

## 2008 Innovations Awards Program APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 08-E-14MA

**Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:**

State: **Massachusetts**

Assign Program Category (applicant): **HR/Education Training and Development**

1. Program Name: **The Executive Office of Health and Human Services' (EOHHS) Management Certificate Program (MCP)**

2. Administering Agency: **The Executive Office of Health and Human Services Office of Human Resources**

3. Contact Person (Name and Title): **Bonnie J. Tavares, Director, Center for Staff Development (CSD)**

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8. Web site Address:

EOHHS website: <http://www.mass.gov/hhs>

MCP website (Intranet Site):

<http://hrconnectsus.ehs.state.ma.us/eohhs/programs/csd/certificate/certificate.asp>

9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.

**The EOHHS Management Certificate Program (MCP) is a data-driven, year long management training program specifically for health and human services managers. It is built the competencies and behaviors necessary for successful management in health and human services and has demonstrated quantifiable change in the skill levels of its graduates.**



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10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

**The program was launched in September 2006.**

11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?

The Executive Office of Health & Human Services (EOHHS) is the largest Secretariat in Massachusetts Government and represents 50% of all state employees – approximately 24,000 people. EOHHS is the administrative umbrella for 17 state agencies led by individual commissioners. The EOHHS Center for Staff Development (CSD) took on the task of designing the MCP in response to virtually a universal request from the 17 commissioners that managerial training was a critical staff development need in our agencies. EOHHS had approximately 1500 managers serving across the 17 agencies but did not have a formal management training program.

The problem identified by the Commissioners was that managers within their agencies were well trained and credentialed in their specific areas of content expertise but the vast majority did not have any formal training in how to manage. EOHHS managers customarily have significant financial as well as staff supervisory responsibilities. They are hired because they are experts in their field. For example, a manager in the Department of Public Health may have substantial education in child and maternal health or a manager at the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission may have significant training in rehabilitation counseling – but often the managers have had no formal managerial training despite the fact that most oversee the performance of many employees. The CSD designed the MCP as one way of addressing this gap in training and development.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.
  - 1) **Prospective applicants to the MCP must complete a lengthy application that requires both their supervisor’s and their Commissioner’s signature. The application requires responses to essay questions that ask the manager to define their role and primary responsibilities; what skills and knowledge they think are important to be an effective EOHHS manager; and, which of those skills and knowledge areas do they think are their strengths and which would they like to develop or strengthen. The application period is open for approximately four weeks. Managers from all 12 management levels are eligible.**
  - 2) **Applications are thoroughly reviewed by an admissions committee that includes Civil Rights Officers, seasoned managers and CSD staff. The committee selects candidates whose applications reflect the rigor that will be expected in the MCP.**
  - 3) **Accepted managers are asked to sign a learning contract and to acknowledge receipt and acceptance of the policies and procedures of the program. In its first year, the MCP accepted 103 managers. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the class were minority managers; 8% were Veterans and 15 of the 17 EOHHS agencies were represented.**
  - 4) **The program requires that participants satisfy the following mandates in order to graduate:**
    - a. **Attendance at each of the six courses (presented in eight days of training) and completion of all related pre- and post-class assignments.**
    - b. **Completion of two MCP-approved electives offered through the CSD.**
    - c. **Development and presentation of a Final Project that reflects the mission and goals of their respective agency and demonstrates skill attainment in competencies taught in the MCP.**
  - 5) **Students are assigned to one of four sections. Throughout the course of the year and in recognition of the demanding schedules of our managers, participants may “float”**

to an alternate section if needed because of illness, work assignments or other extenuating circumstances. Two sections of the MCP are hosted in Boston where the majority of EOHHS managers work and two sections are hosted in Central Massachusetts to accommodate managers in a variety of other worksite locations.

- 6) MCP faculty consists of educators from the private sector, academia and state government. This mix of trainers provides an opportunity for multiple perspectives on managerial strategies. Our faculty employs a variety of teaching methodologies to accommodate multiple learning styles. Faculty use the Socratic approach, didactic PowerPoint presentations, interactive group work, case study methodology and experiential learning opportunities.
- 7) All participants, including faculty, are required to attend an orientation before the September onset of the program. Orientation is hosted in both geographic locations: Boston and Central Massachusetts. Outlined at the Orientation are program requirements and policies as well as a review of the graduation requirements. Participants receive an MCP Binder that includes lesson plans for each course along with faculty biographies and contact information for follow-up questions. At Orientation, students also receive instruction on our learning management system, which is the Commonwealth's electronic tool for course administration and tracking.
- 8) Prior to their first class, course participants complete an on-line assessment tool that reflects their current skill level in 13 competencies and behaviors that are considered to be essential characteristics of a successful EOHHS manager. Participants get immediate feedback from the tool. The results are confidential to the participant and only aggregate data is provided to MCP administration. This same tool is completed at the end of the program in June to assess changes in skill mastery.
- 9) In late September, participants attend the first of their six (8-day) mandatory trainings. The courses include:
  - a. Charismatic/Socially Skilled Manager
  - b. High Performing Manager
  - c. Learning Oriented Manager
  - d. Success Focused Manager
  - e. Problem Solving Manager
  - f. Role Expert
- 10) In March, participants submit a proposal for their Final Project. These proposals are carefully scrutinized by a review committee to ensure that they reflect the mission of their agency and the competencies targeted in the MCP. Participants refine their proposals as required by the review committee until they demonstrate the intended purpose.
- 11) Throughout the year, the participation of the managers is carefully monitored by MCP administrators. Managers who need guidance or who seek out consultation on how to best apply the skills they are learning are offered support from senior managers, advisors or program administrators.
- 12) Early in June, the participants present their Final Projects to their MCP colleagues, supervisors, commissioners and CSD staff. Many of the projects represent cross-

agency initiatives that are an embodiment of the participants' recognition that the needs of our clients are broad-based and best served through a collaborative approach to services.

- 13) Prior to graduation, MCP participants once again complete the 20-minute on-line assessment tool. First year results showed improvement in all 13 competencies and behaviors.
- 14) On June 27, 2007, invited guests, colleagues and dignitaries watched as the inaugural MCP class descended the Massachusetts State House Grand Staircase. One-hundred three graduates received diplomas presented by the EOHHS Secretary's Office.
- 15) Within days of graduation, we introduced the enrollment period for the Class of 2008. Ninety-six managers representing 16 of our 17 agencies are currently enrolled in the program.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

The EOHHS Manager Certificate Program was built on two critical components that make it both unique and replicable. EOHHS provides services for residents of the Commonwealth who come to the government sector for assistance. Clearly recognizing the critical nature of our work, we wanted to design a program that truly reflects the skills necessary to be a highly effective manager in *health and human services*. Secondly, we wanted to design a program that was quantifiably grounded in actual data from our managers that could be tracked and measured. With these tenets in mind, we convened a group of seasoned managers who worked diligently to ensure that the resulting curriculum reflects the unique mission of health and human services.

We then partnered with MVP (Most Valuable People) Associates who had done extensive work in the private sector. MVP Associates had worked with corporations to identify the characteristics of their most valuable managers. MVP was interested in doing similar research in the public sector. This provided us with a creative approach to state government management training. Researchers from MVP Associates worked closely with us designing a methodology to identify the behaviors of our most skilled managers so we could then build a curriculum based on those behaviors.

We asked each EOHHS commissioner to identify their most valuable managers. We provided very little definition as to the people we were looking for except to say "Who would you like to have five of in your agency?" or "If 'so and so' left, I would be devastated." Across the Secretariat, commissioners gave us 87 names of their "perceived" most valuable managers. To ensure a valid research model, MCP randomly selected another 200 managers from the pool of approximately 1500 EOHHS managers. These 285+ managers were asked to complete an on-line assessment tool that rated their competencies against the already established private sector managers' skill sets. Those who participated in the on-line research were never told if they were part of the randomly selected cohort or part of the MVP group identified by their commissioner.

The research showed us that the skills most valued by public sector leadership (commissioners) are identical to skills valued by private sector leaders (CEOs). Additionally, the results validated the *perception* of the agency heads because the MVPs, in

contrast to the randomly selected managers, scored higher in all competency areas. We now had a profile of the managerial competencies most valued in this Secretariat.

These competencies were then vetted by the MCP Workgroup to ensure that the values and mission of human services professionals was clearly imbedded in the competencies. The workgroup concurred with the research results and identified the following 13 competencies and behaviors:

- 1) High Performance
- 2) Problem Solver
- 3) Team Oriented
- 4) Role Expert
- 5) Socially Skilled
- 6) Learning Oriented
- 7) Success Focused
- 8) Assertive
- 9) Ambitious
- 10) Skilled Communicator
- 11) Principled
- 12) Creator of Value
- 13) Explorer

Working with our agency training directors and the MCP Workgroup, we then moved on to build a curriculum, syllabus and lesson plans based on the research.

The data collected from our own exemplary managers gave us a unique approach to curriculum design. The quantitative foundation is invaluable in human services program design and has created an outcome-based framework for training our managers.

14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

The MCP Workgroup's commitment of time and resources to this project substantially reduced the program's start-up costs. This participation of seasoned managers from across the Secretariat provided crucial expertise that enabled us to build a viable program without incurring consultant costs. The existing staff of the CSD provided the overall administrative and coordination which again enabled us to leverage existing, internal resources rather than having to purchase the expertise. The faculty cost of operating the MCP in its first year was approximately \$30,000. This represents a cost of \$275 total per manager. This cost was incurred for external faculty from the private sector and academia. Our start-up contract with MVP Associates provided the research, data-generated foundation for the program as well as a comprehensive program evaluation. The cost was \$12,500. Printing of curricula, diplomas, brochures, etc. were in-kind contributions from our agency partners.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs?

Faculty:	\$30,000.
Classroom supplies & ASL Interpreters:	\$6,000.
MVP Tool:	\$6,000.

16. How is the program funded?

**The MCP is funded through the CSD's ongoing budget and support from the EOHHS Office of Human Resources.**

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.

**This program did not require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulation.**

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

**Participants access information about the program including course assignments, enrollment options and track their progress on our learning management system, PACE. This system is internet based and can be accessed through their existing work hardware and software or via the internet on their home computers. No specific equipment is necessary to access and/or run the program.**

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address.

**To the best of my knowledge, the program is unique to Massachusetts. The person responsible for the original implementation of this program is:**

**Bonnie Tavares (Bonnie.Tavares@state.ma.us)  
Director, CSD, EOHHS HR 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
600 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111  
617-348-5030**

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

**We are not aware of another data-driven program of this kind for human services managers in state government.**

21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?

**Yes, the program has been fully implemented and is currently in its second year of operation.**

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

**We realized early into the design phase of the MCP that quantitative evaluations would be a critical component to this program. We engaged MVP Associates to conduct a thorough evaluation. The pre- and post-assessment of the participants' competency level was the core validation that our students had enhanced their managerial skills.**

**We recognized that it was also imperative that the graduates demonstrate their enhanced skills in their work settings. Our ultimate goal was to change the way our managers manage so we surveyed the managers' supervisors. We asked if they saw any change in the managerial performance of the participants. Ninety-six percent (96%), all but one, of those people surveyed said that they witnessed positive changes and that they would recommend other managers for the program. Seven of the 103 managers who graduated last year have been promoted. There also appears to be a recognition on the part of the managers that the program is "value added" because 10% of this year's class was referred by an MCP graduate.**

**The program evaluation in year one led us to make some changes in this year's program. We have developed a longitudinal theme of diversity in response to feedback from last year's participants that managing in a diverse workforce was not presented as strongly as they would have liked last year. We have also asked faculty to use "real life" case studies as part of their presentations because our adult learners learned well through this training modality.**

**We are currently working on more effectively leveraging the potential impact that implementation of the final projects can have on changing the way we do business in EOHHS. Our goal this year is to spotlight these projects so that senior management is exposed to new strategies and ways of caring for our clients and customers.**

**23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?**

**The MCP is an evolving project that we hope to enhance each year as we learn more from our participants. Year Two already looks somewhat different than Year One because we take feedback obtained through participants' in-depth evaluations seriously. We are committed to delivering a program that responds to the needs of our learners and is able to adjust to the changing needs of our clients as well as the priorities of the Secretariat.**

**24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?**

**"Support from the top" is a critical component of this program. Through the course of a change in administration, we have been able to sustain Secretariat-level support via ongoing communication efforts and active advocacy from participants, senior management and the Office of Human Resources leadership. Statements from our EOHHS Secretary encouraging all managers to enroll are crucial. Without support from all levels it would be challenging to implement a program such as the MCP.**

**Commissioners were willing to commit the time and energy of their agency managers to the MCP Workgroup. This was a critical contribution. If this support was absent, the cost of design and development would have increased significantly. Other states should take the time to build support at the highest levels of their organizations before beginning this process.**

**The existence of the CSD, a Secretariat-wide training vehicle, provided an administrative conduit that enhanced our ability to forge a broad-based constituency interested in formal managerial training. If sufficient resources were identified, however, this program could be facilitated on a smaller scale.**

**If present, a major obstacle that would be difficult for other states to overcome would be a lack of recognition of the critical importance of well trained managers and how productivity and ability to deliver the best possible services can be impacted by its absence.**