and external forces, provide clear direction, align program work with larger directives and mission, model responsibility and accountability, guide development of future leaders</p>	<p>Relationship building: networking with peers state, local and federal, networking key staff in technical areas such as budget, legislative and control agencies, networking with customers, regulated industry and public</p>

There is a distinguishing principle that should be kept in mind when seeking to understand the skills necessary for an effective public sector manager. In the public sector, managers are managing for service delivery rather than for bottom line profit. Understanding this difference is key to proposing performance standards and appropriate reward and disciplinary systems.

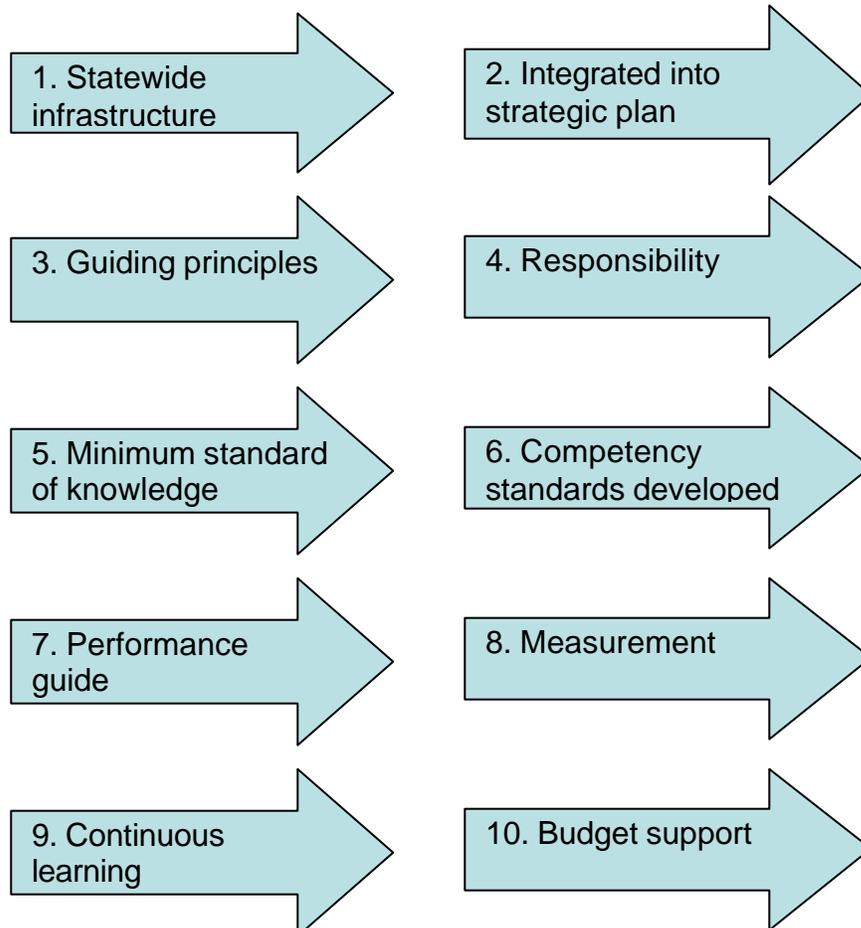
B. Do managers and supervisors in state agencies have access to the training, tools, and resources they need to successfully lead public sector organizations?

There are plenty of courses available online, in the classroom, or on the job. The State Training Center has a page of courses dedicated to teaching management and supervision. Access to training, tools, and resources is currently dependent upon available budget, staff scheduling, and the level of management support for training. In some, perhaps most, State organizations, adequate time and money are not dedicated to develop successful supervisors and managers. Training is often an early casualty of lean budget times. Lean times, however, are when the best managers and supervisors are needed most. A mandatory time and resource commitment is needed to continuously train supervisors and managers.

Performance standards are important components of a continuous training program. Each supervisor and manager is responsible for his/her career development and would benefit from a clear guideline that outlines expectations, competencies, and how it will be measured. Bottom line is that executive commitment to training and development of supervisors and managers on a continuous basis is critical. To sustain such a training program, an infrastructure needs to be put in place that provides standards and consistency in developing State managers and supervisors.

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Recommendation: Ten Point Plan

1. An over-arching statewide infrastructure needs to be put in place that supports training as a continuous part of career development and expected workforce behavior.
2. Support and use of this infrastructure would be integrated into budgeting and strategic planning and have the highest level executive commitment.
3. Leadership, management and performance should have guiding principles that the workforce would follow.
4. Principles should be put in place that clearly places the responsibility for career success on an individual.
5. All employees would be expected to be trained to a certain minimum standard of knowledge of how the state does business.
6. Competency standards should be developed for managers and supervisors as well as all classifications with clear measures of successful attainment.
7. Each employee should receive a guide to performance for his or her job with clear expectations, the knowledge needed for each level, the training/coursework required for each level, regular assessment by a mentor/coach.
8. Employee development would be tracked and measured and gaps in performance addressed with appropriate learning.
9. Continuous learning/training should be a requirement.
10. Budget and time would support the training and competency development plans.