



Case Study

Eastern Municipal Water District

Situation

As one of the largest water districts in California, the Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) required a systematic and strategic approach to succession planning as a larger percentage of their employees were retirement eligible. EMWD recognized the critical importance of preparing for the future by ensuring that its leadership pipeline was robust and well-prepared to meet the district's growing needs. They turned to CPS HR Consulting to help them create a tailored succession plan that would align with their goals of promoting internal growth, retaining talent, and preparing their leadership to guide the district through future matters.

Challenge

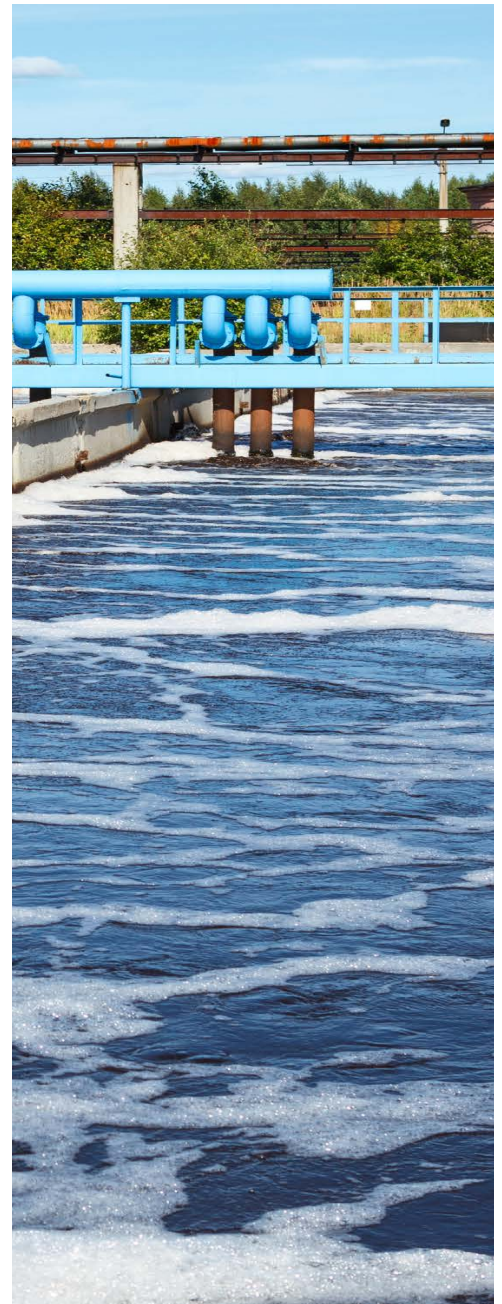
EMWD faced a series of challenges that underscored the need for a robust succession plan. With key leaders nearing retirement, EMWD needed to preserve institutional knowledge and prepare new leaders for critical roles. The district also anticipated significant growth, as only 30% of its service area was built out, requiring a flexible plan to meet future needs. Additionally, their informal approach to succession planning lacked standardization, which risked leaving gaps in leadership readiness. To address these issues, EMWD sought a partner experienced in public sector succession planning to develop a plan tailored to their specific requirements.

Solution

CPS HR Consulting leveraged its extensive public sector human resources experience to collaborate with EMWD on developing a comprehensive succession planning process. The solution included key elements such as setting project milestones and engaging stakeholders through interviews with union representatives, senior executives, and board members to align the plan with EMWD's goals. CPS HR then created a customized four-step succession plan tailored to the district, emphasizing leadership competencies, employee development, and career pathways. A pilot implementation with select employees then allowed for refinements, ensuring practicality. Finally, a phased handover enabled EMWD to gradually assume full ownership of the process, ensuring a smooth transition.

Results

The collaboration between EMWD and CPS HR Consulting resulted in a clear and actionable succession plan that delivered several key benefits. It enhanced leadership readiness by establishing a structured process to prepare current employees and future leaders, ensuring a smooth transition as senior leaders retire. Employee engagement improved, as the plan outlined clear career pathways, demonstrating EMWD's commitment to internal growth and development. Additionally, the plan was designed for long-term adaptability, allowing EMWD to evolve with future growth needs and changes in its structure.



About CPS HR Consulting

CPS HR Consulting is a self-supporting public agency providing a full range of integrated HR solutions to government and nonprofit clients across the country. Our strategic approach to increasing the effectiveness of human resources results in improved organizational performance for our clients. We have a deep expertise and unmatched perspective in guiding our clients in the areas of organizational strategy, recruitment and selection, classification and compensation, and training and development.