



JOHN J. HELDRICH CENTER FOR
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Human Resource Management in New Jersey State Government

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The primary authors of this report are Angie McGuire, Harriet A. Kass, Catherine L. O'Neill, and Kathy Krepcio. William Waldman, Jeffrey Stoller, and Dr. Carl Van Horn also made significant contributions. Robb C. Sewell provided editorial support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	3
Human Resource Management in New Jersey State Government.....	4
Issues and Challenges in Human Resource Management: The Perspective of the New Jersey Department of Personnel	7
Issues and Challenges in Human Resource Management: The Perspective of Other State Departments .	10
A National View of State Human Resource Management Challenges	13
A Close-Up View of Six States	15
Conclusion	20
Appendix: Methodology	22
End Notes	23

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2005, the State of New Jersey Department of Personnel (NJDP) commissioned the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey to study the critical human resource management (HRM) issues confronting New Jersey state government.

The central goal of the study was to define the human resource management problems facing New Jersey state government, and identify the changes that should be undertaken by the state to improve its human resource management. The Heldrich Center was not asked to provide a detailed plan for implementing and reengineering the human resource function, but rather to examine the need for change and to outline the critical steps that would be needed to bring about a stronger, more effective human resource management system in New Jersey.

To accomplish this, the Center sought input from experienced public managers and human resource officials within the Department of Personnel and other state agencies, as well as reviewed the scholarly literature. In addition, the Center reviewed state human resource management activities across the nation, and conducted interviews with six states notable for their progressive strategies in this area.

In sum, the Heldrich Center concludes that New Jersey government's personnel system is in crisis. As such, the organization and functioning of human resource management in New Jersey state government is in need of immediate reengineering.

New Jersey lags behind other states in organizing government functions to skillfully manage its workforce as a key to successfully meeting its mission and goals. As such, the state has failed to recognize the need to operate strategically, and to

embrace strategic human resource management for New Jersey state government. The state has been trapped in a model of centralized authority tied to transactions, focused on administering the civil service system, historically under-resourced, and suffers from poor credibility.

New Jersey human resource officials lack ongoing high-level state support and the access to expertise necessary to implement a strategic central HRM function. New Jersey lags behind other states in supporting and sustaining strong workforce data collection, data analysis, information technology, and workforce planning. The long-standing underinvestment in these critical functions has resulted in too few tools and metrics for NJDP or other state human resource officials to answer basic questions related to the state's workforce. Without usable data and limited analytical capacity, state officials are unable to spot trends, detect problems, identify human resource issues that need improvement, or pinpoint areas with the greatest cost savings potential.

New Jersey lags behind other states in engaging in widespread HRM-related process improvements using technology solutions and agency partnerships. NJDP currently must rely on 10- to 20-year-old information systems and applications to support its personnel activities, and more often than not, critical activities rely on labor-intensive manual processes. Little new investment, in either process improvement efforts or the technologies to support them, has been allocated and/or successfully implemented. States with more robust human resource management functions have recognized that collaborative process improvement efforts among state agencies lead to net cost savings for state government over time.

Years of neglect, resulting from historical undervaluation of the human resource management function and underfunding of the agency charged with providing personnel services,

have left the state with a severely weakened human resource capacity that is in serious need of improvement. While corporate America and other state governments have recognized the vital role that human resource management contributes to their success, New Jersey state government has failed to adequately support the management of its biggest asset—its workforce.

This report highlights three urgent problems:

First, because the management of its workforce is a critical function for accomplishing the state's mandates and mission, the human resource management function must be elevated to a position of primacy in state government. A concerted effort must be made to strategically align HRM with the state's operational needs.

Second, New Jersey must reengineer the State Department of Personnel into an effective HRM department with a broader mission than overseeing transactions and compliance with statutes and regulations. This must include high-level agreement on the DOP's mission, and its roles and responsibilities vis-a-vis the human resource activities in the operation of state agencies. Key

activities for the department must include support for strong workforce planning, including recruiting and retaining highly qualified workers, establishing performance measurements for staffing and service activities, and developing effective professional development strategies throughout state government. Significant investment must be made to change the current HRM culture from compliance and transactional to strategic and collaborative.

Finally, New Jersey must support its human resource function with adequate staff resources. Investments must be made to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of high-volume, labor-intensive human resource activities using targeted technology solutions.

Without corrective action, New Jersey state government will be unable to fully realize the potential of its workforce, to build necessary capacity for the future, and to realize positive results for its enormous investment of public dollars in programs and operations vital to New Jersey's citizens.

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management is a critical function in business and government, and high-quality human resource management is necessary for organizations to be effective and successful. Human resource management can also be a powerful asset for achieving an organization's **strategic objectives**. In the private sector, it is widely recognized that the effective management of human resources can provide a competitive advantage to businesses competing for talent in a global marketplace. In the public sector, a growing body of evidence demonstrates the value of effective human resource management to government agency results.¹

The basic human resource management functions in an organization include a variety of activities. Key among them are identifying staff needs and getting the best employees to fill those needs; paying employees and providing benefits; training, developing, sustaining, and rewarding high-performing employees; ensuring compliance with laws, rules, and regulations; and ensuring a safe work environment.²

In the past, one of HRM's primary functions was to ensure compliance with laws and rules. While this is still seen as essential, recent developments in the human resource field note that **HRM must not only ensure legal compliance, but also provide efficient human resource processes, offer effective HRM programs, and align itself with the strategic goals of the organization.**³

In 2005, the State of New Jersey Department of Personnel (NJDP) commissioned the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey to study the critical human resource management issues confronting New Jersey state government as a whole and the challenges faced specifically by the NJDP, the agency responsible for administering the state's Merit System and managing the state's human resource function.

New Jersey state government — with a workforce of more than 82,000 full- and part-time employees — is the largest employer in New Jersey. Workers for the State of New Jersey perform roles central to the essential business functions of the state, such as motor vehicle services, child protection, public safety, and patient care in the state institutions. Employees also perform administrative roles (financial, policy, personnel, technical) that support the day-to-day operations of the essential business of state government.

The central goal of this study was to define the **human resource management challenges facing New Jersey state government, and identify what high-level changes, if any, could be undertaken by the state to improve its human resource management**. To accomplish this, the Heldrich Center sought input from experienced public managers and human resource officials within the Department of Personnel and in other state agencies, as well as reviewed the scholarly literature. And, since many other state governments around the nation are facing challenges similar to New Jersey, the Center reviewed state HRM activities across the United States and conducted interviews with six states notable for achieving some successful strategies in the human resource management area. The research methodology is described in the appendix.

This report is divided into seven sections. Following this introduction, the second section describes the human resource management environment operating in New Jersey today. The third and fourth sections describe the perspectives of NJDP and other state agency managers on the critical human resource and workforce issues and the challenges they face. The fifth section describes the most significant HRM issues confronting state governments today, and how some states are tackling these issues. The sixth section offers a close-up view of six states, and describes in more depth how they reinvented their HRM functions and addressed critical workforce

challenges. The final section provides an overview of the significant HRM issues and workforce challenges facing the State of New Jersey as identified in this research, and suggests possible directions New Jersey can take to address its key workforce issues.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN NEW JERSEY STATE GOVERNMENT

In the State of New Jersey, the Department of Personnel is responsible for setting human resource policy and managing the recruitment, selection, and compensation of the workforce for state, county, and municipal governments. Originally established as the Civil Service Commission, the Department is constitutionally required to administer the Merit System, and has a statutory role as the public agency responsible for job classification, leave management, salary administration, and most public sector workforce-related matters.

The Department's jurisdiction is enormous, covering 82,186 employees of state government, approximately 4,000 career service state college employees, and more than 100,000 local government employees. The specific functions of the NJDOP include:

- Establishing, interpreting, and implementing workforce policies affecting Merit System employees from state and local public agencies;
- Managing the selection process for the Merit System in state and local government jurisdictions, including administering examinations for employment and promotions;
- Assisting the Governor's Office with change-of-administration restructuring, including the appointment process;

- Classifying jobs, including the creation and elimination of job titles, title consolidations, and applicable salary reevaluations;
- Administering state compensation for career, senior executive, and unclassified employees;
- Providing training and development services for public employees through the Human Resources Development Institute;
- Managing the impact of reductions in force;
- Supervising equal opportunity and affirmative action;
- Maintaining a central human resource information system;
- Coordinating the Employee Advisory Service; and
- Resolving appeals related to the examination and appointment process before the Merit System Board.⁴

In New Jersey, the governance responsibility for human resource management centrally rests with the New Jersey Department of Personnel. As illustrated in Table 1, the NJDOP currently has a 2006 budget of \$25,463,000 and a total full-time workforce of 377 employees. Over the past five years, the Department has faced decreasing state support for its centralized activities (in terms of both funding levels and staff positions), while continuing to be held accountable for an increasing number of state, county college, and local workers. Table 1 details how the NJDOP experienced a 14.4% decrease in its budget, and a 12.9% decrease in staff, through years when the agency was held responsible for an 11.4% increase in state employees and a 6.3% increase in employees in the Merit System.

Table 1. New Jersey Department of Personnel Profile, 2001-2006

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Percent Change 2001-2006
NJDOP Budget (original and supplemental)	\$28,138,000	\$29,735,000	\$26,587,000	\$25,936,000	\$25,448,000	\$24,540,000	-12.8
NJDOP Budget (adjusted appropriation)	\$29,735,000	\$29,541,000	\$29,541,000	\$26,108,000	\$26,307,000	\$25,463,000	-14.4
Total State Government Workforce (full time)	73,801	76,670	74,859	77,756	80,381	82,186	+11.4
Total NJDOP Merit System Jurisdiction Served (# employees)	186,472	190,661	190,640	192,238	198,423	198,188	+ 6.3
Total NJDOP Workforce (# full-time employees)	433	442	384	404	447	377	-12.9

Source: New Jersey Department of Personnel, 2006.

Although there are many HRM functions conducted by the NJDOP, most but not all New Jersey state agencies also maintain an agency-specific human resource operation full-time staff. They perform a variety of human resource functions, including:

- **Employment and Recruiting:** Such as advertising for positions and interviewing job applicants;
- **Training and Development:** Such as employee orientation and agency-specific employee training;
- **Compensation:** Wage and salary administration and development of job descriptions;
- **Benefits Administration:** Administration of vacation/leave policies, and counseling on benefit plans;
- **Employee Services:** Such as referral to employee assistance services, and technical assistance to employees on available employee services;
- **Employee and Community Relations:** Such as Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action compliance functions, and assistance on disciplinary procedures;
- **Personnel Records:** Such as recording, maintenance, and reporting of basic personnel data;

- **Health and Safety Programs:** Such as staff of health and safety committees and workers' compensation administration; and
 - **Workforce Planning:** Such as data collection, data analysis, and planning for future workforce needs.
- Not all of the HRM staff in the state agencies perform **all** of these activities, nor do all employees of the NJDOP. According to NJDOP, there are 1,122.7 full-time professional and administrative staff in other state agencies who perform some or all of the above HRM activities (see Table 2).

Table 2. State of New Jersey: Total Employees Performing HRM Functions in State Executive Agencies with Full-Time Human Resource Staff

State Department	Total Employees	Human Resource Staff	Human Resource Staff to Total Staff
Agriculture	289	4	1:72
Banking and Insurance	537	5.5	1:97
Board of Public Utilities	380	4	1:95
Casino Control Commission	364	6	1:61
Community Affairs	1,288	11	1:117
Corrections	9,409	164.8	1:57
Education	1,049	11	1:95
Environmental Protection	3,665	64.55	1:57
Governor's Office	108	1	1:108
Health and Senior Services	2,186	30.85	1:71
Human Services	22,422	463	1:48
Information Technology	946	13	1:73
Juvenile Justice Commission	1,787	17	1:105
Labor and Workforce Development	3,803	37	1:103
Law and Public Safety	8,429	99	1:85
Military and Veterans Affairs	1,640	25	1:66
Motor Vehicle Commission	3,050	32	1:95
NJN - Public Broadcasting	158	2	1:79
Personnel	389	5	1:78
Public Defender	1,121	8	1:140
State	209	3	1:69
State Parole Board	776	5	1:155
Transportation	3,925	56	1:70
Treasury	3,062	55	1:56
TOTAL	70,992	1,122.7	1:63

Source: New Jersey Department of Personnel, 2006.

Notes: Employee count taken from the New Jersey Treasury Department/Office of Management and Budget funded full-time equivalents on the New Jersey payroll (pay period 8). Human resource staff counts from New Jersey Departments' replies to a pre-budget hearing Legislative request.

The Bureau of National Affairs reports that HRM staffing ratios (that is, the proportion of human resource staff to employees served) has averaged around 1.0 human resource personnel for every 100 employees.⁵ This benchmark is generally used as a guideline and wide variations are routinely seen in human resource department staff ratios across the public and private sectors.⁶

- Human resource staff make up 1.58% of the state’s workforce, or there are 1.58 human resource staff members for every 100 state employees on the payroll.
- The ratio of NJDOP personnel (389) to total New Jersey Merit System employees (198,188) is 1:509 or there are .20 NJDOP staff for every 100 Merit System employees.

Table 2 also shows that 18 out of 24 state agencies with full-time human resource personnel staff have human resource/staff ratios of less than 1:100. There are several factors that can account for variation in human resource ratios. In the public and private sectors, these factors can include:

*The centralization or decentralization of the HR [human resource] function; the number of locations; the geographic distribution of employees served; the number of services outsourced; the amount of automation used in the HR process; the relative sophistication of employees; and the complexity of the strategic mission and objectives for the HR function...the level of regulatory oversight, the type, extent, and frequency of required training, and the type and extent of required recordkeeping and reporting.*⁷

These data show that human resource responsibilities in many New Jersey state agencies, and in New Jersey state government in general, exceed the national average and should be scaled back to move toward the national average.

However, as will be seen in this report, the ability of New Jersey state government to realize more efficient human resource staffing — to do more with less — depends on the resolution of a number of factors that prevent the state’s HRM function from being more efficient and less staff intensive.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL

During interviews with NJDOP officials, and through a review of documents provided by the agency, a variety of issues and challenges related to human resource governance, workforce planning, processes, and programs were identified. These issues are discussed below.

Overall, fundamental and systemic problems plague the agency. A vast and growing set of responsibilities, combined with budget pressures and limitations, frustrates staff and severely undermines NJDOP’s mission to “recruit, develop, and retain a high-quality workforce that supports government objectives.”⁸

Mission and Governance

Issue: Trapped in a central model built on conducting transactional activities and monitoring compliance, the NJDOP is unable to engage in HRM activities that address broader state workforce and workplace needs.

As part of this research, the NJDOP was asked to describe its mission and to characterize its ability to be a contributor to supporting state government operations. First and foremost, NJDOP stated that it has a statutory role as the agency responsible for

job classification, leave management, salary administration, and most workforce-related matters, and has a constitutional role in the administration of the Merit System, and centrally administering the Civil Service process.⁹ And yet, while the NJDOP noted that legal compliance is its primary responsibility and core function, it wished for the tools and support to provide a higher and broader level of personnel services and programs for New Jersey.

NJDOP officials acknowledge that a skilled, motivated workforce is important to accomplishing the goals of state government. However, through its own admission, the Department believes it only has the manpower to focus on its mission critical function — oversight of compliance with federal and state laws, rules, and regulations, and administering civil service — rather than on broader HRM activities.

Workforce Planning

Issue: NJDOP recognizes that workforce planning is important, yet it lacks the data collection, data analysis, and planning tools necessary to carry it out.

NJDOP officials acknowledge that workforce planning has become increasingly important, especially given the large number of impending retirements and the special challenges of managing an older workforce. Yet, officials confide that:

Current workforce planning consists of little more than hurried succession planning in the event of an early retirement incentive, poorly designed recruitment and retention bonuses, and periodic initiatives to recruit employees with unique skill sets...little is done in the domain of data analysis to predict workforce trends, identify what value NJDOP is getting for its current operations, or how workforce needs should be addressed for the future.¹⁰

When asked what they need to do their job, NJDOP managers responded that they would like better tools and methodologies for forecasting workforce needs, planning for succession, integrating workforce and equal employment opportunity planning, assessing employee skills and gaps, evaluating training needs, and identifying and reporting problems in specific workforce areas.

NJDOP managers also noted that the state HRM function would benefit from stronger data gathering and dedicated analysis, especially to help identify patterns and to flag problems. For example, they would like to be able to answer questions such as: What is the turnover in various titles and occupational areas? What occupations are growing in the state and what are the necessary skills to hold those jobs? Are there skilled workers in state government to perform these jobs, or must they be recruited externally? Where are the recruitment trouble spots? In what areas are examination and appointment process appeals being upheld or denied by the Merit System Board, and why? Are there process changes that would remedy identified appeal problems? From the perspective of the NJDOP, workforce needs must be correctly identified in order for its limited resources to be allocated to the most pressing needs.

Issue: NJDOP is frequently called upon to help implement executive and/or legislative initiatives or mandates, but is rarely consulted as they are being conceived and discussed.

The NJDOP often serves as the agency that is ultimately responsible for executing legislative, judicial, and executive branch mandates that have small and large workforce implications. For example, judicial requirements to reform the child welfare system, new plans to address homeland security, and increased mandates in the motor vehicle arena all have state workforce consequences that affect HRM management in general, and NJDOP specifically. In addition, state

government efforts to reengineer functions (requiring the use of information technology staff), hire new workers (such as new child welfare workers), or downsize the workforce (any proposed reduction in force) have a significant effect on the day-to-day operations of NJDOP and operational agency human resource staff.

More often than not, however, the human resource implications of new projects, laws, and/or initiatives are seldom discussed and fully assessed by the executive, judicial, or legislative body mandating change, nor is NJDOP usually consulted or included in the initial planning. As a result, NJDOP finds itself having to reallocate its existing activities and priorities in order to respond to the immediacy of these projects.

Human Resource Processes

Issue: NJDOP finds it spends more time policing inadequately performed state agency human resource activities, rather than leading new process designs and improvements.

The responsibility for compliance with laws, regulations, policies, and procedures belongs to NJDOP. From the perspective of NJDOP, the human resource offices operating in the state agencies too often fail to properly establish, administer, and/or adhere to policies that affect their workforces. As a result, NJDOP finds itself in the position of policing agency activities and, it believes, New Jersey suffers costly litigation to remedy problems that could have been avoided. For NJDOP, state agency monitoring takes time away from being able to focus on developing and instituting process improvements, such as understanding what value they offer their customers. NJDOP believes that if it had the time to engage in less policing and more planning, then it would be in a better position to identify areas of concern or opportunity regarding services.

Issue: An historic lack of investment in technology and process design has resulted in NJDOP staff performing tasks — such as testing, recruitment, and promotions — in manual and obsolete ways. The costs and time drained from NJDOP by maintaining antiquated technologies and processes has prohibited the transformation of the Department into a strategic HRM asset for the state.

The outdated, non-integrated computer systems in the HRM area have created numerous problems for the Department — from difficulties with accessing employee records and basic workforce information to responding to ongoing deficiencies that affect nearly every critical human resource area. According to NJDOP:

While they have made some investment in improving the information technology infrastructure, most of the support for HRM functions is still done using mainframe-based applications that were developed and implemented in the early to mid-eighties. Progress made in the area of information technology in the last 20 years, coupled with changes in the philosophy and direction of human resource management, has made these applications archaic, cumbersome, and difficult to maintain. The current state of our HR systems is such that, in many instances, they actually impede progress in the areas of reform and innovation. Because these applications were built over a span of years and independently of one another, there is little or no integration between them. This requires a great deal of repetitive and redundant data entry with almost no verification of the information. Information that is stored in one system cannot readily be moved to another or linked electronically and cross-checked for accuracy.¹¹

Human Resource Programs and Systems

Issue: NJDOP acknowledges that the state’s classification and compensation systems are onerous to manage and administer, and changes to these systems are long overdue.

With more than 4,000 job titles — each with its own distinct duties, requirements, testable skills, etc. — the New Jersey classification system has created an untenable situation for NJDOP. Similarly, the Department acknowledges that systemic changes to the compensation system are necessary to recruit and retain a qualified workforce. As stated by NJDOP officials, the current salary regulations are complicated, difficult to understand, and time consuming to administer. They also concede that they operate independently of market conditions. Again, according to NJDOP, the cost and time taken by the Department to oversee these complicated and onerous systems, with limited resources, has prevented them from performing a much broader strategic HRM function.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: THE PERSPECTIVE OF OTHER STATE DEPARTMENTS

The majority of New Jersey state agencies are organized with staff dedicated to administering the HRM functions of those particular agencies. These human resource staff, external to NJDOP, typically report to their Departments’ commissioners or top administrators and handle the daily transactions required in their unique business units. Interviews with state agency managers responsible for personnel functions revealed overwhelming frustration with the human resource management function in New Jersey state government.

Mission and Governance

Issue: The HRM function in the state needs to be strategic, and human resource management must be aligned strategically in support of state government success and results.

The single largest area of need, as expressed by state agency officials, was the necessity for the personnel function in New Jersey state government to be more strategic and focus on “the big picture,”¹² an element they felt was currently missing in the state, and most frequently assumed to be within the purview of the Department of Personnel. While the majority of those interviewed expressed appreciation for the difficulties faced by NJDOP in meeting its legal compliance obligations in an environment of continued budget and resource cuts, they felt that the HRM activities must be reengineered to support achieving the mission and goals of state government departments. They felt strongly that setting strategy — and, most importantly, having the Governor’s office establish an environment for improvement — is critical and must be led by the central personnel agency. They also, however, underscored the need for the NJDOP to retain an overseer role, since “at the highest level, NJDOP needs to ensure equity and standards across the board.”¹³

Issue: It is widely recognized that there is little professionally trained human resource management expertise in state government, yet managers were confident that they have the talent in their agencies to help NJDOP solve many critical issues.

Those interviewed felt that the HRM expertise offered by NJDOP and some operational agency HRM staff is predominantly in “rule interpretation and processing” while “interviewing skills, resume review and assessment skills, HRM problem solving skills, and exit interview skills are weak if non-existent.”¹⁴ As noted by one manager:

*Our human resource staff needs some training to enable them to take a broader perspective on workforce issues; many, if not all, of them rose through the ranks of state government and learned human resources along the way...Many developed some bad habits.*¹⁵

According to the managers interviewed, human resource staff over the years have not been groomed to learn broader HRM skills, and, for the most part have been rewarded for their rule interpretation knowledge and processing skills. Interviewees felt strongly that the state, including NJDOP, needs to move to recruit individuals with professionally trained human resource backgrounds and education into state government.

Issue: Historic miscommunication, poor collaboration, and “turf issues” between the Treasury Department, the Department of Personnel, the Governor’s Office of Employee Relations, and the Office of Information Technology have made support for, and implementation of, HRM reform activities difficult.

State managers believe a commitment to collaboration is important if the state HRM function is to realize greater efficiency and effectiveness. They believe the relationship between internal agency human resource staff managers and state agency senior management is becoming more collaborative. Yet, while they feel that agency human resource offices are becoming more involved in day-to-day agency management activities, they believe the NJDOP human resource office appears to be less involved in a consultative role at the highest levels of state government. State managers reported that historic internal communication problems and turf issues between Treasury, Personnel, the Governor’s Office, and the Office of Information Technology have cost the state money, and made the implementation of effective workforce and workplace process improvements and general reform impossible. As

noted by one interviewee, “These four entities are the four legs of the table of state government — they need to communicate and work consistently well together if the administration of state government is to work well.”¹⁶

Workforce Planning

Issue: Being able to respond to the aging workforce is a critical challenge for state managers today, and they believe this will be a crisis in the years ahead if left unaddressed.

Those interviewed noted that worker retention, succession planning, and workplace flexibility, including more part-time work, needed to be seriously reviewed to address the aging workforce problem. They suggested the need to explore offering phased retirement as well as instituting workable solutions that allow more flexible work options for older workers. Those interviewed believed little to no activity was taking place across state government to address the aging workforce problem.

Those interviewed suggested that the state do some serious strategic planning in this area. There is an immediate need to begin workforce planning and analysis for the state workforce — looking at where and in what positions older workers are employed, who plans to retire, and when. According to the managers, workforce needs and planning succession should first be developed by the operational agencies, and then a statewide skills assessment and inventory should be put together by NJDOP. With input from all the state agencies, NJDOP should offer concrete solutions to keep older workers working in some capacity, retain the potential lost knowledge of upcoming retirees (especially those in essential positions such as information technology, or with critical skills such as finance and accounting), and appropriately plan for the succession of older workers when they retire.

Issue: Little guidance or proactive assistance is available from NJDOP on how to improve the diversity of the state's workforce.

Managers interviewed felt that they were on their own in figuring out how to attract and recruit qualified minority candidates or persons with disabilities. At present, NJDOP's role is seen as mainly reactive — that is, collecting general statistical data on the state workforce's characteristics and demographics and pointing out areas for improvement to the state agencies. It was suggested that it would be most helpful if NJDOP offered seminars to the agencies on how to best identify and recruit qualified minority candidates, and how to make jobs and workplaces more accessible to persons with disabilities.

Human Resource Processes

Issue: The process to review personnel paperwork is time consuming and problematic for all state agencies, and is in desperate need of streamlining.

According to state officials, the paperwork process for reviewing promotions, hirings, and pay raises is time consuming and onerous. As noted by one manager, "Not that we in the Department always do it right, but 95% of everything that is put forth gets final approval."¹⁷ Yet, according to those interviewed, significant time is taken at the operational agencies as well as at NJDOP to get approvals and signatures. It was noted that, including internal department review as well as time for Governor's office and NJDOP review and approval, it can take as long as **nine months** to get final approval for a hiring or promotion. In addition, those interviewed believed that NJDOP could do more to automate some of the more cumbersome and antiquated processes, and expressed concern about the lack of progress in this area.

Human Resource Programs and Systems

Issue: There is a lack of state support for state managers, especially in the areas of compensation, supervisory training, and professional development.

Those interviewed noted that there is a tremendous need for management and leadership training and more appropriate manager compensation. According to the state managers interviewed, the establishment of better professional development and compensation plans for managers is critical to building a first-class state workforce.

State managers noted that, over the years, subject-matter experts and highly skilled technicians have been promoted to supervisory levels, since becoming a supervisor was seen as the only avenue for rewarding high-performing employees and getting them appropriate compensation. Yet, many of these "super technicians" lack the management skills that would help them to function effectively as supervisors. A few interviewees suggested looking to the private sector for leadership and supervisory training models.

Officials also stated that the leadership development path is further complicated by an imbalance in compensation schedules between management and non-management personnel. All those interviewed believed that the state needed to institute some fairness and consistency in compensation matters. For example, those interviewed all felt that the state has abdicated its role by letting state employee unions drive the compensation schedules, rewarding workers in union positions and penalizing managers. Union workers have received negotiated annual pay raises, while managers have experienced little or no pay raises. In the worst cases, capable

managers have requested demotions back to union titles so that they could receive cost-of-living pay increases. At best, some managers, making far less money than the employees they supervise have continued to do their jobs despite this lack of recognition for their responsibilities.

Issue: The current classification and upgrade process for job titles is overly cumbersome and time consuming and, as presently constructed, ill serves the state, its employees, and its citizens.

Every person interviewed shared stories of job classifications and promotions that took months, instead of weeks and days, to review. It is fundamentally in the classification area that the lack of trust between the state agencies and NJDOP seemed greatest. Departments felt that classification and testing processes for many jobs and titles were antiquated, hampered by a lack of understanding on the part of NJDOP about the business needs of the agencies as well as the slow, manual processes that continue to exist in the testing and classification areas.

Interviewees were critical of both the testing that currently takes place and the process by which education and experience can be substituted for testing. Managers believed that NJDOP continued to rely too heavily on testing when education and experience reviews would be more appropriate, and not enough on testing for positions where necessary job skills (such as typing and driving) were better suited to that type of skill review.

Ideas for improvements deemed necessary by the state officials interviewed included the development of:

- **A role for NJDOP that is more consultative and strategic** rather than the perceived regulatory watchdog role;

- A comprehensive **statewide workforce planning strategy, framework, and guidelines** for implementation;
- Comprehensive **recruitment and retention strategies** with specific emphasis on the need for diversity and new skills sets;
- **Succession planning methods and knowledge retention strategies** to deal with the impending crisis of the aging state workforce;
- The development of **stronger professional development training for managers**; and
- The institution of **smarter, fairer, and more consistent compensation, classification, and job specification policies and procedures.**

A NATIONAL VIEW OF STATE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

Public human resource management functions have undergone dramatic changes over the past decade. Most states and the federal government have downsized their human resource workforces, delegated human resource authority to line managers, relinquished centralized operational control, and introduced technology to enable more effective personnel processes and workforce management.¹⁸

Changes at the state government level have lately been driven by the need to improve human resource services as part of creating a more productive workforce. A number of states have undertaken structural reorganizations of their HRM functions and designed innovative delivery systems to support those functions. Most state human resource agencies are looking to redefine the role of their HRM organizations to be consultative rather than rules oriented.

Research in the field of public sector human resources points to three significant challenges as dominating state HRM agendas:

Challenge #1: Confronting an Aging Public Sector Workforce

An aging workforce is a problem affecting most states. In more than half of the states, one in five employees will retire over the next five years. States likely to be hit the hardest will be Washington (64% eligible to retire), Maine (59%), Tennessee (58%), Michigan (56%), and Pennsylvania (54%).¹⁹ According to Government Performance Project research in 2005, state governments are soon to face a significant “brain drain,” citing the large percentage of managers at all levels eligible for retirement over the next decade. In some states, agencies run the risk of losing leadership and experience in key areas such as healthcare, engineering, and education, as well as in other specialized government functions.²⁰ Addressing the aging workforce issue has required states to develop a knowledge transfer strategy and plan for potential losses in key workforce areas.

Challenge #2: Doing More with Less

Resource constraints affect all levels of government, but public and private human resource departments have felt them keenly over the past decade. Process improvements are the most cited efficiency mechanism used to cope with resource constraints and budget cutbacks. Within the realm of process improvement, a growing number of states have begun implementing information technology programs to improve human resource processes.

While some states are implementing integrated HRM-related information technology systems, many more states are implementing specific applications to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of high-volume human resource

activities, such as recruiting and hiring. Online recruitment and hiring systems have delivered significant cost and time reductions for states, even for those that pursued interim technology systems. Several states have operational systems, while others are in the process of developing them. Examples of how states have used information technology to streamline their processes include:²¹

- Utah, which recently implemented a Web-based recruitment system with a one-stop job application process;
- Minnesota, which has had an online hiring system since 2002;
- Wisconsin, which recently implemented an online application and testing system;
- Nebraska, Alaska, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, which currently conduct Web-based recruitment; and
- Michigan, which is developing an integrated online recruitment and screening application tool.

Challenge #3: Recruiting, Training, and Retaining the Right Workforce

Recruiting, training, and retaining the best workers is critical to public sector managers, and is currently viewed as activities under the umbrella of workforce planning. Human resource departments in a number of states now use strategic workforce planning as the process to support individual operational agencies’ specific future workforce needs. The practice of workforce planning has prompted state human resource departments to develop integrated processes and planning tools for agencies to address such problems as the retirement of older workers, labor and talent shortages, and the recruitment, training, and retention of minority and/or younger workers.²²

Retention and development issues have long been associated with succession planning. In many states, the need for succession planning has extended beyond the executive ranks, and agency human resource managers are now undertaking succession planning for mid- and entry-level management positions as well. Investments in training and development of the workforce are also believed to be effective mechanisms for retaining employees and ensuring succession continuity. However, in both public and private organizations with resource constraints, training budgets are often the first to be cut when money is tight.

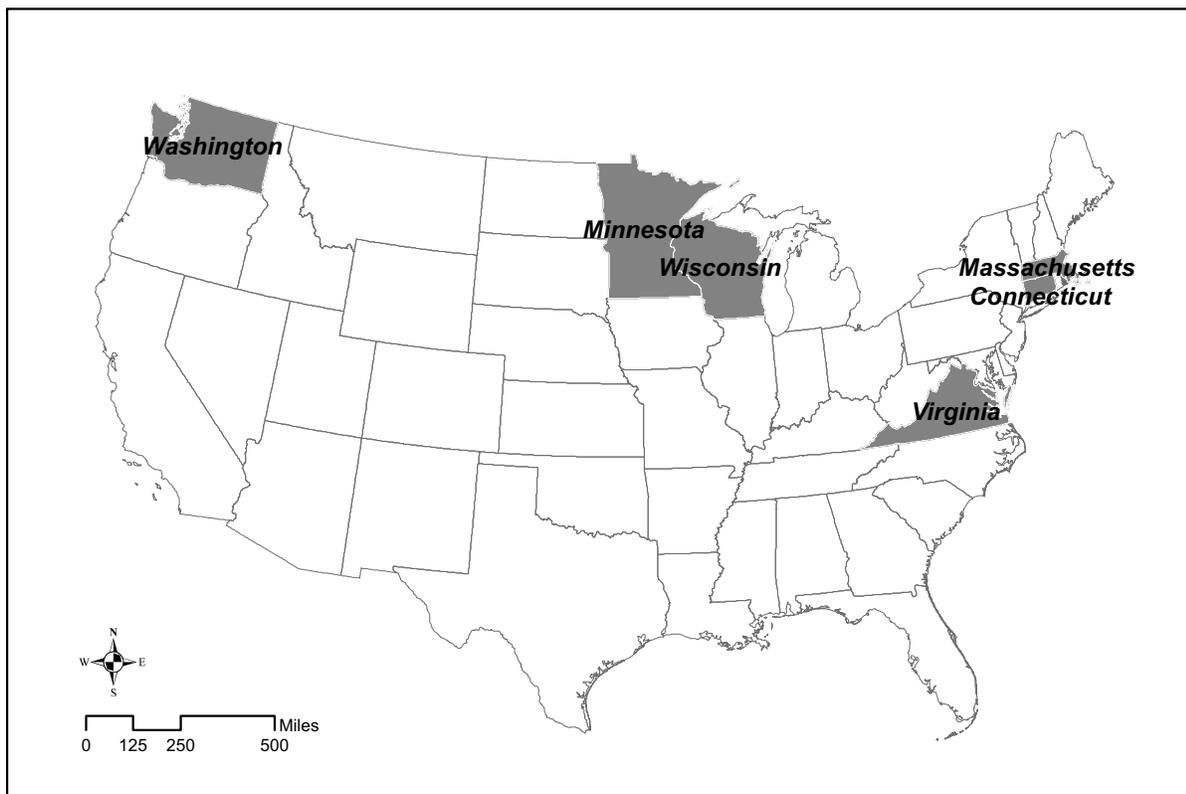
States have learned that a focused training and development strategy must be built on having a solid understanding of the existing workforce and the future needs of the workplace. Washington State and Virginia report improvement in the identification of required skills as a result of their workforce planning efforts, thus leading to more deliberate resource planning for training and career development. For these states, workforce

planning has helped to direct resources to the most needed skills sets.

A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF SIX STATES

A number of states, recognizing that human resource management is a critical function to state government operations, have made great strides in human resource strategy and practice. This section describes the efforts of six states — **Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin** (see Map 1) — identified by the NJDOP, as well as by academic and public sector literature, as demonstrating promising practices in HRM. The findings reflect research that included telephone interviews with senior state human resource executives in the office of personnel, as well as reviews of state Web sites, state human resource documents and plans, and scholarly studies.

Map 1. Interview States



Overall, this review identified a number of common themes and promising practices that have been initiated to make the state human resource organizations more valuable to the governor, executive branch operational agencies, the state workforce, and ultimately citizens. The key findings identified in this report reflect what is now considered state-of-the-art human resource management in state government.

Key Finding #1: In every case, states have redefined *centralized personnel* to be a strategic human resource function, responsible for defining processes, setting policy, and working collaboratively with state agencies to implement those processes on a decentralized basis. For these states, public employees have been recognized as state government's most important asset, and HRM as a critical organization function.

The central HRM organizations in these states have transitioned into adopting more strategically focused and consultative roles, offering policy and service support to operational agencies. As a result, most day-to-day and transactional personnel services and agency-specific decisions have been deferred to the operational agencies, eliminating duplication and the need for constant and rigid review. In these states, the operational agencies provide the managerial decision making, and the centralized HRM department supports and audits the results. Central human resource departments provide the tools, not the rules.

State officials noted that this fundamental role change has not only saved money by eliminating duplication but also provides more meaningful jobs for both headquarters and operational agency human resource organizations. The transfer of functional human resource responsibilities to the operational agencies now provides agency managers with both flexibility and accountability. Most states have a process for auditing, rather than managing the

work of the agencies. This change allows the state workforce to be managed within the operational agencies, and permits central human resources to set policy, oversee results, and only conduct transactional human resource work when agencies request support. Reporting results, rather than seeking approvals, provides agencies in these states with the ability to customize standard policies to the needs of their departments. Doing this requires a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities. The partnerships involved in developing such new roles enhances the working relationships between the central and operational agencies and provides more fulfilling jobs for all human resource staff.

Several of the states supplemented this vertically decentralized model with an alternative approach to managing human resources for smaller agencies that cannot support their own human resource functions. This model allows each department to share expenses and resources in developing, purchasing, or using human resource tools and services. In **Virginia**, smaller agencies contracted with larger agencies or the state-level human resource office for support. Some states have introduced the concept in pilot format, with just a few designated departments; others, such as **Massachusetts**, have done it on a more widespread basis with great success.

Key Finding #2: The management of human resources has been recognized and internalized as being an integral part of how the state is going to achieve its goals. The better state-managed human resource operations brought in human resource professionals to help get the job done.

The overarching theme expressed by the human resource leaders interviewed was that the management of human resources was recognized and internalized as being an integral part of how the state is going to achieve its goals. Once recognizing that, changes in mission and/or

structure followed and these changes required the full support, endorsement, and attention of the governor. According to all state officials, executive-level endorsement needed to be strong, visible, and well communicated to the legislature and the operational agencies.

Those interviewed felt strongly that support from the governor must be visible and evident. This was demonstrated by elevating the organization responsible for the HRM function to a cabinet-level position, and by sending a clear message that the state HRM director was a critical cabinet post responsible for supporting the governor's mission and goals for the state. In the six states, the governor was often credited with having brought in private sector, human resource professionals to enhance credibility, to effect organizational culture change, and to provide new energy, fresh ideas, and enthusiasm.

Key Finding #3: Key reforms need to be understood by all stakeholders, and reforms need to be implemented incrementally.

Almost all six states have undergone reforms of their civil service, job classification, and compensation systems. A clear message was that the basis for, and results of, these reforms needs to be fully understood by all stakeholders. Those interviewed felt that the reforms needed to be implemented incrementally so that technology and other solutions can be successfully introduced. For example, reducing and consolidating job classifications was done successfully in many of the six states, resulting in more flexible structures and the ability to adapt more quickly to changing needs. Compensation reform, merit pay, and the introduction of a well-thought-out performance management system were the next logical reforms to tackle. State officials interviewed believed that a quick win in one major reform area was important to gaining trust and credibility, and to maintaining focus.

Key Finding #4: Formal, comprehensive workforce planning processes have been broadly adopted and implemented in the six states. States used the creation of statewide workforce plans to lead them to solutions to their workforce problems.

Concerns about aging state workforces and hard-to-fill jobs accentuated the need for the states to adopt workforce planning as the process in which talent gaps could be identified by demographics, organizations, skills, and knowledge. Processes described by the interviewees included the use of data, tools, protocols, and templates typically provided by the central human resource management organization. Agency personnel, however, who know their departments best, created agency-specific workforce plans. These plans were then reviewed by the central HRM organization and rolled into an aggregate state plan from which policies could be put into place to support solving agency-identified problems.

Washington, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Virginia have well-established processes for these workforce plans and offered models that could be studied further and implemented by the State of New Jersey. Although **Massachusetts** is at an earlier stage in its implementation than the four states mentioned above, Massachusetts has also embarked on a program of strategic workforce planning, linking the state government's goals and objectives to the strategies and actions of personnel throughout the state.

In **Minnesota**, the central HRM organization starts the process by formatting the reports that put workforce data into the hands of each agency. Agencies are supported by the central HRM office, but are held accountable for their own plans. The central HRM organization also assists agencies by helping them think through key workforce issues, such as hiring, succession problems, diversity planning, professional development, and training.

In **Virginia**, the central HRM office provides templates and guidelines to each operational agency to help them develop a workforce plan. There are hundreds of business units within agencies, so one size does not fit all. Each agency has the flexibility to build its own plans. The state-provided template is a “strong spine, but the methodologies are not considered too bureaucratic.”²³ The key driver for planning in Virginia remains the large proportion of the workforce eligible for retirement. Succession planning, recruitment, and knowledge transfer are all critical elements of the workforce plan that they feel prepares the state for the future.

To specifically address the aging workforce problem, states have used the creation of statewide plans to help identify problem areas and to develop solutions. For example, **Wisconsin** reported the number of employees eligible to retire in each department as part of the strategic workforce planning process. The Wisconsin Office of State Employment Relations developed tools for departments to conduct exit interviews with retirees and to capture institutional knowledge before retirement commences.²⁴

Key Finding #5: Many states have engaged in process improvement and quality initiatives around key issues. Process improvements for these states are seen as one of the most important HRM functions.

States interviewed saw this process improvement phase as an important step in communicating change and encouraging collaboration while implementing a new governance structure for human resource management. In most of the six states, the investigation and examination of processes was cited as a joint activity undertaken by the central HRM organization and the operational agencies, as well as other stakeholders such as the labor unions representing the state workforce. A close examination of the steps involved in each process was used to highlight

where resources are being spent, as well as where processes could be streamlined and improved. Interviewees cited evidence that this collaborative approach of identifying both problems and solutions allowed both central and agency personnel to work together, to have a voice in the process, and to develop a stake in the program’s success.

For example, **Massachusetts** formed a human resource advisory group to help choose five processes to get quick wins: hiring, performance management, merit pay for managers, orientation, and human resource metrics. State officials said the key to their success was collaboration between agencies and state-level personnel regarding the processes that needed improvement and mutual responsibility and accountability for cost reductions. According to the state’s Chief Human Resources Officer:

*Several people-intensive processes have been transformed into easier, online functions that are managed with less staff and greater speed but less direct control by the agencies. These are permanent, sustainable changes. An example of our success is the reduction of time to fill hiring requisitions from 16 weeks to 5 weeks. Our customers have enthusiastically received this improvement.*²⁵

Key Finding #6: Information technology (IT) was used to make process improvements, and states introduced a variety of IT solutions to streamline personnel processes. Because of resource constraints and the need for quick wins, states approach the implementation of IT solutions incrementally.

Pressure to improve productivity has driven reforms across the states. While the commissioners and executives interviewed expressed the need for agency and statewide system planning, each state approached implementation of information technology improvements incrementally.

Washington, Virginia, and **Wisconsin** felt strongly that central HRM managers needed to demonstrate their ability to deliver process improvement quickly. In each state, quick wins were achieved through collaboration with other departments. Each state introduced a variety of technology solutions to streamline many personnel processes, making them cheaper, more efficient, and more customer-focused. The majority of states realized cost savings in making the job recruitment, application and testing, hiring, and on-boarding procedures either online or fully automated.

Washington introduced Web-based hiring as early as 1999, and all six states have at least a significant portion of their recruitment, testing, and hiring processes online today. Other technology applications have been implemented successfully; for example, employees can update their records and change their benefit choices online. Whether these systems were developed internally or purchased externally, the states interviewed agreed it was critical that the systems be integrated and able to interface with already existing legacy systems. **Virginia** and **Washington** are both in the planning phases for deploying statewide, integrated systems that provide a full suite of human resource application systems. These statewide systems also integrate with other critical statewide functions such as treasury and procurement.

Key Finding #7: States have made widespread use of collaborations and partnerships between the central and operational agencies to generate ideas, discuss policy changes, learn about key issues, and share information and promising practices.

All six states have made widespread use of collaborations and partnerships such as instituting human resource advisory committees. These groups are usually composed of central and agency HRM representatives who meet with the purpose of generating ideas, discussing policy

changes, identifying key issues, and sharing information and promising practices.

According to state officials, regular meetings have created a culture of collaboration, partnership, and mutual respect, as well as have greatly enhanced communications. The assignment of liaison relationships between the central HRM organization and the state agencies were also cited as helpful, as long as these liaisons or account managers listened to the agency's needs, and offered support, can-do attitudes, and guidance.

Key Finding #8: States introduced human resource performance metrics as a way to measure results, promote accountability, and communicate success.

To document and display the progress of their reform efforts, states introduced human resource metrics to measure performance. The metrics adopted — in the areas of process improvement, cost/time trend analyses, compensation and benefits, training and development, and customer service — have been used to objectively and publicly measure improvements and communicate progress. States reported that the central and agency HRM organizations have increased their credibility and visibility, and are now being taken more seriously as value-added functions, through the introduction of regular measurement and tracking of human resource and related business activities.

For example, in **Virginia**, educating the legislature was seen as important to gaining their support for HRM activities and reform efforts, as well as helping them understand critical workforce issues. To help accomplish this, the state created a multi-year plan with metrics and a management scorecard for sharing information with members of the legislature. As a result, Virginia officials feel they have forged a close and more positive relationship with key legislative members, and earned a more positive assessment of their value by other executive-level departments.

CONCLUSION

Research conducted by the Heldrich Center in this report shows that New Jersey faces the same workforce challenges and trends experienced in other states and businesses, such as confronting an aging and increasingly diverse workforce, matching employee skills and talents with the demands of work required in today's state government, recruiting and retaining skilled workers, and managing with diminishing resources to meet demands in an environment of increasing public pressure to cut costs and improve productivity.

In order to manage in this environment, both government and businesses have found that innovative human resource practices and strategic human resource management are necessary to keep pace with the changes in the workforce and workplace. In successful organizations, the human resource management function is a critical component of overall operations, and human resource managers are directed to work closely with operational managers to promote greater productivity and increased effectiveness in the workforce.

Strategic workforce management means strategically aligning the human resource functions with the mission and goals of the organization — leaving operational agency managers to focus on hiring, training, and retaining the right people. As seen in the private sector, the adoption of improved technologies, combined with new worker skills, provides a competitive advantage to organizations seeking to compete in delivering products and services. Similarly, the public sector, faced with increased competition for resources, must also work to achieve improved productivity levels to remain effective. **In successful public and private agencies today, people are seen as a key driver in achieving productivity gains, more so than any other investment.**²⁶

Insights from the research in this report demonstrate that the state's HRM function has not operated strategically, nor been pressed to do so by the executive and legislative branches of government. The New Jersey Department of Personnel has experienced decreases in staffing and funding, but has not made improvements to increase the efficiency, and reduce the costs over time, of state human resource activities.

Overall results from the research demonstrate that:

- New Jersey lags behind other states in organizing government functions to skillfully manage its workforce as a key to successfully meeting its mission and goals. As such, the state has failed to recognize the need to operate strategically, and to embrace strategic human resource management for New Jersey state government. The state has been trapped in a model of centralized authority tied to transactions, focused on administering the civil service system, historically under-resourced, and suffers from poor credibility.
- New Jersey human resource officials lack ongoing high-level state support and the access to expertise necessary to implement a strategic central HRM function. New Jersey lags behind other states in supporting and sustaining strong workforce data collection, data analysis, information technology, and workforce planning. The long-standing underinvestment in these critical functions has resulted in too few tools and metrics for NJDOP or other state human resource officials to answer basic questions related to the state's workforce. Without usable data and limited analytical capacity, state officials are unable to spot trends, detect problems, identify human resource issues that need improvement, or pinpoint areas with the greatest cost savings potential.

- New Jersey lags behind other states in engaging in widespread HRM-related process improvements using technology solutions and agency partnerships. NJDOP currently must rely on 10- to 20-year-old information systems and applications to support its personnel activities, and more often than not, critical activities rely on labor-intensive manual processes. Little new investment, in either process improvement efforts or the technologies to support them, has been allocated and/or successfully implemented. States with more robust human resource management functions have recognized that collaborative process improvement efforts among state agencies lead to net cost savings for state government over time.

The insights offered in this report point to three urgent needs:

- First, because the management of its workforce is a critical function for accomplishing the state’s mandates and mission, the human resource management function must be elevated to a position of primacy in state government. A concerted effort must be made to strategically align HRM with the state’s operational needs.
- Second, New Jersey must reengineer the State Department of Personnel into an effective HRM department with a broader mission than overseeing transactions and compliance with statutes and regulations. This must include high-level agreement on the DOP’s mission, and its roles and responsibilities vis-a-vis the human resource activities in the operation of state agencies. Key activities for the department must include support for strong workforce planning, including recruiting and retaining highly qualified workers, establishing

performance measurements for staffing and service activities, and developing effective professional development strategies throughout state government. Significant investment must be made to change the current HRM culture from compliance and transactional to strategic and collaborative.

- Finally, New Jersey must support its human resource function with adequate staff resources. Investments must be made to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of high-volume, labor-intensive human resource activities using targeted technology solutions.

Today, state-of-the-art human resource practices in the private and public sectors are based on the need for a strategic, enterprise view of the workforce. Competitive advantage in successful organizations is only realized when human resource efforts are developed strategically to attract, develop, and retain people with the skills required for the jobs. Today, the product of human resources — people — have become more important. In order for New Jersey state government to do well, the human resource function must be seen as a strategic function devoted to ensuring that the state has “the right number of people, with the right skills, deployed in the right places, at the right time.”²⁷

APPENDIX: METHODOLOGY

In preparing this study, the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University conducted national research on trends and promising practices in human resources and workforce planning in the public sector.

The methodology for the study included:

- A review of materials provided by the New Jersey Department of Personnel,
- A review of best practices and national literature in public sector human resources that outlined leading-edge research and thinking in human resource practices,
- Interviews with NJDOP personnel, and
- Telephone and in-person interviews with high-level managers knowledgeable about state human resource practices in other New Jersey state agencies.

Within the State of New Jersey, interviews were conducted between December 2005 and January 2006 with current and former state officials in the

Personnel, Treasury, Labor, and Human Services departments. Interviewees, who wished to remain anonymous, were senior officials with direct human resource and/or operational responsibility within their respective agencies and with 15 to 30 years of state government experience.

In addition, a review of state human resource practices yielded a subset of states with workforce environments and structural issues similar to New Jersey (e.g., represented workforce, history of centralized human resource functions) that resulted in more in-depth exploration. As part of this study, the Heldrich Center conducted research on trends and promising practices in state governments, but most notably conducted more in-depth reviews in six states: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. The key criteria for the selection of these states (as noted in Table 3) involved states that were identified in the scholarly literature as making significant strides in the area of human resource management, had a workforce with significant representation from labor unions, had a grade of “B” or better for “People” in the Government Performance Project under the auspices of Syracuse University’s Maxwell School,²⁸ and/or were identified by the NJDOP as being particularly noteworthy.

Table 3. Interview States and Selection Criteria

State	Reasons for Selection		
	DOP Request or GPP Grade ¹	Identified Best Practice in Literature	Unionized Workforce
Connecticut	■		■
Massachusetts ²	■		■
Minnesota	■	■	■
Virginia	■	■	
Washington	■	■	■
Wisconsin	■	■	■

1 The Government Performance Project (GPP) evaluated the "People" function of the states, ranking states based on their performance in the personnel function. A grade of "B+" or better is above average.

2 Massachusetts faced a large budget deficit at the time of Governor Romney's inauguration. A strategic repositioning of human resources occurred in the state and implementation of it is more than halfway complete.

The Heldrich Center developed a protocol to be used when researchers contacted New Jersey state officials and other states as part of the promising practices study. Below is a list of topics that were included in the protocols:

- Most pressing workforce challenges facing the state.
- Specific human resource strategies, changes, and/or reform efforts being undertaken in the state, if any, specifically in the areas of hiring, retention, succession planning, training/development, information technology/process improvements, and (re)organization.
- Organization structure of the human resource function (centralized, decentralized, hybrid, etc.).
- The effect of civil service provisions, union representation, and/or budget issues on the state's human resource organization, function, and/or reform efforts.
- The use of information technology and process improvement efforts in the human resource area.
- The status of human resource managers in the state's organizational structure, legislative processes, and decision making processes.
- Barriers to improvements in human resource functions, organizations, policies, or procedures undertaken by the state.
- Lessons learned from experiences with changing human resource functions and/or organizational structure.

Telephone interviews were conducted with the following state human resource officials: Dr. Pamela L. Libby, Ph.D., Director, Human Resource Management, Connecticut; Ruth N. Bramson,

Chief Human Resources Officer, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Laurie Hanson, Manager, Human Resource Management Division, Minnesota; Cal Ludeman, Commissioner, Department of Employee Relations, Minnesota; Ann Schluter, Deputy Commissioner for Personnel Services, Minnesota; Dr. Sheryl D. Bailey, Ph.D., Deputy Secretary of Administration, Virginia; Sara R. Wilson, Director, Department of Human Resource Management, Virginia; Ginny Dale, Assistant Director, Department of Personnel, Washington; Eva Santos, Director, Department of Personnel, Washington; and Patricia Almond, Administrator, Wisconsin.

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JOHN J. HELDRICH CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

33 Livingston Avenue, Fifth Floor

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

732.932.4100 ext. 717

www.heldrich.rutgers.edu