



# How Big Are Your Shoes?

By Suzanne Healy

*“After 25 years of service to our university community, today we thank Martin for his dedication to the department, university and the community. He has worked with his staff to ensure a solid seamless transition. For a number of years the department has been benchmarking development opportunities to capture the skills needed for the next five to ten years. His team is well positioned to succeed as changes are on the horizon. Martin, on behalf of the university we wish you much health and happiness as you move onto your next adventure.”*

Hmmm .... What will they say when it is your turn? How prepared is your team to be able to lead when you are ready to start your next adventure? Do you have a plan in place? Are you ensuring that your team is positioned to handle the changes that are on the horizon? **How big are your shoes?**

Every organization knows that the key to their success is the people that make up the team. The leaders of these successful organizations know that one of their critical tools to ensure a top notch team is to have a solid succession plan in place, and understand the various elements that comprise this plan. In today's environment, the most critical element of succession plans is to maximize the value of industry standards such as the Educational Facilities Professional (EFP) and Certified Educational Facilities Professionals (CEFP) offered by APPA. The successful facilities leader will embrace the value of these industry setting credentials and ensure that they become the fabric of their department's succession plan for success.

Individuals who are provided the opportunity to participate in a certification

program such as APPA's EFP and CEFP position themselves to demonstrate their knowledge of the facilities industry standard.

Department leaders can see that earning these credentials allow individuals to demonstrate the foundational knowledge, talent, and skills that they have in the profession; demonstrate their commitment to growth and the value seen in the importance of preparation to exhibit their mastery in the profession; and reminds leaders that credentialed employees are more competitive and desirable. Invest-

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ment in certification by you, the leader, is the most important decision that can be made to implement a successful succession plan, and ensure your team is positioned to handle challenges after your new adventure begins.

But with all the 'important' and 'critical' needs that go into the creation of a good implementable succession plan, where to do you begin? Begin at the beginning. Assess your aging workforce and identify your current leaders. Develop a benchmarking tool that allows these upcoming leaders to develop as qualified employees, and assess their skills. Make the investment in professional develop-

ment, thus allowing the retention of good employees. Remembering that one of the easiest tools to capture it all, is setting the benchmark – EFP or CEFP: where are your staffers making the grade?

Assess – Develop – Implement. You are at the crossroads. It is your time to take ownership in the development of a succession plan, by setting an example for your colleagues. You must establish a professional development plan that ensures the success of your employees. It's the commitment that speaks volumes – certify your staff today!

*“Today's meeting is meant to allow me to share with you that changes are on the horizon. After 24 years at the university, I have decided that this will be my last year. As we begin this final chapter together here on campus, we will begin to make changes in training, departmental positioning among our colleagues, and we will begin to participate in the APPA EFP and CEFP program. I have conferred with some of the other directors and we have produced the following list of those who we feel should begin to pursue this newly formed industry credential. Let's begin ....”* 💰

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