Pembangunan Eksekutif Sektor Awam Negeri (PESAN)

Conceptual Thinking

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Conceptual Thinking

• Definition

- Applies or create new constructs, model, theories, or frameworks that explain and give meaning to business, commercial, scientific problems, events or situations;
- Involves identifying patterns or connections between situations that are obviously related, and identifying key or underlying issues and trend in complex situations;
- Includes using inductive reasoning that allows one to form ideas about groups of events or situations.
Conceptual Thinking

• Scale of Progression
  - The scale progresses from applying guidelines to pattern recognition or model building
  - There are 5 levels of progression
Conceptual Thinking

• **Level 1: Applies established rules**
  - Applies simple rules, common sense and past experiences to identify governmental business issues;
  - Recognised when a current situation is exactly the same as a past situation
Conceptual Thinking

- Applies present decision trees to problems or opportunities
- Uses established rules in predefined way
Conceptual Thinking

• Level 2: Sees patterns between data and information based on experience
  □ Notices when a current situation is similar or dissimilar to a past situation, and identifies the similarities and/or differences;
  □ When looking at information, sees patterns, trends or
Conceptual Thinking

- Seeks a precedent when faced with new situations to inform response
- Identifies the links between the information and the context
- Identifies discrepancies, trends and inter-relationships in the information
- Identifies pertinent information, and notices trends, patterns of missing pieces
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• Level 3: Applies complex models and concepts
  □ Uses knowledge of theories or frameworks to look at current situations
  □ Applies and modifies complex learned concepts, theories or methods
Conceptual Thinking

- Applies advanced models to identify the intricacies of situations and how they may impact the outcome.

- Formulates a clear explanation for complex governmental business problems, situations or opportunities based on existing theories or frameworks.
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• Level 4: Clarifies complex data or situations
  □ Makes complex or abstract ideas or situations clear, simple, and/or understandable
  □ Assembles ideas, issues & observations into a clear, useful and complete explanation
Conceptual Thinking

- Restates existing observation or knowledge in a simple fashion
- Synthesises complex ideas, issues & observations into a clear understanding; takes intricate data and puts it into lay terms; “boils down” information
- Conduct strategic analysis of
Conceptual Thinking

- Selectively absorbs a large amount of diverse or complex information to identify central and underlying central and underlying issues of a situation.

- Sees multiple relationship & missing factors/gaps in systems or processes, and
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• Level 5: Creates new concepts, theories, models & frameworks
  ◦ Creates new concepts that are not obvious to others & not learned from previous education or experience to explain situations or resolves problems
  ◦ Looks at things in a novel way (i.e., breakthrough thinking)
Conceptual Thinking

- Shifts a paradigm; starts a new line of thought
- Thinks beyond the issues & balances multiple perspectives when setting direction or reaching conclusions
- Thinks beyond the organisation & balances multiple perspectives when setting direction or reaching conclusions
Innovation management ...

‘developing both the ability to scan for signals about change and a readiness to move into new areas – and let go of old ones.

... the primary task is one of managing knowledge – developing and building distinctive competence in particular fields, adapting and absorbing new and different knowledge sets ... and moving out of particular knowledge areas when they become redundant.’

Benefits of increased innovation …

- increased synergy from information sharing, joint initiatives, integrated policy, investment in R & D and benchmarking
- increased competitiveness
- better efficiency and cheaper products and services which are more attractive than those offered by competitors
To foster creativity and innovation within organizations:

• Ensuring that organisational structures and processes optimise both creativity and innovation;

• Developing the creative capacity of staff through training.
Understanding creativity and innovation involves understanding ...

- Exactly what is involved in the specific context of the organisation;
- What behaviour needs to be fostered;
- What supports and what inhibits creativity and innovation.
Six barriers to organisational innovation …

1. Lack of organisational slack
2. Bureaucracy
3. Structure
4. Poor Communication
5. The ‘imported talent’ syndrome
6. Financial aversion to risk taking
To overcome barriers …

- Remove fear, encourage trust and sharing through better communication
- Make innovation part of everyone’s performance review system
- Build in enough looseness for staff to explore new possibilities and collaborate with others both within and outside the system
- Train staff to scan the environment for new trends, technologies and changes in clients’ mindsets
- Encourage staff and raise awareness on the critical importance of diversity of thinking styles, experience, perspectives and expertise
- Develop an idea management system that captures ideas
Innovation ...

It is the symbiosis between ‘creative organisations’ and ‘creative people’ that produces innovation. It is the interplay between individual creativity and environmental creativity that is the driving force of innovation in any organisation.
Three specific elements for organisational innovation ...

- The climate for creative thinking must be right
- An effective system of communicating ideas must exist at all levels
- Procedures for managing innovation must be in place
Conceptual Thinking

• Developmental Aspects of Conceptual Thinking
Problem Solving

• Conceptual thinking

- Understands situation or problem by identifying patterns or connections and addressing key underlying issues. Conceptual thinking includes organising the parts of an issue or situation in a systematic ways.
Conceptual Thinking

- **Elements of Competency**
  - Looking for common factors in different situations and using/modifying previously successful approaches to meet the unique needs of the situation
  - Identifying key factors in a complex problem and analyse situation and simplify for the eyes of others
  - Integrating and applying different ideas and approaches to accomplish a goal
  - Coming up with a new or different way of describing or explaining situation or opportunity
  - Responding to changes or constraints by formulating new concepts or approaches
Conceptual thinking

Performance Level/Target Levels

- Clarifies Complex Data or Situations
  - Uses alternative ways of looking at issues or problems and linking complex information to a solution
  - Analyses, plans and integrates concepts into structured and rational process
  - Makes complex ideas or situations clear, simple and or/ understandable
  - Assembles ideas, issues and observations into clear and useful explanations and solutions
Innovative Thinking

• Innovative Thinking
  • Taking an innovative approach to problem solving. It includes the ability to “think outside of the box”, to go beyond the conventional, and a willingness to try out different solutions. At the higher levels, it is the ability to champion innovation and encourage new ideas.
Innovative Thinking

- **Elements of Competency**
  - Acknowledging the ideas of others and incorporating them into performance improvements
  - Developing and weighing alternatives to conventional thinking before settling on a solution
  - Constructively challenging existing processes and procedures on the job and developing original approaches to improve or replace them
  - Taking a calculated risk to improve performance by introducing something new and unique to the public sector
  - Showing foresight, encouraging new ideas and helping others to see new possibilities
Innovative Thinking

- Performance Level/Target Levels
  - Thinks Laterally
    - Generates varied solutions to problems
    - Think laterally (“outside of the box”) to identify new solutions
    - Will consider the radical or unconventional
    - Is prepared to look beyond the data for solutions
    - Is innovative and creative when generating solutions
Strategic Orientation

• Strategic Orientation

- The ability to demonstrate an intimate understanding of the capabilities, nature and potential of the department. It involves taking calculated risks based on an awareness of societal, economic, market and political issues, trends, processes and outcomes as they impact the strategic direction of the department and its linkages with the direction of the government.
Strategic Orientation

- Elements of Competency
  - Continually assessing how day-to-day tasks support the broader governmental objectives
  - Aligning own organisation’s goals with the government’s strategic goals
  - Visualising what might or could be by preparing and reviewing contingency plans for future problems and opportunities; developing resources necessary to carry them out
  - Engineering and promoting new opportunities
  - Assessing economic/environment, social, and technological trends and calculating any potential implications these may have on our department’s future direction
Strategic Orientation

- Performance Level/Target Levels
  - Contributes to Strategic Direction
    - Contributes to the development of the department vision, mandate and long-term strategy
    - Develops and implements long-term alternative strategies for achieving success at the departmental level in own area of responsibility
Content

• Concluding Remarks
Concluding Remarks

- SP&MP identified the need to focus on leadership work-related competencies at individual and organisational level.
- Competencies are required for all management and leadership roles and as well as for highly successful performance within our State Public Service.
- Hence, the need on profiling leadership competencies is crucial in the development of our future leaders.
Q&A

Thank You