Succession Planning For Airborne Instrumentation

Overview

- Issues and challenges
- Current challenges driving the need for succession planning in Aircraft Instrumentation
- What is succession planning?
- What succession planning is not
- The public sector and succession planning
- Basics of succession planning – How to

Issues and Challenges

- Reading articles about succession planning can produce feelings of gloom and doom
  - 40% of the US workforce will be poised for retirement by 2020
  - The workforce in general has been given a fair warning of the impending exodus of the baby boomer workforce (10,000 per day)
  - The new workforce, who might otherwise be interested in working for the public sector, ultimately have accepted offers in the private sector by the time they receive a job offer or are even contacted by a public agency
  - The new workforce prefers the higher pay for entry-level jobs in the private sector
  - STEM talent is difficult to recruit to the federal government
  - There are roughly 6 to 7 million unfilled jobs in the USA right now

- Accepting this reality and using it as information to motivate the need for succession planning can result in a positive outcome

Current Challenges Driving The Need For Succession Planning In Aircraft Instrumentation

- Significant number of highly experienced employees retiring between now and the next 5 years

    - 37% of AID workforce is 55+ and eligible to retire now

- Newer workforce not sticking around for 30 to 40 years like the workforce retiring out now

    - Entry level engineers tend to stay in organizations for about 3-5 years (maybe a little longer)

    - Engineers hit journey level in the 5-8 year timeframe

Current Challenges Driving The Need For Succession Planning In Aircraft Instrumentation

- Competition with the private sector for new and experienced talent

- Large gap of government experience created during the hiring freezes of the 90's

- Contractor workforce is critical in closing the gap – non key government positions

  - Contractor companies supporting the DoD are facing their own similar challenges

NAVAIR

What Is Succession Planning?

- Succession planning is a process of identifying current and near-term gaps in key positions within an organization
    - At all levels of the organization – not just leadership positions
- Developing a Strategy to manage the replacement of employees in key positions
- Requires leadership to look at the organization from an internal and external perspective
- Includes active retention and development efforts in order to retain and grow current talent
- Succession planning is an ongoing process that must be updated and managed on a regular basis

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

What Succession Planning Is Not

- Succession planning is not difficult – it just requires attention and the desire to do it
  - Requires the support and buy-in of senior leadership

- Succession planning is not just a replacement of leadership positions

- Succession planning is not a one time event – it must be an ongoing process

- Succession planning is not a one person job – it requires input from leadership, HR and the workforce
  - The workforce has valuable insight into the challenges associated with employee retention and turnover
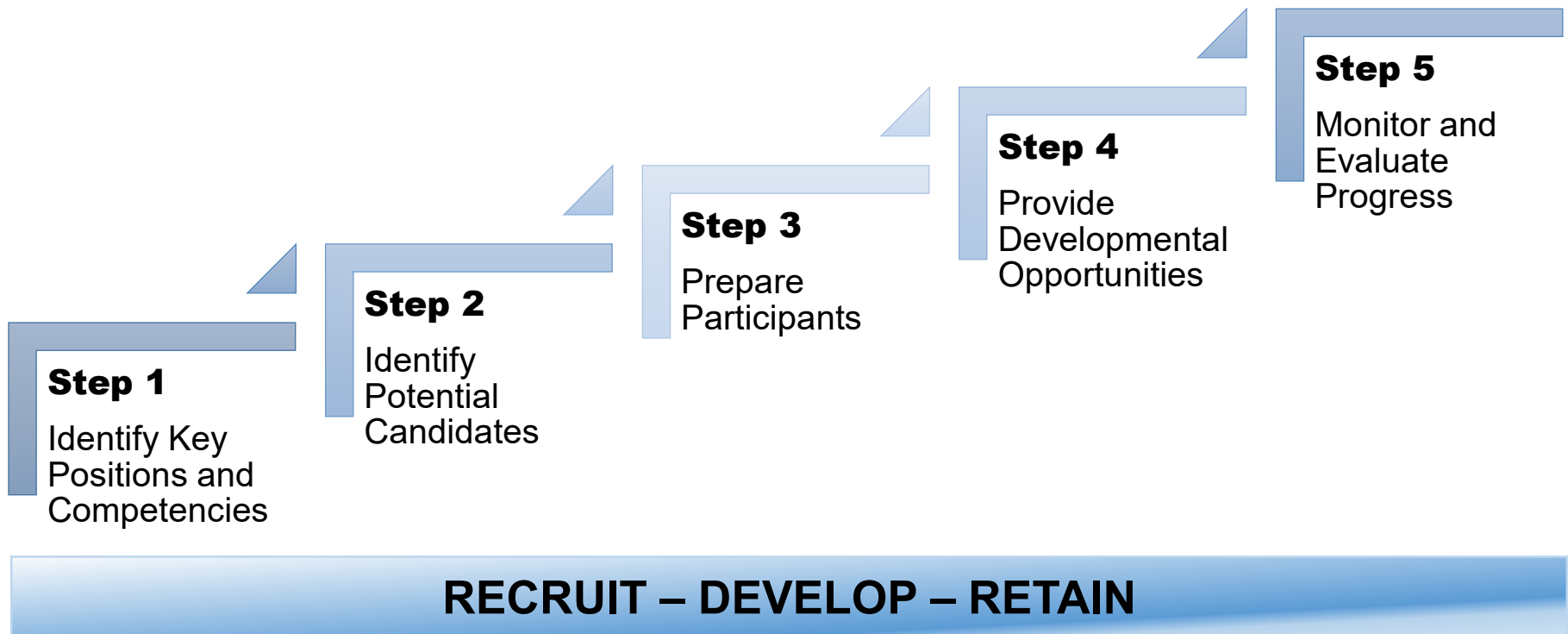
The Public Sector and Succession Planning

- Most public sector organizations believe that succession planning is very important for the health of their organization

- Very few public sector organizations actually address the issue of succession planning

- Some reasons cited for not developing a succession plan:
  - Low on the priority list
  - Consumed with day-to-day work and putting out fires
  - Insufficient staff
  - Insufficient time
  - Insufficient funding

- We must strive to overcome these obstacles and ask senior leadership for support – this is important to them too!

- We have a golden opportunity to address this issue, make important decisions to improve the current and future health of our organizations, and share our knowledge and success with other government organizations
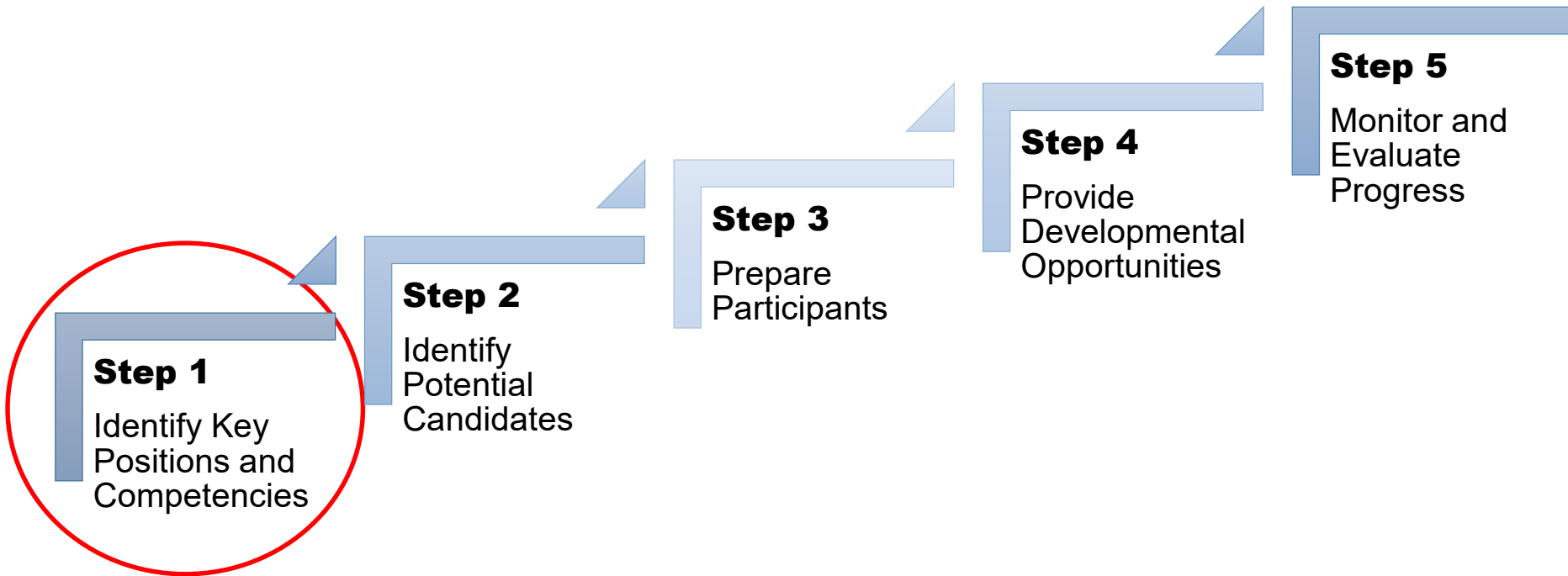
Basics of Succession Planning

- Many examples have a set of steps used for a succession planning process

- Defining and implementing a process is critical to creating a successful succession plan

Step 1

Identify Key Positions and Competencies

Step 2

Identify Potential Candidates

Step 3

Prepare Participants

Step 4

Provide Developmental Opportunities

Step 5

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

RECRUIT – DEVELOP – RETAIN

NAVAIR

Basics of Succession Planning

Step 5

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

Step 4

Provide Developmental Opportunities

Step 3

Prepare Participants

Step 2

Identify Potential Candidates

Step 1

Identify Key Positions and Competencies

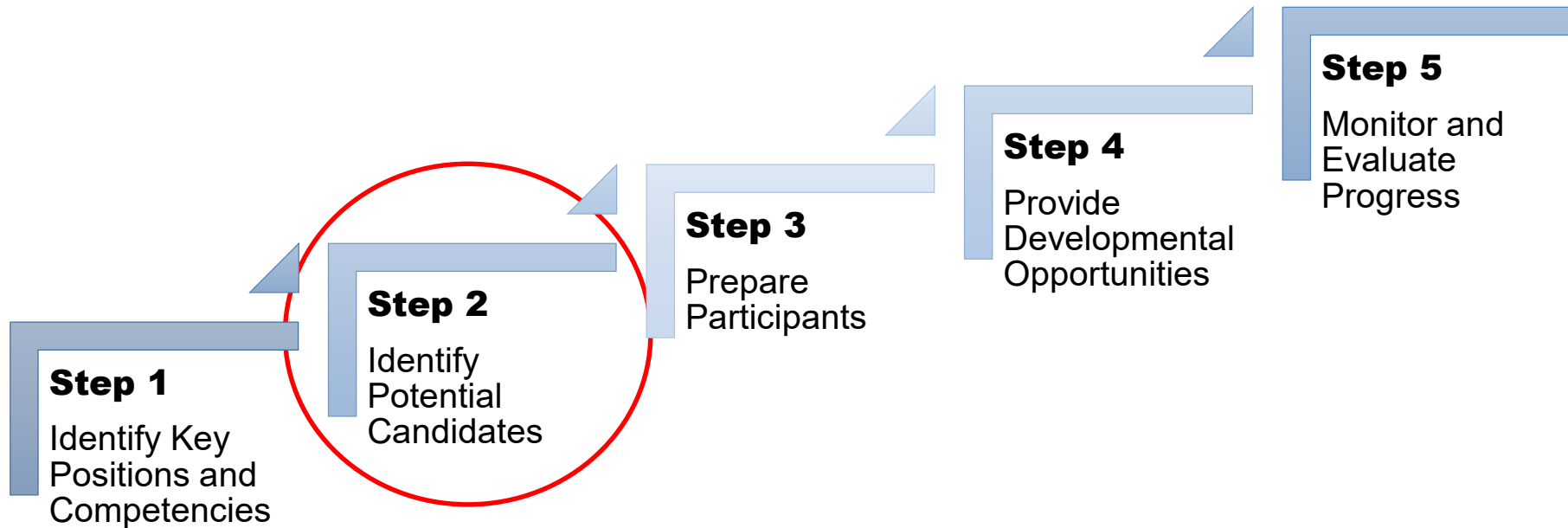## RECRUIT – DEVELOP – RETAIN

NAVAIR

Identify Key Positions and Competencies

- A key position is generally defined as a position that is critical to the viability and continuity of the organization
  - At all levels and functions of the organization (e.g., branch heads, senior engineers, specialized technicians, etc.)

- Requires continuous assessment of critical positions and potential impacts

- Every level of management has a responsibility and part in this process

- Consider……
  - Expected retirements
  - Retirement eligible employees
  - Internal promotions
  - The unexpected loss of incumbents

Basics of Succession Planning

Step 1

Identify Key Positions and Competencies

Step 2

Identify Potential Candidates

Step 3

Prepare Participants

Step 4

Provide Developmental Opportunities

Step 5

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

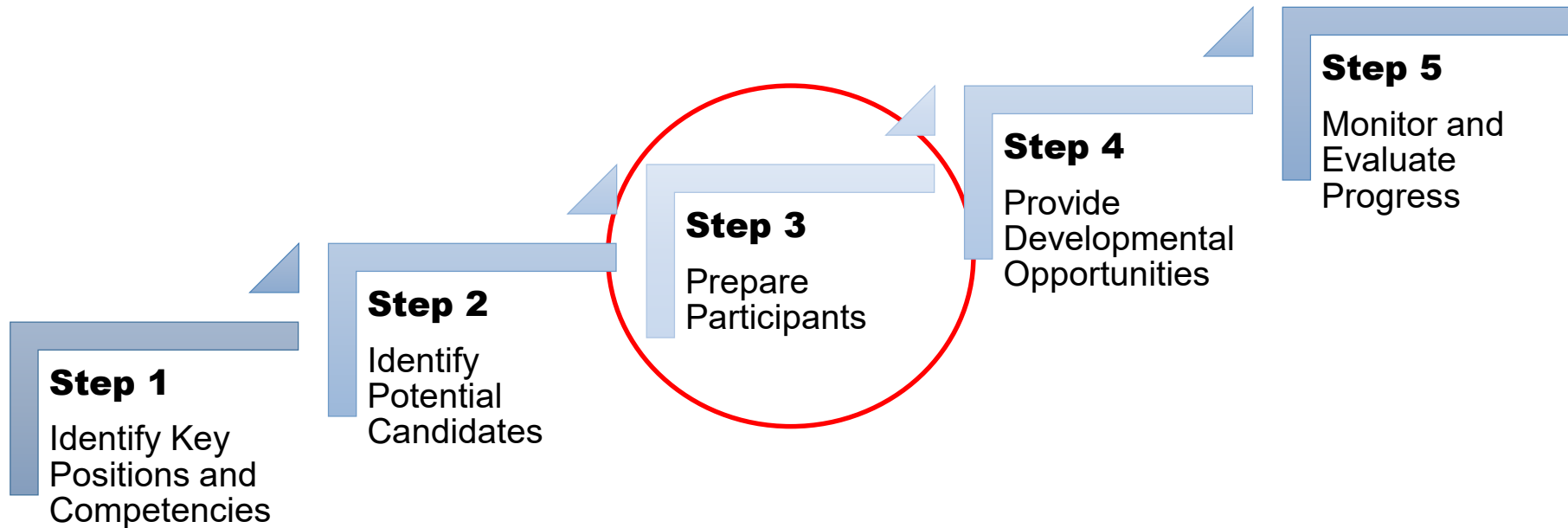## RECRUIT – DEVELOP – RETAIN

Identify Potential Candidates

- It is important to identify a pool of potential candidates within the organization that are interested and can fill key positions

- It is important to ask who may be ready now and who may be ready in the next 3 to 5 years

- Leaders must define the competencies of key positions and agree on what they are looking for in candidates

- High potential candidates need a line of sight between their current position and the key positions being focused on for succession

- One study recommends having a self-nomination component and not just a management-only nomination process

- Important to have an emergency plan for unexpected key position departures – bench strength

Basics of Succession Planning

Step 5
Monitor and Evaluate Progress

Step 4
Provide Developmental Opportunities

Step 3
Prepare Participants

Step 2
Identify Potential Candidates

Step 1
Identify Key Positions and Competencies
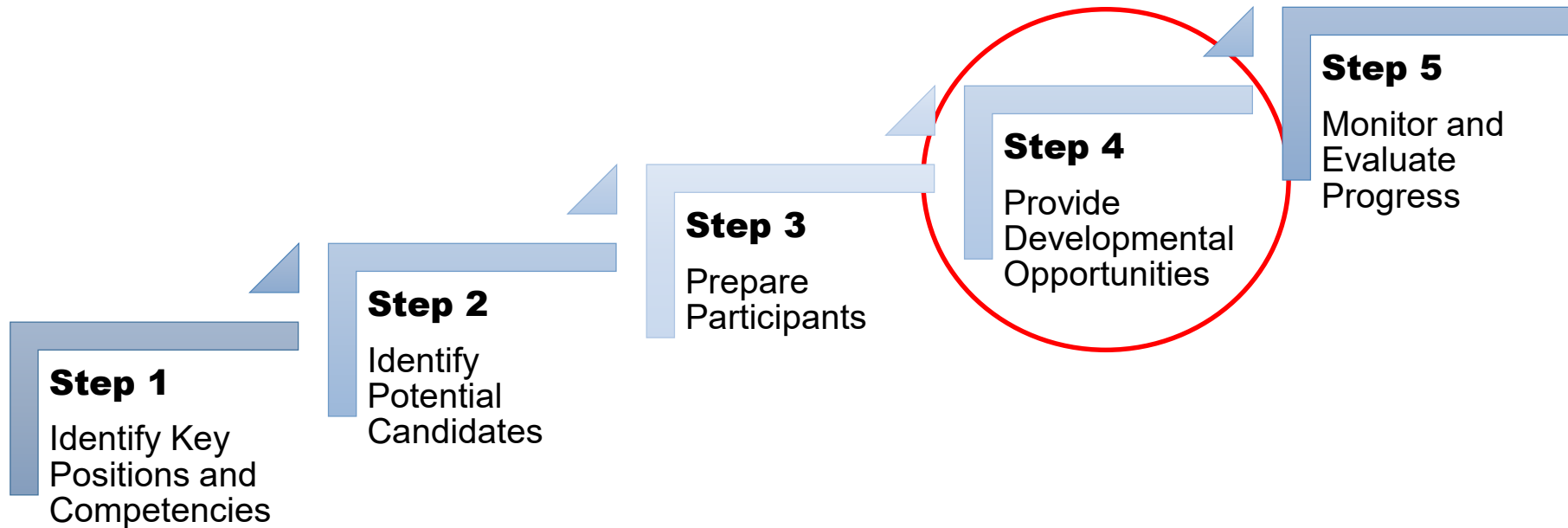
RECRUIT – DEVELOP – RETAIN

Prepare Participants

- Communication with potential candidates is very important

- Employees need to know the expectations for participation in the succession planning process

- After identifying the competencies for key positions, it is critical to conduct a gap analysis between the required skills for a position and the existing skills of the candidates
  - Employee self-assessments can be an important component of the gap analysis process

- Transparency with succession planning gives integrity to the process and minimizes politics, resulting in better retention
  - Helps to clarify that this is not a secretive process

- Telling the workforce what the planning process looks like and what it takes for interested candidates to participate, helps prepare them for inclusion in the program

Basics of Succession Planning

Step 1

Identify Key Positions and Competencies

Step 2

Identify Potential Candidates

Step 3

Prepare Participants

Step 4

Provide Developmental Opportunities

Step 5

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

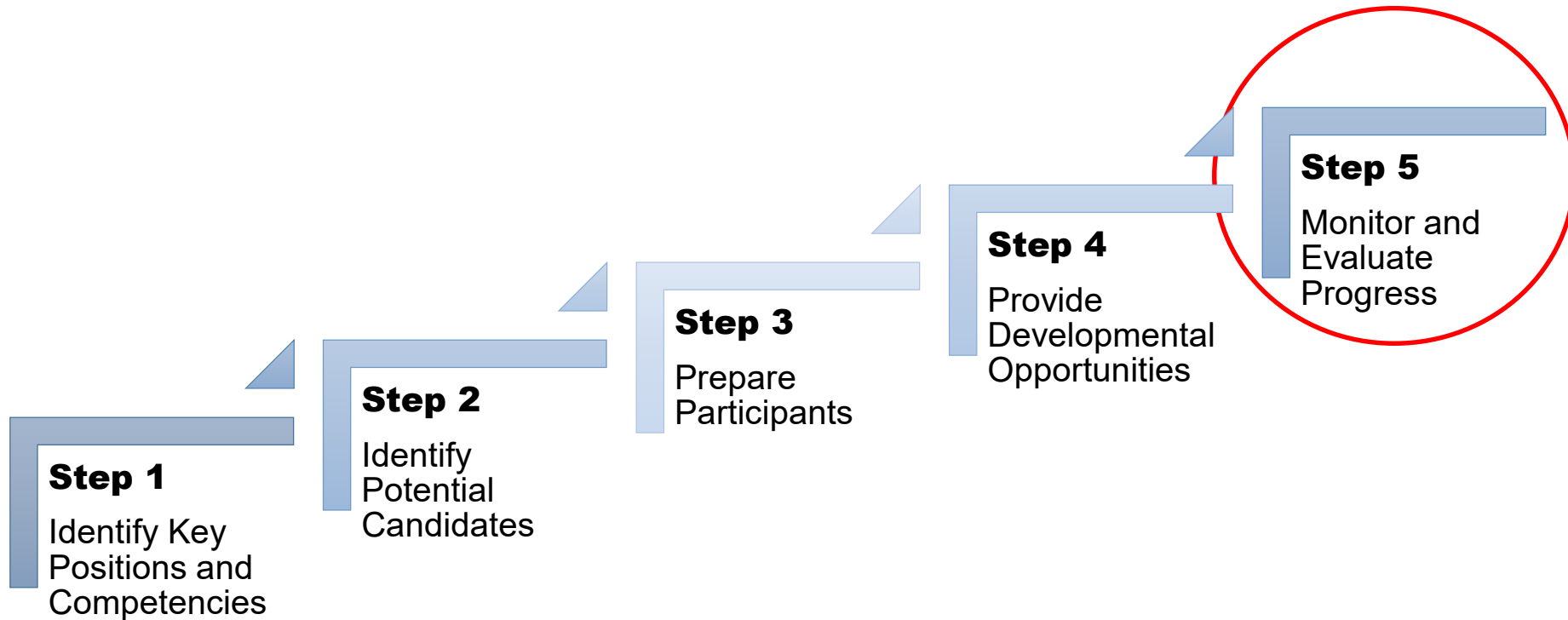## RECRUIT – DEVELOP – RETAIN

NAVAIR

Provide Developmental Opportunities

- It is important to create/provide a range of developmental opportunities based on the competencies for key positions
  - Leadership training
  - Technical training
  - Mentoring and coaching programs
  - Shadowing
  - Job rotations
  - Committee and conference participation
  - Special projects
  - Continuing education

- Development methods should be created considering the competiencies and not just the position itself

- Provide opportunities based on competencies that interested candidates need to develop – one size does not fit all

- Knowledge management/transfer are critical to share with interested candidates (e.g., senior engineer, branch head, etc.)

Basics of Succession Planning

Step 1

Identify Key Positions and Competencies

Step 2

Identify Potential Candidates

Step 3

Prepare Participants

Step 4

Provide Developmental Opportunities

Step 5

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

RECRUIT – DEVELOP – RETAIN

NAVAIR

Monitor and Evaluate Progress

- A continuous checkup of the process along with feedback into the system is crucial for success

- Program reviews should be conducted regularly
  - 1 to 2 months when in a critical situation
  - Annual or semi-annual when stabilized/healthy

- Update succession plans and development plans as needed – based on current key positions and competencies included in the plan

- Performance measures or indicators can be developed to assess the program

- Ask for or seek help
  - Most of us are not experts in succession planning
  - Ensure that leaders receive training and support in succession planning

Resources

- CPS HR Consulting, (DATE). Succession Planning, Preparing for Your Agency's Future. Retrieved from https://www.cpshr.us/services/resources/org-strat/succession-planning/SuccessionPlanning_Whitepaper.pdf

- Half, Robert, (2018, April 19). Succession Planning. Retrieved from https://www.roberthalf.com/blog/management-tips/7-steps-to-building-a-succession-plan-for-success

- Newfoundland Labrador, (2008, April). Succession Planning and Management Guide. Retrieved from https://www.exec.gov.nl.ca/exec/hrs/publications/succession_planning_and_management_guide.pdf

- University of Nebraska at Omaha, (2014). Best Practices for Succession Planning in Federal Government STEMM Positions. Retrieved from http://www.businessofgovernment.org/sites/default/files/Best%20Practices%20for%20Succession%20Planning%20in%20Federal%20Government%20STEMM%20Positions.pdf

- Watson Wyatt, (2007). Effective Succession Planning in the Public Sector. Retrieved from http://www.4cleanair.org/Chicago/EffectiveSuccessionPlanningforPublic.pdf