Your feet pound on the pavement pushing the ground behind you. You speed up, reach your hand forward, and in one fluid motion the baton lands softly in the outstretched hand of the next runner on your relay team. The hand-off was perfect. After the race, you feel pride and accomplishment because you prepared in advance for the transfer of the baton from one team member to another. Successful leadership and personnel transitions require the same level of advance preparation.

Leadership and personnel changes in state government occur regularly. These changes can introduce risk including the loss of institutional knowledge, expertise, and momentum on key projects. You can minimize the risk with advance preparation and strong documentation.

As your agency completes the Annual Internal Control System Certification, consider how Control System Assessment Tool (CSAT) and/or your Agency Risk Assessment Worksheet tools can help you document the “what”, “who”, and “how” of your agency mission during a leadership or personnel transition.

Start by creating clear and well-organized documentation of your agency responsibilities, so new leaders and team members know your agency goals. Highlighting key assignments and responsibilities, and how to identify subject matter experts, is priceless! You can set your team up for success by utilizing the Agency Risk Assessment Worksheet. This worksheet will help you outline relationships between agency management, subject matter experts, and agency goals.

Once a new leader or team member understands what the agency does, learning can shift to how the agency does it. Understanding the tools and processes of reaching goals helps ensure a smooth personnel transition. Use a centralized inventory of your agency business processes or programs to help new leaders understand agency operations. When done well, the Agency Risk Assessment Worksheet and CSAT can give new leadership confidence in your existing practices and highlight organizational excellence.

A proactive approach to document and assess risk to critical business processes or programs prepares new leaders to make informed management decisions. It also highlights the importance of an efficient and effective system of internal control. The Agency Risk Assessment Worksheet serves this exact purpose. When leaders know what risks the agency faces in a clear and concise manner, it is that much easier to create a strategy to manage internal and external risk.

**Suggested Action Step**

Consider how you can incorporate the CSAT and Agency Risk Assessment into new leadership and employee orientation.

**Questions?**

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