

Risk 6: Staff Capability



Risk Definition

There is a risk that Staff may not have the skill sets required to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

This risk focuses on the capability (skills sets, qualifications, expertise, etc.) of DFAIT's staff to achieve the Departmental objectives. This risk is closely aligned to Risk 5: Staff Capacity.

This risk has the potential to obstruct the organization from achieving all of its strategic outcomes.

Sources of Risk

Misaligned Management Skills

Heads of Mission are selected for their expertise in diplomacy but the success or failure of missions is dependent heavily on management effectiveness. In a similar manner, senior managers are selected primarily for their program expertise rather than for their management effectiveness. Corporate functions such as staffing are being "downloaded" to line managers who may not have the required knowledge base to perform the functions properly. Project management capabilities and capacity are not readily available or are not that strong within the Department.

The Department's large number of policies and legislative frameworks require constant skills updates but there is insufficient clarity of which skills-sets are required overall.

Supporting HR Management Processes

The performance management system of the Department better encourages project, policy, and program skills than management skills. Performance management evaluations are not reliable in providing adequate feedback. In effect, DFAIT is not rewarding management excellence. A career management process is not in place to assist in the development and growth of resources. Formalized succession planning is not wide-spread in the Department. HR planning has historically been done largely on an informal basis or in silos.

Since adequate classification or compensation incentives are not available to MCOs and others who take on high-risk or