

RECOGNISING WHOLE UNITS IN SUCCESSION

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WHAT ARE YOUR
EXPERIENCES OF
SUCCESSION?

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SUCCESSION?

- Succession can be voluntary or involuntary (Connelly et al, 2016; Farah et al, 2020)
- Influences organizational culture and context (Hart, 1988; Kuntz et al, 2019; Ndofor et al, 2009; Aravena, 2020)
- Often associated with trauma and disruption to professional and personal lives (Gambatista et al, 2005; Gordon et al, 2015; Bridges, 2018; Li, 2018; Farah et al, 2020)
- Perspectives of employees are rarely included in research

PREDECESSORS IN SUCCESSION

- Memories of a predecessor interact with relationships with a new successor (Ospina et al, 2020)
- Successors must often adapt to these memories (e.g. Hart, 1988) and are compared and analyzed (Meyer et al, 2009)
- What a predecessor lacks, a successor can satisfy (Poulin et al, 2007; Ballinger et al, 2009; Meyer et al, 2009)
- What positives a predecessor had, a successor must match
- The role of employees in channeling these 'demands' has not yet been explored

RELATIONSHIPS IN SUCCESSION

- There is an immediate need to build relationships and trust (Karaelvi, 2007; Carsten and Bligh, 2008; Schepker et al, 2017)
- Commonly achieved through story-telling, one-to-one discussions, and sharing visions (Sackney and Walker, 2006)

‘I gathered everyone in for a meeting, because I felt that they were more... *I don't know*, but different to the ones I worked with last time... *I got the feeling that I had to do something.*’
(Gjerde and Ladegard, 2018: p49, emphasis added)

PROFESSIONAL STAFF AND SUCCESSION

- Szekeres (2006): 'I am general staff, therefore I am not'.
- Negative discourse around professional staff is slowly changing (Whitchurch, 2007; Wild and Wooldridge, 2009)
- Diverse responsibilities, high reported collegiality and a generally high 'staying rate' (Simpson and Fitzgerald, 2014; Beer et al, 2015; Regan and Graham, 2018; Bossu et al, 2019; Holmes, 2020a)
- Do these role characteristics interact with succession?

WHAT DOES EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP FOR STAFF WELLBEING LOOK LIKE DURING SUCCESSION?

- Researchers must consult a broader sample to understand previously unrecognised experiences of succession
- Succession should not be assumed as being *received* but *co-constructed* by many
- Reflective discussions can be helpful in pausing the 'turmoil' of succession for all involved

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