Case Study: Succession Planning

Jerry, the CEO of an R&D subsidiary, knew he was going to retire soon. He decided to develop a succession plan to help enable a smooth transition after his departure. He commissioned a network analysis to help him create the plan.

Jerry’s organization consisted of five Directors and 9 Senior Managers (see org chart). The network analysis (Figure 1) shows how people drew on each other in order to complete their work. Heavy lines represent more frequent contact while dotted lines represent less frequent contact. Light dots represent men while dark dots represent women.

The network analysis also shows who interacts with whom socially (Figure 2).

Additionally, the analysis shows that Diane is a Hub, Robert is a Gatekeeper, and Faisal is a Pulsetaker.

Based on this data:

- Who should Jerry appoint as his successor? Why?
- Who do you think Jerry actually appointed as his successor? Why?

Case adopted with permission from Karen Stephenson, NetForm International.