

# **Women, Executive Careers and Local Government**

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## **Women, Executive Careers and Local Government**

### ***Executive Summary***

Women are underrepresented in senior management ranks in South Australian local government. At the time of this research there were three women Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in this system of government. Women are underrepresented in senior management ranks generally across Australian organisations similar to the situation in comparable Western countries.

This research reports on a survey of second and third level managers, both men and women, in South Australian local government in 2015 as to their intentions to apply for promotion at the next available opportunity using the Reasoned Action Approach developed and refined by Ajzen and Fishbein over the last three decades (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010). The research was conducted through the University of Adelaide's Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning with funding support from the South Australian Local Government Association's Research and Development Fund. Senior women in SA local government, as well as Local Government Professionals Australia, SA provided support through access to their mailing lists enabling this survey-based research to be carried out.

The results show that men and women have similar beliefs structures when it comes to their intentions to apply for promotion in South Australian local government. This is a significant finding.

Importantly, the only significant difference found in this survey was that women have more positive attitudes towards applying for promotion than men notwithstanding the current situation where less than 5% of CEOs in South Australian local government are women.

From our literature review earlier qualitative research suggests that men and women hold different attitudes to their work life balance influencing their intentions to apply for promotion and seek a senior management career in their respective organisations and industries. This was not the case in response from managers surveyed in this research.

The imbalance in the proportion of women and men in CEO positions in South Australian local government, we suggest, reflects earlier findings of the inherent bias towards men in the selection process for these positions. We have made structural and managerial recommendations, which we believe will address this imbalance overtime.

Our recommendations are grouped around actions elected members, senior managers, the SA LGA, LG Professionals SA and the SA State Government can do to redress this imbalance in the South Australian Local Government workforce.

### **Elected members**

We recommend that;

- a. The council manages CEO attraction, recruitment and selection processes in an open and transparent manner notwithstanding protecting the confidentiality of candidates.
- b. Elected members develop, promote and demonstrate that recruitment procedures can be trusted by potential applicants; that Council has a good relationship with its community and other stakeholders; and that working conditions can be negotiated in a flexible manner if the location of the position represents a barrier to applying.
- c. Third-party recruitment and selection consultants be used as a matter of course for all CEO appointments in South Australian local government.
- d. Mayors and councillors vested with the responsibility of CEO selection to participate in a one-day workshop conducted by the South Australian Local Government Association on 'Selecting the Best Possible Candidate as your CEO'.

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### **Senior local government managers**

We recommend that:

- e. Current senior local government managers ensure that they engage systematically and periodically with managers working for them as to their career aspirations. This should be comprehensive enough to include aspirations outside of local government should this be an individual's realisation.
- f. Senior managers establish strategies that give middle managers confidence that while working at an executive level may subject them to significant stress this would likely contribute to shaping positive intentions to apply for promotion.
- g. Highlight normative expectations supporting staff to identify and urge their colleagues to apply for promotion and by mentoring such managers toward promotion.
- h. Assisting managers to identify with executive role models (e.g., through mentoring) who can assist them to negotiate the path toward applying for promotion.
- i. Helping managers to understand what personal abilities and skills are important for promotion and helping them to achieve competency in these areas.
- j. Ensure performance management systems link individual managerial aspirations to the vision, mission and periodic goals, programs and objectives such that both individual and organisational outcomes are achieved.

### **The South Australian Local Government Association (SA LGA)**

We recommend that:

- k. The SA LGA publicise the results of this research such that all councils in South Australia are aware of its findings.
- l. The SA LGA develop a one-day workshop titled 'Selecting the Best Possible Candidate as your CEO' and that elected members closely involved in the selection of their CEO be given every possible opportunity to attend. The workshop, for example, should be offered in both metropolitan, regional and rural centres.

### **Local Government Professionals Australia, SA**

We recommend that:

- m. LG Professionals SA continue to offer a range of courses and management development programs which prepare candidates for promotion to a CEO position in South Australian local government. These would include: understanding the political management role of the CEO; from management to leadership in local government; career planning and management; and, programs and activities such as manager exchanges both within and between councils including international exchanges all of which are designed to give individuals a broader perspective on the senior management role in local government.

### **The South Australian Government**

We recommend that:

- n. The South Australian government actively participate in annual programs that celebrate effective leadership and management in their system of local government. Such programs would celebrate and reward councils that are effective in delivering value for money services. This would best be done in concert with the SA LGA and LG Professionals SA who already undertake such programs.

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### 1. Introduction and Literature Review

Women are underrepresented in the senior management ranks of South Australian local government. At the time of this research three of the 68 Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) in South Australia local government were women. The literature tells us that women are underrepresented in senior management ranks anywhere from 5 to 10% depending on the industry and the point in time at which data is collected. The proportions have remained static over the last few decades.

In 2010, the year of women in Australia local government, 7% of CEOs were women and approximately 20% of senior managers were women. In the *Australian Women in Leadership, 2012 Census Report*, ASX 500 companies had just over 9% of women as directors. In the 1980s in the United States of America women accounted for 13% of Chief Administrative Officers in local government. Today that number is around 20%. There is an extensive literature on why the level of representation does not reflect the roughly 50-50 proportion of men and women in Australian society. There is an equally extensive literature on how this situation can be changed such that a more equitable ratio exists.

The last four decades have delivered a substantial body of literature on leadership, which has by-and-large been presented as a gender neutral activity despite the observed lack of women in leadership roles (Hutchinson, Walker & McKenzie 2014).

In Australia, the debate over equal opportunity began in 1975 with the Royal Commission into Australian Government Public Administration, and an intensive program of legislative and policy change ensued during the 1980s resulting in an improvement in women's employment status (Still 2006). In addition to this, in global terms, women have made substantial improvements in education attainment, professional development and political participation (Pande & Ford 2011). However, these factors have not lead to a significant increase in female leadership in business, political or public sector domains (Fox & Schuhmann 1999; Hutchinson, Walker & McKenzie 2014; Klettner, Boersma & Clarke 2012; Pande & Ford 2011; Pini, Brown & Ryan 2004; Still 2006).

Five key areas have been identified within this body of research, of importance to the question of why women are underrepresented in leadership roles worldwide:

1. the gendered nature of leadership;
2. gendered leadership styles;
3. women in male dominated work cultures;
4. women in leadership; and,
5. career development and progression (Hutchinson, Walker & McKenzie 2014, p. 181).

While there has been limited research into women in leadership specifically in local government, research on this topic has found similar results to the broader gendered leadership studies described above. Hutchinson, Walker and McKenzie (2014) cite the work of Fox and Broussine (2001) in the UK who, among others (Broussine & Fox 2002; Fox & Schuhmann 1999; Pini 2006; Pini, Brown & Ryan 2004; Radin 1980), have identified the following important factors:

1. the predominance of men at senior levels;
2. masculinized management styles and discourse;
3. unchallenged barriers to women managers' effectiveness; and,
4. apparent bias of elected members in the appointment of CEOs.

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Thus, it is widely accepted in the literature that, fundamentally, “rather than being gender neutral, concepts and practices of leadership are embedded in a variety of social interactions” which can be attributed to “implicit or unconscious bias” (Hutchinson, Walker & McKenzie 2014, p. 182). In addition to this, Still (2006) puts forth another explanation for the lack of advancement of women in leadership, arguing that the more recent public policy emphasis on ‘work and family’ has taken away from the impetus of equal opportunity.

Acknowledgement of the broad-scale absence of women in leadership positions begs the question of whether intervention is required and, if so, how? One public policy option being examined in the literature as an equity strategy is that of quotas (Pande & Ford 2011), while another strategy is the use of ‘women-only networks’ (Pini, Brown & Ryan 2004) and leadership training and development programs (Radin 1980).

Bochel and Bochel (2008) provide an insight into the nature of gendered political leadership by studying elected representatives in local government in the United Kingdom. They focus on the leadership roles and functions of male and female councillors. The study was conducted in two stages – first, secondary data pertaining to decision-making models, numbers and genders of councillors and their proportions in senior positions and portfolio responsibilities were gathered from websites, The Municipal Yearbook and direct contact with councils themselves. The second stage comprised 36 in-depth qualitative interviews conducted either face-to-face or over the telephone with individuals in leadership positions across England, Scotland and Wales.

The study found that, despite gradual and steady increases in the number of female councillors being elected and being promoted to senior posts such as being responsible for a portfolio, there remained an underrepresentation of women in the deputy leader and leader roles. The authors also highlighted the fact that women councillors were more likely to be given responsibility for certain types of portfolios – namely, those corresponding to social services, housing, health and community or neighbourhood services – and much less likely to have lead roles in others like transport and regeneration/economic development. However, it was unclear as to how these differences in leadership and portfolio types came about. Language and reasoning of male and female councillors when discussing their leadership styles was not dissimilar, and was more likely to be about comparing themselves with their predecessor irrespective of sex. Therefore, Bochel and Bochel (2008) conclude that although women are underrepresented in leadership positions within elected local government, it does not appear to be gendered.

Broussine and Fox (2002) present a convincing argument for a need to rethink the assumptions which underlie current models of organizational leadership, and develop new models which capitalize on the strengths of both men and women alike. In a case study of local government in England and Wales, the authors portray institutionalized sexism in which female senior managers have a harder time than their male counterparts. The study therefore aimed to focus on underlying assumptions about appropriate forms of organizational leadership, and how these translate into actions and processes that limit local government’s ability to modernize. Broussine and Fox (2002) note that this type of conservatism is not isolated to women, it can also thwart the progress of men who have similarly non-traditional attitudes towards leadership and management. Traditional modes of management include emphasis on ‘hard’ skills such as resource management, knowledge

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of legal and other technical skills, while 'soft' skills such as staff motivation, empowerment and consensus-building were not as valued.

The study was framed as an action research project whereby data about the experiences of male and female chief executives and senior colleagues was collected and hoped to bring about awareness and learning among the participants. The data collection methods included focus groups, interviews and written submissions as well as a mail out survey.

The findings suggested a traditional, orthodox notion of leadership prevailed as opposed to one that might appreciate innovation and learning. Furthermore, women managers consciously do not wish to pursue chief executive posts because of the nature of the position, others do not advance due to harassment and discrimination rather than a lack of ability.

The authors conclude that progress on gender equality will only be possible if "the forces which perpetuate traditional power structures, such as male domination of executive arrangements" give way to new models of leadership which "transcend gender differences and which capitalize on the talents of both men and women" (Broussine & Fox 2002, p. 105).

Leadership research has been dominated by quantitative study designs and the use of one methodological data-generating instrument – the self-administered questionnaire. Other techniques employed can include structured observation and content analysis (Bryman 2004).

Leadership research has been criticized in the past for not delivering much 'bang for buck'. Bryman (2004) reviews the contribution of qualitative research to the leadership field. Articles deriving from peer-reviewed journals prior to 2004 were used to contrast qualitative research on leadership with quantitative in order to determine the distinct findings that qualitative research has contributed to the field dominated by quantitative research.

Fox and Schuhmann (1999) provide an insight into the nature of gendered leadership in the USA with their examination of the different behavioural attributes of male versus female city managers across the country.

The managerial styles of women and men city managers were explored via a mail out survey in 1997: 435 female city managers were matched with a 440 male counterparts from similar-sized and geographically located cities such that the sample size comprised 875 city managers. The survey instrument was a 4 page questionnaire with open and closed-ended questions regarding the manager's perception of their role, what issues were important to them, and what important decisions they had made as city managers, as well as general demographic information and the political context of the city.

The findings were reported in terms of city managers' motivations for pursuing a career in city government, how men versus women define the role and responsibilities of the city manager, and thirdly the decision-making styles of women versus men city managers were assessed.

The authors found that women city managers were more likely to value citizen input in decision-making processes. Secondly, women city managers tended to emphasize communication in carrying out their role, including with citizens and elected and unelected government officials. Thirdly,

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women city managers tended to see their role as a manager and facilitator rather than, as opposed to their male counterparts, as policy entrepreneurs.

As such, Fox and Schuhmann (1999) conclude that the skills and values women managers utilize helps to advance the legitimacy of government. Also, female city managers provide a distinct 'voice' that is not imparted by their male counterparts. Furthermore, this 'voice' is underrepresented in the city management profession since only 11% of chief administrators in city government are women.

Based in Western Australia (WA), this study investigated the reasons behind the under-representation of women at CEO level in local government in 2011, at the request of an advisory group to the WA Minister for Local Government. This pilot study surveyed 21 women in second tier management positions in metropolitan Perth local government, followed by three, one hour focus groups with survey participants to explore the key issues emerging from the survey data. Survey results were analysed quantitatively using SPSS, and transcripts of the focus groups were thematically analysed.

The authors applied a gender lens to their analysis and found the most powerful themes to be 1) the masculine leadership culture and 2) the attitudes and behaviours of elected members. Stereotyped views of women and men were used as the basis for leadership decisions. The authors purport that the underlying cause of the entrenched gender bias in leadership positions in WA local government is the powers elected members have over the recruitment and employment of CEOs. While there are state government guidelines relating to gender equity practices, there is no overriding independent commission to review local government governance. As such, much of the decision-making occurs within informal processes. This has consequences not only for diversity, but also the balance of power between legislative and administrative arms of local government (Hutchinson, Walker & McKenzie 2014).

Klettner and Boersma (2012) from the University of Technology Sydney Centre for Corporate Governance conducted the 2012 Australian Census on Women in Leadership. They report on the 2012 Census results for women in leadership specifically in corporate governance.

Female board representation has improved since the ASX Corporate Governance Council amended the governance principles and the number of female directors is positively correlated to the size of the company. Over the last 10 years, insurance, banking and retail have consistently been in the top 5 industries with the highest proportion of female board members. Factors contributing to the likelihood of female board members include larger companies and companies with a high proportion of female employees. Furthermore, women were more likely to have multiple directorships than men, which the authors suggest means that companies were seeking proven female directors rather than taking on new female talent.

However, female representation in the senior management of Australian listed companies has not been as positive as the improvement in board membership. With regards to female executives, retail and telecommunications have been the best industries for women in leadership. The authors suggest there remain barriers to female career advancement in executive ranks, and propose three main reasons for this: 1) the focus on women in leadership, especially in regulatory terms, has been directed at boards; 2) the pipeline for senior executive positions is narrower than for board positions due to a larger requirement for experience in the specific field; and 3) the required commitment of

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time and availability conflicts with family and other social commitments at key points in a woman's career progression (Klettner, Boersma & Clarke 2012).

The World Bank commissioned Pande and Ford (2011) from Harvard University to prepare this Background Paper for the World Development Report on Gender in 2011. Concerned with the gender gap in political and business leadership around the world, this international review focussed on the equity and efficiency impacts that gender quotas may have in relation to political positions and corporate board membership.

Pande and Ford (2011) review potential barriers to female leadership and rely heavily on evidence from two countries to assess quota systems used in politics (India) and business (Norway). Pande and Ford (2011) discuss the pros and cons of quotas with regards to efficiency and equity, and the impact quotas have had on representation, participation, policy and economic outcomes, and attitudes. Their findings were mixed, not surprisingly, depending on the context of the country and sector. In India, quotas to increase female political representation were purported to increase female leadership, influence policy outcomes and reduce gender discrimination in the long term. In Norway, the introduction of corporate board quotas was correlated with changing management practices however appeared to adversely impact short-term profits. Overall, it was observed that political and corporate entities often act strategically to circumvent the intended impact of quotas. As such, the authors conclude that the design of the quota system and selection systems matter for increasing female leadership.

This article's focus was on female representation in elected political positions and corporate board membership, and more specifically on the usefulness of the mechanism of quotas in improving female representation. Though this is not significantly related to female leadership in local government administration, it does provide a relevant, up-to-date overview of the obstacles relevant to female leadership from a global perspective and is useful when considering how to improve female representation in leadership positions.

Pini, Brown and Ryan (2004) investigate the efficacy of formal, female-specific networks as a tool to support and increase participation of women in leadership positions. Women have been previously reported to be missing from leadership positions due to being excluded from more powerful male-dominated networks (Linehan & Walsh 1999; Davidson and Burke 2000; Fawcett & Pringles 2000; cited in Pini, Brown and Ryan (2004)).

The study employed a case study approach in the state of Queensland, using the Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA) as the formal female-specific network. Semi-structured interviews of approximately one hour's duration were conducted with all 19 of the female Mayors in QLD about their experiences, attitudes and perspective on the usefulness of the network (124 Mayors in total; i.e. 15% female). Interviews were transcribed and coded thematically based on themes identified in the literature, and then again to establish any emergent themes.

The results were mixed. Eleven out of 19 mayors were very supportive of the ALGWA network. Several expressed that the network would have been a great support to them when they started in their leadership positions, and remain part of the network in order to provide that kind of support to fledgling female colleagues. Four out of 19 mayors were critical of the concept of women-only networks, citing various reasons such as bigger issues to worry about in the local government sector;

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women weren't treated inequitably; and women-only networks exacerbated the problem by being divisive and discriminatory in themselves. Finally, a third group (4/19) was categorized as being ambivalent towards the ALGWA, with issues varying from concern that the group was essentially powerless compared to the mainstream Australian Local Government Association and that the group was not inclusive enough.

Despite the fact that only 58% (11/19) of incumbent female mayors in QLD were supportive of the concept of formal, women-only networks like ALGWA, the authors concluded that such networks do have a valuable role to play in securing greater equity for women in management. The contradictory position of women-only networks, in that they are established due to marginalization but accused of separatism, is in deep contrast to the acceptance of mainstream groups which are not named as androcentric despite the fact that males dominate decision-making positions. The authors argue for women-only networks serving a purpose to address the symptoms of discrimination in the short-term, whilst also serving a long-term agenda to promote broader social and organizational change.

Radin (1980) is concerned with the continued lack of women in top decision-making positions in state and local government in the USA. The author's interest lies in the patterns of mobility and career development for women and the nature of the problems faced. One hundred women at various levels of management participated in the pilot survey and were divided into three 'groups' of roughly equal number: the upper echelon, the middle management and the young, entry-level professionals. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were completed with seven women, most fitting into the middle management category.

Radin (1980) suggest that women who are successful in attaining leadership positions in public organizations have a certain skill set, including "inside" skills (interpersonal, organizational and technical abilities) and "outside" skills (political know-how and use of outside contacts), and that the "outside" skills are critical to the attainment of the top positions. Interestingly, the women in the study appeared to overrate education and hard work and underestimate the importance of political awareness. The women in middle management positions were particularly unaware of the political games being played and simultaneously felt the most discriminated against. Despite expressing interest in training and development programs as a strategy for dealing with equity problems, few women actually felt they would help with their career development. With no evaluation of the impacts of training and development programs in place, Radin (1980) concludes that further research is required to determine the value of training and development programs for women moving into leadership roles.

Still (2006) reviewed the representation of women in leadership in management and board positions, using government statistics to provide a snapshot of the status of women in leadership in Australia.

The review found that three decades of significant legislative, policy and social change relating to equal opportunity in Australia has not lead to significant numbers of women in leadership. The author cites two barriers, including lack of line management and profit centre experience, but also argues the need for more research and examination of reasons such as Australia's "macho" culture and lack of acceptance of women as leaders; women's ways of communicating in the workplace; overall changes in the workplace; and generational change (Still 2006).

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Still (2006) believes that the more recent public policy emphasis on 'work and family' has taken away from the impetus of equal opportunity and recommends that the Federal and State governments re-engage in the equity area as they did in the 1980s to once again promote women in leadership, put an end to ongoing discriminatory practices in employment, selection and promotion, and attain a more acceptable number of women in leadership in Australia.

Clearly much research has already been carried out into the nature of gender in leadership and management in private and public sector organisations. There are structural and individual factors that contribute to and compound the current and continuing underrepresentation of women in leadership and senior management positions. In the conclusion to this report we return to this literature to locate our findings and to provide an evidence base to our recommendations designed to address this continuing inequity.

In this research project we set out to understand the motivation of men and women in second and third level management positions in South Australian local government in applying for promotion. The structure of this report is as follows. We first explain the theoretical basis for our research, outline the methodology and describe the nature of the respondents to our survey. We then provide a frequency analysis of responses and measure the components of our approach before predicting behavioural intentions to apply for promotion.

In conclusion we discuss the policy implications from these research findings and make recommendations to elected members, CEOs, local government and professional associations as to how they can ensure women are more widely represented in senior management ranks in South Australian local government.

### 2. The Reasoned Action Approach (RAA)

The goal of research presented here was to understand local government managers' intentions to apply for promotion to an executive level position at the next opportunity. A well-researched model of predicting intentions and behaviour is the *Reasoned Action Approach* (RAA) (Fishbein and Ajzen 2010), as set out in Figure 2.2.1. According to this theory, applying for promotion to an executive position is reliant upon one's *intention* (or willingness) to submit an application and having the capacity to do so (referred to as *perceived behavioural control* in the RAA). Within the RAA, managers' intentions are also influenced by perceptions of behavioural control as well as three other factors. These are (i) their attitude toward applying for promotion, (ii) their perception of what other people who they consider important would do, and (iii) their perception of what important others would expect them to do.

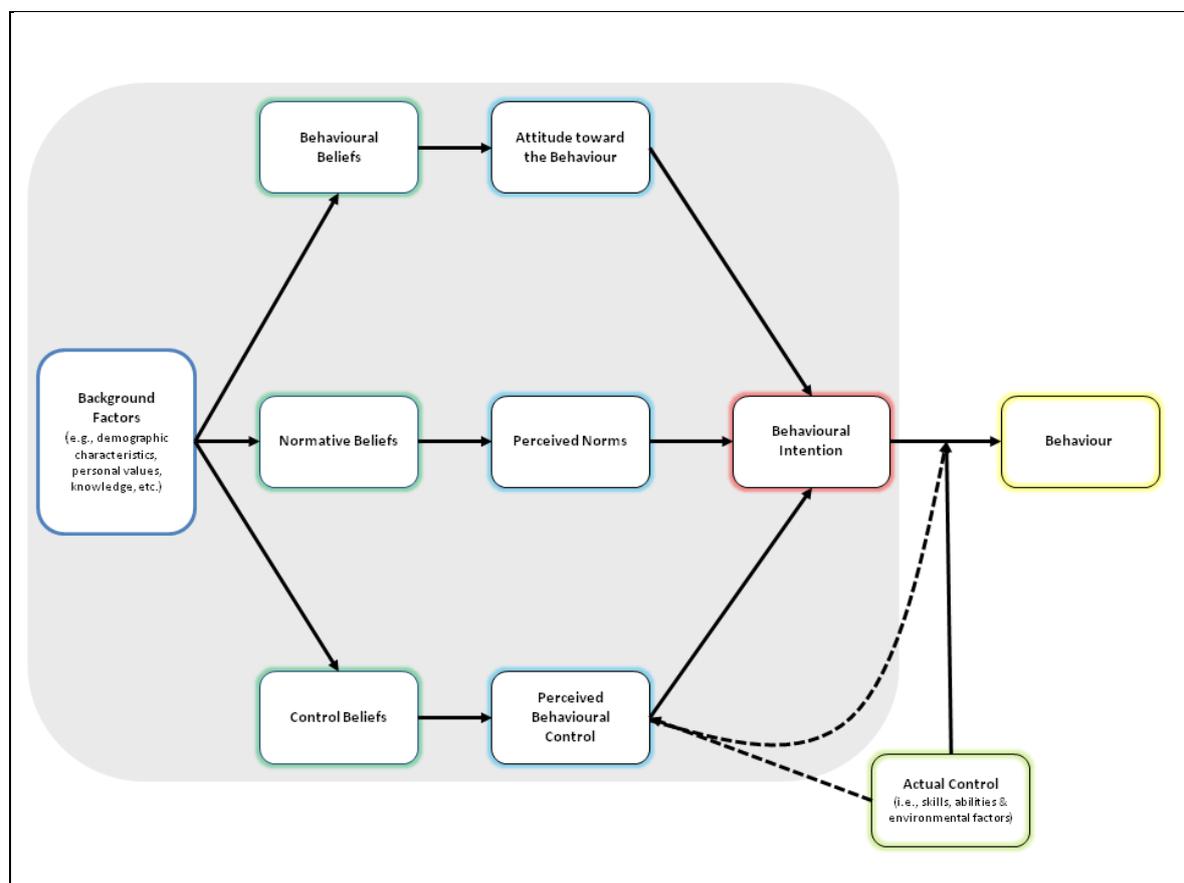
Attitudes, social norms and perceived behavioural control are a function of beliefs (and a weighting factor not shown in the figure). But these beliefs are not all the same. Rather, there are *behavioural beliefs* referring to whether or not the behaviour (i.e., applying for promotion to an executive level position at the next opportunity) will result in positive or negative outcomes for the individual. There are *injunctive normative beliefs* which refer to the perceived social pressure the individual may feel to do or not do the behaviour. *Descriptive normative beliefs* are those beliefs an individual may

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have about what others might or might not do. And, finally, *control beliefs* concern the degree of power an individual believes they possess to enact the behaviour.

Where *control beliefs* refer to individuals' perceptions of the environmental and personal factors that could facilitate or hinder their behaviour, their beliefs may or may not accurately reflect their actual control over the behaviour. When there is a mismatch between perception and reality, the actual conditions relating to the behaviour can affect the way intentions influence behaviour. For example, individuals may want to enact a behaviour, and they may believe they have the power to do so, but find that it is more difficult than they had expected.

**Figure 2.2.1:** Schematic presentation of the Reasoned Action Approach (Fishbein & Ajzen 2010, p. 22)



The last set of factors in the model are collectively referred to as *background factors* which include personal characteristics (e.g., values, emotions, personality, etc.), social characteristics (e.g., age, gender, education level, job experience, level of current position, etc.), and information. These background factors are recognised within the RAA as influential in forming the different kinds of beliefs but they are not considered as direct influences on any other aspect of the behavioural model. Rather, the most important parts of the model for understanding behaviour are the RAA variables themselves, namely, attitudes, norms, perceived behavioural control, and intentions.

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Measures of managers' actual behaviour were not possible. Instead, the research sought to identify the factors that influence intentions to apply for promotion among second and third level senior managers. This focus meant that it was not necessary to measure levels of actual control managers might be subject to if they applied for promotion. Therefore, the components of the model that were considered in the research were those within the shaded area in Figure 2.2.1.

In summary, the RAA offers a parsimonious and validated model of behaviour that can be employed to understand managers' intentions to seek promotion. To do this, however, requires undertaking some important preparatory steps. First, the behaviour of interest needs to be clearly defined. In this case, the behaviour of interest is actually submitting an application for an executive level position. This unambiguous behaviour is one that can, in principle, be observed at some point in the future. Also, part of defining the behaviour is specifying a time frame in which the behaviour would be enacted (e.g., to apply at the next opportunity). Second, implementation of the RAA requires that its components (i.e., attitudes, perceived behavioural control, social norms, and intentions) can be accurately measured. The procedures to achieve this second step are described in the following sections.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodology incorporated strategies for research involving the *Reasoned Action Approach* (RAA) of behaviour and its application in predicting and understanding behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

#### 3.1 Eliciting the Beliefs

Each of the components of the RAA is based on the beliefs managers may hold about applying for promotion to an executive position at the next opportunity. For attitudes, the relevant beliefs are those concerned with the pros and cons of applying (referred to as *behavioural beliefs*). *Control beliefs*, on the other hand, are those that highlight potential barriers to performing the behaviour. And, *normative beliefs* are beliefs that employees might have about whether others would apply and beliefs about what others would want them to do with respect to applying for promotion. To identify the relevant beliefs that describe the way senior managers think about applying for promotion, 15 local government managers were interviewed about their beliefs. These employees were interviewed by telephone about *applying for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity* (see Appendix 1 for a copy of the belief elicitation interview schedule). From the interview data, it was possible to identify the most salient beliefs (i.e., beliefs likely to be most influential for behaviour) and, therefore, the necessary information for developing measurement procedures to be implemented in the wider population of local government managers. The results of this stage of the research are presented in Appendix 1.

#### 3.2 Measuring the Components of the Reasoned Action Model

An online survey questionnaire was developed and pre-tested. Local government managers were contacted via email and invited to complete the questionnaire by LG Professionals SA. The questionnaire was accompanied by an information sheet describing the research and the participants' role. Reminder emails were sent periodically over 6 weeks.

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The questionnaire sought information on the components of the RAA arising from the information provided by Stage 1. Intention to apply for promotion was also measured including intention to apply for promotion at an organisation other than the one the employee was currently employed.

Of the total number of potential participants contacted, 181 completed the questionnaire. Of these, 9 identified themselves as CEOs and were subsequently removed from the data set resulting in a sample of 172 employees. A further 23 participants were removed from the sample because their own descriptions of their positions suggested that they were not senior managers.

In the following data analysis, univariate analyses were conducted on samples that varied in number depending upon the prevalence of missing values. Therefore, these sample sizes are reported on an analysis-by-analysis basis. Where multivariate analyses were concerned, missing values were estimated using LISREL 9.2 software and results are reported for the total sample of 148 participants.

### 4.0 DESCRIPTION OF PARTICIPANTS

An analysis of the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents are presented in Table 4.1. A little over half (55.6%) of respondents were aged 46 years or more, but the largest cohorts were aged between 36 and 45 years and between 46 and 55 years (each constituting 37.5% of the sample). The greater proportion of respondents was female (59.4%) compared with males (40.6%). Education levels were quite high with 72% of participants reported having completed at least an undergraduate degree and nearly half (49.6%) had at least one postgraduate qualification.

Participants were asked to report their profession from among a number of options. However, a reasonably large proportion (27.2%) opted to provide their own classification. This indicates that the list of professions provided was not exhaustive as the list of “other” responses. However, of the categories provided to participants, “Community Services” was most frequently selected (17.0%) while “Marketing and Engagement” (0.7%) and “Health and Building” (2.0%) were the least frequent professions reported.

Respondents reported having been employed in local government for an average of 14.7 years and employed in their current positions for 5.4 years on average. Moreover, 35.9% of the sample was Level 2 managers and 64.1% held Level 3 positions.

**Table 4.1:** Descriptive Statistics for Valid Responses

Variable	Response Category	%
Age (N=144)	18-25	0.7%
	26-35	6.3%
	36-45	37.5%
	46-55	37.5%
	56-65	16.0%

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	Over 65	2.1%
Gender (N=143)	Male	40.6%
	Female	59.4%
Education (N=147)	Certificate	6.8%
	Diploma	21.1%
	Undergraduate Degree	22.4%
	Postgraduate Certificate	12.9%
	Postgraduate Diploma	19.0%
	Postgraduate Degree	17.7%
Profession (N=147)	Planning	10.9%
	Human Resources	13.6%
	Engineering and Technical Services	12.9%
	Finance and Accounting	12.9%
	Information Technology	2.7%
	Community Services	17.0%
	Marketing and Engagement	0.7%
	Health and Building	2.0%
	Other	27.2%
Years Employed in Local Government (N=141)	Average	14.7 years
	Minimum	0.3 years
	Maximum	45.0 years
Years Employed in current position (N=136)	Average	5.4 years
	Minimum	0.3 years
	Maximum	26.3 years
Position Level (N=145)	Level 2	35.9%
	Level 3	64.1%

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### 5.0 FREQUENCY ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

This section of the report provides a frequency description of the components of the RAA, beginning with attitudes toward the behaviour.

#### 5.1 Behavioural Beliefs

In the RAA, the behavioural beliefs that comprise attitudes toward the behaviour are a combination of an outcome evaluation (i.e., how good or bad a particular outcome is judged to be) and a belief strength (how likely or unlikely the outcome is to follow from enacting the behaviour). The outcome evaluations (Table 5.1.1.) represent participants' judgements of the potential consequences associated with applying for an executive position. Outcomes such as career advancement, better salary and benefits, having more opportunity to make a difference in local government, and having greater contact with elected members were judged positively by a clear majority of survey respondents. Unsurprisingly, outcomes such as experiencing job stress and feelings of rejection following an unsuccessful application were generally considered unfavourably although sizeable proportions of participants regarded these outcomes as neither good nor bad. Indeed, small numbers of participants regarded stress and rejection positively, perhaps seeing them as necessary and manageable consequences of being a CEO.

**Table 5.1.1:** Outcome Evaluation Response Frequencies

Outcome Evaluation Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Very Good – Very Bad)						
	Very Good	2	3	4	5	6	Very Bad
Advancing my career through promotion to an executive position in local government is... (N=136)	39.0	29.4	13.2	12.5	2.2	2.9	0.7
Experiencing stress from being promoted to an executive position in local government is... (N=136)	2.2	5.9	16.2	29.4	24.0	16.2	5.1
Improving my salary and employment benefits is... (N=136)	28.7	28.7	26.5	10.3	3.7	1.5	0.7
Feeling rejected following an unsuccessful application for promotion to an executive position in local government is... (N=136)	0.0	1.5	6.6	48.5	31.6	7.4	4.4
Having more opportunity to make a difference in local government is... (N=135)	43.7	35.6	11.9	5.9	2.2	0.7	0.0
Having more contact with elected members is... (N=135)	11.9	28.9	24.4	17.0	11.1	0.7	5.9

When the perceived likelihood of favourable and unfavourable outcomes applying for promotion were considered, some outcomes were considered more likely than others (Table 4.1.2). In fact, larger proportions of survey respondents believed career advancement, improved benefits, job stress, contact with elected members and greater influence were more likely than unlikely.

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However, managers' responses to the question of rejection arising from a failed application had the largest proportion of participants uncommitted one way or the other.

**Table 5.1.2:** Behavioural Belief Strength Response Frequencies

Behavioural Belief Strength Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Very Likely – Very Unlikely)						
	Very Likely	2	3	4	5	6	Very Unlikely
<i>Applying for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity will... make work more stressful if I get the job. (N=136)</i>	26.5	32.4	21.3	14.0	3.7	0.7	1.5
improve my salary and employment benefits if my application is successful. (N=136)	43.4	38.2	9.6	5.9	0.7	1.5	0.7
advance my career if I get the job. (N=135)	40.0	39.3	9.6	9.6	0.0	0.7	0.7
result in feeling rejected if my application is unsuccessful. (N=135)	2.2	14.1	19.3	38.5	15.6	4.4	5.9
increase my contact with elected members if I get the job. (N=135)	40.7	31.1	9.6	11.9	3.0	0.7	3.0
give me more opportunity to influence local government if I get the job. (N=135)	29.6	38.5	17.8	10.4	2.2	0.7	0.7

### 5.2 Injunctive Normative Beliefs

There are two parts to Injunctive Norms: (i) the extent to which an individual believes that expectations of his/her behaviour are held by other individuals and groups who are important to them, and (ii) an individual's motivation to comply with the expectations of these important referent individuals and groups. From the response frequencies in the following table, it can be seen that friends and family, superiors and peers can be considered as positive referents where applying for promotion is concerned. In contrast, competitors were not regarded as sources of social influence on participants' behaviour. It can also be seen from the frequency data in the table that around one-quarter of participants opted for the neutral position in response to each referent.

**Table 5.2.1:** Motivation to Comply Response Frequencies

Motivation to Comply Questions	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree)						
	Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Disagree
<i>When deciding about applying for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity, I want to do what... My competitors for promotion think that I should do. (N=128)</i>	3.9	9.4	7.0	29.7	6.3	14.8	28.9

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My friends and family think that I should do. (N=128)	10.9	25.8	23.4	21.1	7.8	3.9	7.0
My superiors think that I should do. (N=128)	8.6	21.1	21.9	25.8	9.4	6.3	7.0
My peers think that I should do. (N=128)	9.4	21.1	22.7	25.0	8.6	5.5	7.8

A slightly different picture is revealed from the response frequencies to questions which asked participants how likely they believed that particular referents expected them to apply for promotion at the next opportunity. The frequencies in Table 5.2.2 at least 40% of respondents indicated that all referents were perceived as expecting them to make an application for promotion. But, between 21.9% and 43.8% of participants viewed referent expectations as neither likely nor unlikely. This ambivalence was most pronounced where potential competitors were concerned.

**Table 5.2.2:** Injunctive Belief Strength Response Frequencies

Injunctive Belief Strength Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Very Likely – Very Unlikely)						
	Very Likely	2	3	4	5	6	Very Unlikely
My peers think that I should apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity. (N=128)	26.6	27.3	14.1	21.9	3.9	5.5	0.8
My competitors for promotion think that I should apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity. (N=128)	11.7	16.4	13.3	43.8	6.3	7.0	1.6
My superiors think that I should apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity. (N=128)	16.4	17.2	21.9	31.3	8.6	3.1	1.6
My friends and family think that I should apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity. (N=128)	19.5	22.7	12.5	28.1	8.6	6.3	2.3

### 5.3 Descriptive Normative Beliefs

Descriptive subjective norms comprise two types of beliefs: (i) Identification with the views of certain individuals and groups, and (ii) perceptions of what these referents would likely do themselves with respect to making an application. The most important group influencing participants' decision-making were individuals who valued their work-life balance (Table 5.3.1). A larger proportion of participants (67.5%) attributed some importance to this group than those who deemed them unimportant (15.1%) or those who reported a neutral response (17.5%). Where identification with other referents was concerned, about one-quarter to one-third of participants were neutral when considering the importance of the opinions of others. The opinions of people employed outside local government tended to be viewed as slightly less important than the other referents.

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Participants' perceptions of whether or not other individuals and groups would apply for promotion at the next opportunity demonstrated that "career driven people" were perceived as most likely to perform the behaviour (Table 4.3.2). There was much more variability in the responses to whether individuals employed outside local government and individuals comfortable in their current positions would be likely to apply. People who value their work-life balance tended to be seen by the majority of respondents as being unlikely to perform the behaviour.

**Table 5.3.1:** Identification with Referent Response Frequencies

Identification with Referent Questions	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Very Important – Not at all Important)						
	Very Import.	2	3	4	5	6	Not Import.
<i>When deciding about whether to apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity, how important is the opinion of each of the following groups?</i> people who value their work-life balance. (N=126)	22.2	28.6	16.7	17.5	2.4	4.8	7.9
people employed outside local government. (N=126)	2.4	11.1	16.7	34.9	13.5	7.9	13.5
career-driven people. (N=126)	6.3	19.8	23.8	27.0	6.3	6.3	10.3
people who are comfortable in their current position. (N=126)	4.8	14.3	23.8	29.4	8.7	6.3	12.7

**Table 5.3.2:** Descriptive Belief Strength Response Frequencies

Descriptive Belief Strength Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Very Probable – Very Improbable)						
	Very Prob.	2	3	4	5	6	Very improb.
<i>Applying for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity is something that...</i> career-driven people would do. (N=126)	67.5	25.4	5.6	0.8	0.0	0.8	0.0
people who are comfortable in their current position would do. (N=126)	11.1	19.8	20.6	20.6	17.5	7.1	3.2
people who value their work-life balance would do. (N=126)	0.8	7.1	16.7	20.6	24.6	19.0	11.1
people employed outside local government would do. (N=126)	15.9	30.2	18.3	21.4	11.9	1.6	0.8

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### 5.4 Control Beliefs

The RAA supposes two types of control beliefs which refer to the extent that an individual has the power to submit an application for promotion and the availability of information, skills and other resources managers might believe are required to connect. The results in Table 5.4.1 indicated that characteristics such as having the right experience, having confidence in one's ability, and feeling supported by peers were regarded by most participants as facilitating the behaviour. External characteristics such as an unsuitable location, a Council with a poor reputation, and a lack of faith in the recruitment process were all seen as barriers to the applying for promotion.

**Table 5.4.1:** Power of Control Response Frequencies

Power of Control Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree)						
	Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Disagree
<i>I would apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity if...</i> I have the right experience for the job. (N=126)	43.7	31.7	13.5	7.1	1.6	0.0	2.4
I lacked confidence in the recruitment process. (N=126)	0.0	5.6	7.9	19.0	18.3	16.7	32.5
I feel confident in my ability. (N=126)	49.2	34.9	11.9	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.8
the location of the position was unsuitable. (N=125)	3.2	4.0	6.4	15.2	12.8	18.4	40.0
I have the support of my peers. (N=126)	13.5	26.2	23.8	24.6	4.0	4.0	4.0
the Council had a poor reputation. (N=126)	3.2	6.3	3.2	11.9	15.1	29.4	31.0

**Table 5.4.2:** Control Belief Strength Response Frequencies

Control Belief Strength Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Very Likely – Very Unlikely)						
	Very Likely	2	3	4	5	6	Very Unlikely
<i>At the next opportunity to apply for promotion to an executive position in local government...</i> I will have the support of my peers. (N=126)	28.6	33.3	23.8	11.1	2.4	0.0	0.8
I will feel confident in my ability. (N=126)	40.5	34.1	13.5	8.7	2.4	0.8	0.0

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the Council I apply to will have a poor reputation. (N=126)	0.0	4.0	4.0	23.8	13.5	23.0	31.7
the location of the position will be unsuitable. (N=125)	0.8	3.2	4.8	20.0	12.8	21.6	36.8
I will have the right experience for the job. (N=126)	35.7	38.1	19.0	4.0	3.2	0.0	0.0
I will lack confidence in the recruitment process. (N=126)	0.8	5.6	9.5	24.6	17.5	18.3	23.8

Moreover, when asked how likely it is that these conditions would be in place prior to the next time a promotion opportunity presented itself (see Table 5.4.2), the facilitation characteristics tended to be seen as likely while the barriers tended to be regarded as unlikely to be present. Therefore, where control beliefs are concerned, most participants appeared optimistic about applying for promotion.

### 5.5 Behavioural Intentions

Intentions to apply for promotion at the next opportunity were measured with four questions. The data in the table below indicates a reasonable amount of variability across the response options. This variability persisted in responses to questions that took account of whether the job vacancy arose in respondents' current organisation or somewhere else. However, for each question the majority of respondents reported positive intentions than either neutral or negative ones.

**Table 5.5.1:** Behavioural Intentions Response Frequencies

Behavioural Intention Question	% of Rating Scores from 1 to 7 (Strongly Agree – Strongly Disagree)						
	Strongly Agree	2	3	4	5	6	Strongly Disagree
I intend to apply for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity. (N=126)	14.3	17.5	16.7	17.5	7.9	10.3	15.9
Applying for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity is something I am willing to do. (N=125)	19.2	19.2	23.2	13.6	5.6	8.8	10.4
When an executive position becomes available in the local government organisation that currently employs me, I intend to apply for it. (N=126)	14.3	15.9	16.7	21.4	8.7	10.3	12.7
I intend to apply for an executive position that becomes available in a local government organisation I am <i>not</i> currently employed by. (N=126)	15.1	19.0	16.7	15.9	11.1	12.7	9.5

### 6.0 MEASURING THE COMPONENTS OF THE RAA

Predicting behavioural intentions to apply for promotion to an executive position requires that attitudes toward the behaviour, injunctive and descriptive norms and perceived behavioural control are constructed by multiplying together each variable's constituent components described in Section 5.0.

To calculate the attitude variable, each outcome evaluation score was multiplied with its corresponding behavioural belief strength score to create new variables. For example, participants' responses to the outcome evaluation statement *Advancing my career through promotion to an executive position in local government is... [very good – very bad]* was multiplied with their responses to the belief strength question *Applying for promotion to an executive position in local government at the next opportunity will advance my career if I get the job* resulting in a new behavioural belief variable. The same process was undertaken to obtain new measures for perceived behavioural control and the two subjective norm variables. Each resulting RAA variable could potentially range from a score of 1 to 49.

Next, each set of new measurement variables for each component of the RAA were subject to exploratory factor analysis in order to develop measurement scales. On the basis of these analyses, one variable was excluded from further analysis when shown to be poor measure of its RAA component. Specifically, the analysis of the new behavioural belief variables indicated that belief concerning feelings of rejection following an unsuccessful application and the one regarding job stress were not significantly correlated with attitudes toward applying for promotion. Furthermore, the correlation with intentions to apply for promotion was near zero and not significant ( $r = -0.10$ ,  $p > .05$ ) for feelings of rejection. In contrast, the correlation with intention for the job stress belief was significant ( $r = -0.22$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Therefore, both belief variables were omitted from the attitude scale and feelings of rejection was excluded from further analysis given its lack of correlation with intention. The scale reliability of the remaining four behavioural belief variables was high ( $\alpha = 0.74$ ) indicating that their combined variance contained little error. This process of identifying valid and reliable measures of attitudes toward connection was also performed on the new normative and control belief variables.

The table below lists the new RAA variables and the correlation they had with their respective RAA factors. The first column in the table lists the name of the factor based on the survey questions it summarises. For example, the Attitude factor was moderate-to-strongly correlated with four behavioural belief variables in the second column which were calculated by multiplying outcome evaluations with behavioural belief strength responses (e.g., survey questions B7 and B15). This factor explained 44% of the variance in the four behavioural beliefs. The Injunctive Norm, Descriptive Norm, and the two Perceived Behavioural Control factors explained 61%, 33%, 34% and 54% respectively. Intention to apply for promotion was correlated with the four intention items in Section F of the survey. This variable explained 80% of the variance in the intention items reflecting the high correlations between the factor and the survey questions.

The third column lists the variable means and standard deviations (recalling that each variable can potentially range from 1 to 49) and indicated that responses on each attitude variable had reasonably large deviations from their respective means on average. The attitude beliefs and some of the control beliefs had relatively low standard deviations (SD) indicating that their distributions

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were more closely based around their mean values compared with the other belief variables in the table. In other words, the sample did not vary as much on these belief variables compared to other variables in the table.

Column 4 shows that most variables in the table had a strong association with their respective RAA factors which is also evidenced by the medium to high estimates of measurement reliability (i.e., low levels of random error) shown in the last column. Belief variables that are highly correlated with their respective factors are the variables most representative of the factor. For example, Injunctive Normative beliefs about peers, superiors and friends and family re closest to the meaning of the Injunctive Norm factor than is the belief about the expectations of competitors for promotion. Likewise, the behavioural beliefs most similar to the Attitude factor are those concerning career advancement and improved benefits rather than influence over local government activities and contact with elected members.

The last column lists the reliability statistic for each measured RAA factor. This statistic can be thought of as a measure of the proportion of reliable variance versus error variance. The statistic ranges from zero to one with values approaching one indicating better measurement (i.e., less error). The data in the table shows that all the measured RAA variables had good to excellent reliability.

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**Table 6.0.1:** Factor Analysis Results

Factor Name	Variable Name (Survey Questions)	Mean (SD)	Correlation with Factor	Reliability $\alpha$
Attitude	ADVANCE (B7B15)	4.67 (4.19)	0.82	0.74
	BENEFITS (B9B14)	4.91 (4.52)	0.74	
	INFLUENCE (B11B18)	4.70 (4.65)	0.57	
	CONTACT (B12B17)	6.74 (5.32)	0.48	
Injunctive Norm	PEERS (C19C26)	10.43 (7.92)	0.89	0.85
	COMPETITOR (C20C23)	18.16 (10.31)	0.66	
	SUPERIORS (C22C25)	12.66 (8.90)	0.76	
	FRIENDS (C22C24)	11.56 (8.99)	0.78	
Descriptive Norm	DRIVEN (D27D33)	5.58 (4.46)	0.44	0.62
	COMFORT (D28D34)	14.89 (10.36)	0.48	
	WORK-LIFE (D29D31)	14.30 (9.68)	0.76	
	OUTSIDELG (D30D32)	12.95 (8.04)	0.55	
Control-1	RIGHTEXP (E35E45)	4.74 (4.18)	0.87	0.82
	ABILITY (E37E42)	4.22 (3.83)	0.96	
	PEERSUP (E39E41)	7.64 (5.11)	0.56	
Control-2	PROCESS (E36E46)	27.76 (12.76)	0.41	0.63
	LOCATION (E38E44)	31.21 (13.40)	0.71	
	COUNCILREP (E40E43)	30.94 (13.22)	0.74	
Intention	INTEND (F47)	3.93 (1.92)	0.97	0.90
	WILLING (F48)	3.41 (1.84)	0.96	
	CURRENTORG (F49)	3.90 (1.87)	0.77	
	OTHERORG (F50)	3.76 (1.84)	0.87	

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### 6.1 Socio-demographic Differences on the RAA Factors

From the factor analysis shown in Table 6.0.1, scale scores for the factors were calculated for each participant so that tests could be performed to identify the relationships between the components of the RAA (i.e., the factors shown in the table above) and the socio-demographic characteristics of the participants. The scales were calculated by first summing and then averaging the belief variables associated with each factor.

The analysis of gender differences across the RAA variables resulted in only one significant effect: females had more positive attitudes toward applying for promotion than did men ( $t(146) = -2.34, p < .05$ ). The mean scores were equal to 4.69 (females) and 6.04 (males) with lower scores indicating more positive attitudes. When Level 2 and 3 managers were compared on the RAA variables there were no significant differences in the mean scores.

Correlations between the RAA variables and age, education level, years employed in local government and years employed in current position were mostly not statistically significant. Higher education levels were associated with stronger Descriptive Norms ( $r = 0.29, p < .001$ ). Years of employment in local government was positively and weakly correlated with Injunctive Norm ( $r = 0.16, p < .05$ ).

Finally, an analysis was conducted to ascertain whether the effect of gender on the RAA variables depended upon position level (i.e., Level 2 versus Level 3). The results showed the main effect of gender on attitude reported above (i.e., females had more positive attitudes compared with males), however, the interaction of gender and position level was not statistically significant for any of the RAA variables.

In summary, background factors such as demographic and employment characteristics were not widely or strongly associated with the RAA variables.

### 7.0 PREDICTING BEHAVIOURAL INTENTIONS

According to the RAA model, behavioural intentions can develop on the basis of attitudes toward the behaviour, injunctive and descriptive social norms, and perceived behavioural control. The model also contends that these four types of variables may be associated with background factors such as demographic characteristics and environmental conditions. However, the preceding analyses have indicated that the range of potential background factors had only weak effects on the RAA variables at best. Therefore, a parsimonious approach was taken to predicting intentions to connect by dealing only with the RAA variables.

Intentions were regressed on the other five RAA variables and the stress belief in separate steps so that each variable's contribution in explaining intentions could be observed. The results in Table 7.0.1 show that, with responses to the weighted behavioural belief concerning stress (i.e., *Experiencing stress from being promoted to an executive position in local government is...* [very good – very bad]) as the only explanatory variable, 6% of the variance in behavioural intentions was accounted for. The negative sign on this variable meant that individuals who rate the experience of stress as “bad” but “unlikely” tended to express more positive intentions to apply for promotion. When Attitude was added to the model in Step 2, the explanatory power of the two variables rose to 10%. When the Injunctive Norm factor was added to this basic model (see Step 3 in Table 7.0.1), it

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explained an additional 23% of the variance in intentions. In contrast, with Descriptive Norms also included in Step 4, the explanatory variance of the four variables was only slightly improved, representing an increase of 12% from that achieved in Step 3. Similarly, with the first control variable entered in Step 5, the explanatory power of the model increased from 0.35 to 0.36. Finally, with all the RAA variables in the model (Step 6), 46% of the variance in behavioural intentions was explained.

The *t*-values and significance levels for Step 6 in the table reveal that all the explanatory variables were significantly related to intentions with the exception of Attitude. The Beta coefficients in Step 6 of the table identify the most important variables in terms of their explanatory power. Injunctive Norms and the second Perceived Behavioural Control variable were the most explanatory variables. The first control factor (Control-1), Descriptive Norms and the Stress behavioural belief were also relatively good predictors of intentions.

The interpretation of the statistics in the table is straightforward with respect to understanding applying for promotion to an executive position at the next opportunity. Individuals who are influenced by important referents such as peers, superior and friends and family are more willing to apply for promotion. Likewise, identifying with the behaviour of important referents such as individuals who value their work-life balance proved to be significant driver of managers' promotion intentions. Moreover, individuals who do not regard external barriers as impediments to applying for promotion are more likely to want to apply for promotion. Personal attributes as barriers to behaviour were also important in understanding intentions with individuals having stronger self-confidence in their abilities, experience and peer support reporting a greater willingness to apply. In a similar vein, believing that more job stress was unlikely to accompany promotion to an executive level was associated with stronger intentions to apply.

**Table 7.0.1:** Multiple Regression Results (*N*=148)

Step: Variable Entered	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
	<i>b</i>	<i>S<sub>v.x</sub></i>	<i>β</i>			
1 (Constant)	4.37	.25		17.50	.000	.06
STRESS	-0.07	.02	-.24	-3.48	.001	
2 (Constant)	3.82	.37		10.34	.000	.10
STRESS	-.07	.02	-.24	-3.54	.000	
ATTITUDE	.11	.05	.20	2.07	.038	
3 (Constant)	2.64	.36		7.43	.000	.33
STRESS	-.07	.02	-.26	-4.33	.000	
ATTITUDE	.06	.04	.12	1.48	.140	
INJUNCTIVE	.12	.02	.49	6.68	.000	
4 (Constant)	3.04	.37		8.25	.000	.35
STRESS	-.07	.02	-.25	-4.39	.000	

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	ATTITUDE	.06	.04	.11	1.36	.175	
	INJUNCTIVE	.12	.02	.52	6.35	.000	
	DESCRIPTIVE	-.05	.02	-.15	-2.56	.010	
5	(Constant)	2.98	.358		7.81	.000	.36
	STRESS	-.06	.02		-4.19	.000	
	ATTITUDE	.05	.04	.09	1.09	.276	
	INJUNCTIVE	.11	.02	.09	4.70	.000	
	DESCRIPTIVE	-.04	.05	.16	-2.50	.012	
	CONTROL-1	.05	.05	.29	1.16	.245	
6	(Constant)	1.33	.47		2.82	.005	.46
	STRESS	-.05	.02	-.19	-3.54	.000	
	ATTITUDE	.05	.04	.09	1.25	.212	
	INJUNCTIVE	.09	.02	.35	3.64	.000	
	DESCRIPTIVE	-.05	.02	-.18	-3.07	.002	
	CONTROL-1	.10	.04	.21	2.80	.022	
	CONTROL-2	.06	.01	.33	4.58	.000	

#### 7.1 Predicting Intentions within Gender

Regression analyses were conducted within gender groups and statistical analyses were conducted to ascertain whether potential predictors of intention had weaker or stronger effects depending upon whether participants were male or female. For this analysis, demographic and job characteristics were included along with the RAA variables as predictors of intentions. Next, the coefficients for the intercept and each of the predictors were compared across gender groups to see if any variables had effects that depended upon gender.

The two regression equations resulting from this analysis are presented in the table below and show little variation between the predictors and intention as a function of gender. The only difference between the predictors in the regressions was that years employed in local government was negatively signed in the female regression and positively signed in the male one. However, since this variable was not a statistically significant predictor of intentions in either regression equation, the difference is of little consequence.

Another difference between the two regressions was that the model was more predictive of male intentions than of female intentions, although both models can be regarded as offering good explanatory power with R-square values in excess of 0.45.

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**Table 7.1.1:** Multiple Regression Results by Gender

Variable	Females (N=86)			Males (N=62)		
	<i>b</i>	<i>S<sub>r.x</sub></i>	<i>p</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>S<sub>r.x</sub></i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	-1.053	2.741	.701	-1.200	2.560	.639
Age	.496	.261	.057	.496	.261	.057
Education	.177	.075	.019	.177	.075	.019
Level	.694	.905	.444	.694	.905	.444
YearsLG	-.005	.004	.202	.004	.002	.137
YearsCP	-.014	.010	.174	-.014	.010	.174
STRESS	-.013	.004	.003	-.013	.004	.003
ATTITUDE	.037	.016	.016	.037	.016	.016
INJUNCTIVE	.018	.005	.000	.018	.005	.000
DESCRIPTIVE	-.019	.006	.001	-.019	.006	.001
CONTROL-1	.047	.017	.007	.047	.017	.007
CONTROL-2	.010	.002	.000	.010	.002	.000
ERROR	3.472	.552	.000	4.971	.933	.000
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.487			.590		

### 7.2 Discussion

Managers' intentions to apply for promotion to executive level are best explained by variables identified in the Reasoned Action Approach: attitudes, perceived control, and descriptive and injunctive norms. Each of these variables has implications for understanding decision-making and informing a communications strategy to support the number of applications for promotion. First, a very specific attitude concerning job stress was important in understanding intentions whereas the attitude concerning behavioural outcomes to do with benefits and career advancement was not. If managers believed that they were very likely to experience a great deal of job stress their intentions to apply for promotion were weaker. In contrast, attitudes reflecting positive outcomes from obtaining an executive position were not strong predictors of intentions because they were widely recognised among managers as following from promotion. In other words, managers did not hold very different attitudes toward the positive aspects of the behaviour. Therefore, efforts to promote the financial and career benefits associated with executive promotion are not likely to motivate behaviour because most managers already believe that these things are outcomes of obtaining promotion. However, putting in place strategies that give managers confidence that working at an executive level will subject them to significant stress would likely contribute to shaping positive intentions to apply for promotion.

Second, intentions to apply for promotion at the next opportunity can also be understood in terms of an individual's perception of the normative standards of one or more reference groups. Recall that injunctive norms involve some form of social expectation to "do the right thing" while descriptive norms influence behaviour by simply noting what others are doing. Both types of norms

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influence intentions to apply for promotion, but the former is statistically more important in the decision-making process in this instance.

Intentions were more likely to be positive if managers understand the expectations of other people important to them (such as peers, friends and family, superiors and even potential competitors) and want to comply with these expectations. In this way, information conveying social expectations and encouraging compliance with these expectations can serve to influence intentions in a positive way. This can also be the case when one's peers and friends are also likely to be applicants for the position. Therefore, encouraging managers to apply for promotion by highlighting normative expectations (e.g., by supporting staff to identify their favoured candidates and to urge them to apply for promotion) can work to motivate intentions to apply and result in more applications. Given the relatively strong effect of injunctive norms on intentions, it is reasonable to conclude that applying for promotion was perceived by managers to be imbued with strong social expectations. The reason for the strong influence of injunctive norms is that managers who intend to apply for promotion have a clear idea of what these expectations are and have a strong desire to comply with them.

Knowing what others have decided to do and whether they are likely to act on their decisions can influence intentions to seek promotion. Descriptive Norms were significant predictors of intentions and indicated that perceptions of referents regarded as likely to apply for promotion and whose opinions are considered to be very important tended to enhance participants' intentions to apply for promotion. Therefore, allowing managers to identify with role models who would apply (either hypothetically or otherwise) is likely to inspire them to apply themselves.

Two types of Perceived Behavioural Control explained managers' intentions. The first kind of control described internal capacities and abilities such as peer support, experience and skills. This factor, while positively associated with intentions, was not a strong influence on intentions. As with Attitudes, most managers believed that they would have these capacities when applying for promotion such that variation among managers was narrow. This notwithstanding, helping managers to realise these personal characteristics is important if managers are to have the confidence to apply for promotion. In this instance, most managers in the sample rightly or wrongly believed that their personal ability and experience would not be a barrier to seeking promotion.

The second control factor offers much more scope for increasing applications for promotion because it was one of the strongest predictors of intentions and one upon which managers hold a range of positions. This factor described barriers external to the individual (e.g., the fairness of the recruitment process, council reputation, and the location of the advertised position). Local governments might motivate more applications for executive positions if they can demonstrate that their recruitment procedures can be trusted by potential applicants, that their Council has a good relationship with its community and other stakeholders, and that they can negotiate working conditions in a flexible manner if the location of the position represents a barrier to applying. Determining what is a trustworthy recruitment process, a good reputation, or a barrier associated with locality requires further enquiry that might be done by Councils themselves. In any case, these aspects of Perceived Behavioural Control are as important to shaping intentions as are the social pressures represented by Injunctive Social Norms and offer local governments strong avenues of influence.

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Finally, the sorts of drivers of intentions discussed above were found not to be affected by gender. That is, both male and female managers' intentions were influenced by the RAA variables in the same manner, thereby negating any requirement to adopt different kinds of approaches to increasing women's applications for promotion. However, the application of specific strategies in particular workplaces may need to be informed by gender (e.g., what is meant by satisfactory "work-life balance" and what recruitment procedures might be considered "fair" and "trustworthy").

In sum, applying for promotion to an executive level and the next opportunity is likely to be supported by:

- Demonstrating that any increased job stress can be effectively managed in a way that negates it as a source of negative experience.
- Clearly articulating and defending any expectations (where they exist) about what managers should do regarding applying for promotion. In part, this involves giving managers a reason to want to comply with the expectation, and this would likely result from supporting important referents (e.g. peers and superiors) in encouraging managers to apply.
- Promoting opportunities for managers to learn about their options by understanding how other individuals have approached their own career progression including any difficulties they may have encountered and how they have addressed such challenges. Mentoring is one widespread strategy for helping managers negotiate their career paths. Most likely, managers will be interested in the experiences of successful senior managers and, therefore, a range of different personal experiences should be explored.
- Enhancing managers' control over the behaviour by providing opportunities to build relevant capacities through training and acting in higher positions, and by recognising the skills and executive-level abilities that managers already have. Control would also be enhanced by demonstrating that external threats such as unfair recruitment procedures are not factors that will bear on selection decisions. Introducing and advertising procedures that potential candidates would deem trustworthy is one way that applicants can be encouraged to apply for promotion.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This project set out to understand the intentions of women working in SA Local Government in 'applying for promotion to an executive position the next time a suitable vacancy becomes available.' As we have outlined this was a two-step process which resulted in us receiving survey responses from 148 second and third level managers working in South Australian local government.

We surveyed both men and women in order to ascertain any differences in the belief structure based on gender. There are several general points that need to be made at the outset. First, women and men in South Australian local government occupying second and third level management positions hold similar beliefs about intentions to apply for promotion at the next available opportunity.

Importantly, the only significant difference found in this survey was that women have more positive attitudes towards applying for promotion than men notwithstanding the current situation where less than 5% of CEOs in South Australian local government are women.

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Given the persistent underrepresentation of women as CEOs in South Australian local government when they have similar beliefs to their male counterparts about applying for promotion we are recommending strategies that address attraction, retention and recruitment especially as it relates to gender and the beliefs of those involved in the selection process. It can no longer be claimed that eligible women candidates in South Australian local government hold beliefs and expectations which preclude them from being interested in becoming CEOs, certainly no less so than men.

### **8.1 Recommendations**

We have identified five groups that can take action to address gender inequity in CEO ranks in South Australian local government. Each group has a different role to play in the local government system yet each can have a significant influence in addressing gender related issues across the system. If each group is to respond as we recommend our view is that the system as whole will be more effective in selecting the best available person for the job of CEO.

#### **8.1.1 Elected members**

Elected members play a pivotal role in addressing gender equity issues in local government. It is they who choose the CEO and it is their inherent bias towards stereotypic male CEOs that perpetuates the current situation. We are recommending that councils who wish to ensure that the attraction, selection and retention of the best available candidate from the widest possible pool of available talent occurs that they institute a structure and process which ensures they achieve this outcome.

We recommend that;

- a. The council manages CEO attraction, recruitment and selection processes in an open and transparent manner notwithstanding protecting the confidentiality of candidates.
- b. Elected members develop, promote and demonstrate that recruitment procedures can be trusted by potential applicants; that Council has a good relationship with its community and other stakeholders; and that working conditions can be negotiated in a flexible manner if the location of the position represents a barrier to applying.
- c. Third-party recruitment and selection consultants be used as a matter of course for all CEO appointments in South Australian local government.
- d. Mayors and councillors vested with the responsibility of CEO selection to participate in a one-day workshop conducted by the South Australian Local Government Association on 'Selecting the Best Possible Candidate as your CEO'.

#### **8.1.2 Senior local government managers**

Current senior local government managers can play a pivotal role in preparing their second and third level managers interested in a career as a CEO in South Australian local government. The requisite variety of local governments in the state, from the large urban councils through regional cities to the smaller rural and remote councils there are many different options for managers aspiring for a CEO position. The important role senior managers play is in engaging in a dialogue with other managers who are potential candidates for CEO positions about their career aspirations.

We recommend that:

- e. Current senior local government managers ensure that they engage systematically and periodically with managers working for them as to their career aspirations. This should be comprehensive enough to include aspirations outside of local government should this be an individuals realisation.

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- f. Senior managers establish strategies that give middle managers confidence that while working at an executive level my subject them to significant stress this would likely contribute to shaping positive intentions to apply for promotion.
- g. Highlight normative expectations supporting staff to identify and urge their colleagues to apply for promotion and by mentoring such managers toward promotion.
- h. Assisting managers to identify with executive role models (e.g., through mentoring) who can assist them to negotiate the path toward applying for promotion.
- i. Helping managers to understand what personal abilities and skills are important for promotion and helping them to achieve competency in these areas.
- j. Ensure performance management systems link individual managerial aspirations to the vision, mission and periodic goals, programs and objectives such that both individual and organisational outcomes are achieved.

### **8.1.3 The South Australian Local Government Association (SA LGA)**

As the organisation that represents elected members in the South Australian system of local government the SA LGA is well-placed to institute systems and processes which both support and enable mayors and councillors vested with the responsibility of attracting, selecting and retaining the best possible candidate as their CEO.

We recommend that:

- k. The SA LGA publicise the results of this research such that all councils in South Australia are aware of its findings.
- l. The SA LGA develop a one-day workshop titled 'Selecting the Best Possible Candidate as your CEO' and that elected members closely involved in the selection of their CEO be given every possible opportunity to attend. The workshop, for example, should be offered in metropolitan, regional and rural centres.

### **8.1.4 Local Government Professionals SA**

Local Government Professionals SA play a central role in ensuring managers are well-placed and prepared for applying for promotion to a CEO position. While they had offered such programs in the past we believe their contribution in this area is significant in addressing equal opportunity for women and men interested in pursuing a senior management career in South Australian local government.

We recommend that:

- m. LG Professionals SA continue to offer a range of courses and management development programs which prepare candidates for promotion to a CEO position in South Australian local government. These would include: understanding the political management role of the CEO; from management to leadership in local government; career planning and management; and, programs and activities such as manager exchanges both within and between councils including international exchanges all of which are designed to give individuals a broader perspective on the senior management role in local government.

### **8.1.5 The South Australian Government**

As the level of government responsible for local government in both a regulatory and enabling manner the South Australian Government can be in a vexed position when it comes to CEO selection by councils. While we believe the Government will, in principle, be supportive of our recommendations relating to the institution of systems and processes which enable the most

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suitable candidate to be selected for the CEO in a council local government ministers, historically, state that they are 'hands off' when it comes to matters such as the management of councils. Only in the case of deliberate malfeasance will state governments intervene in council management. Given this dilemma: how to ensure the citizens of South Australia get the best value for money local government services without having to intervene in council management, it is difficult to see the SA Government taking a proactive role of the kind we have recommended above for elected members, senior managers, associations and professional organisations. Nevertheless we believe there are initiatives the State Government can take to ensure councils attract, select and promote the most suitable candidate for the position.

We recommend that:

- n. The South Australian government actively participate in annual programs that celebrate effective leadership and management in their system of local government. Such programs would celebrate and reward councils that are effective in delivering value for money services. This would best be done in concert with the SA LGA and SA LG Professionals who already undertake such programs.

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## BELIEFS ELICITATION INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

**Target Behaviour:** apply for promotion at the next opportunity

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### ELICITATION QUESTIONS

#### ***Behavioural Beliefs:***

1. What do you see as the ***good things or positive outcomes*** that could result if you apply for promotion at the next opportunity? (LOOK FOR AN OUTCOME)
2. What do you see as the ***bad things or negative outcomes*** that could result if you apply for promotion at the next opportunity? (LOOK FOR AN OUTCOME)

#### ***Normative Beliefs:***

If you considered apply for promotion at the next opportunity, there might be certain individuals or groups (you know, people important to you and whose opinion actually matters) that would think you either *should* or should *not* do it.

INJUNCTIVE NORM

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3. Who are the people who would **approve of**, or who would **encourage** you to apply for promotion at the next opportunity?

4. Who are the people who would **disapprove of**, or who would **discourage** you from applying for promotion at the next opportunity?

### DESCRIPTIVE NORM

5. Sometimes, when we are not sure what to do in a particular situation, we look to see what other people are doing.

5.1 Who are the people **most likely** to apply for promotion at the next opportunity?

5.2 Who are the people **least likely** to apply for promotion at the next opportunity?

### **Control Beliefs:**

6. Please tell me any factors or circumstances that would **make it easy or enable** you to apply for promotion at the next opportunity.

7. Please tell me any factors or circumstances that would **make it difficult or prevent** you from applying for promotion at the next opportunity.

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ATTITUDE	FREQUENCY	
	M,F	Total
<b><i>Good things or positive outcomes</i></b>		
Getting the job; success in the task; advancing my career; stepping stone to bigger and better councils	3,4	7
Opportunity to contribute to the area; make a difference; opportunity to influence decision-making in local government	2,3	5
Opportunity to put your stamp on the job (set the direction); more autonomy; greater sense of satisfaction (more rewarding); to be able to use your skills	2,2	4
Opportunity to influence the Council	1,1	2
Opportunity to grow; learn new things; build skills; use skills that cannot be used in current role	2,3	5
Greater impact on the community	0,1	1
More responsibility	0,1	1
Being forced to prioritise your goals;	0,1	1
Institutional benefits from the position; better pay and super;	4,3	7
Validation of my skills; testing your strengths for the role	0,2	2
Prestige; Getting name out there, being noticed.	2,1	3
Better understanding of that Council	1,0	1
Clear understanding of the role so that you will do better next opportunity; finding out what is needed to be successful	2,1	3
Being relieved of tedious tasks	0,1	1
More people oriented position	0,1	1
<b><i>Bad things or negative outcomes</i></b>		
Will make dynamics of position fickle	1,0	1
Challenge of having to work with a new manager;	0,1	1
Being given a hard time by my manager for applying for the job.	0,1	1
Disappointment; emotional rollercoaster; feelings of rejection	2,3	5
Impacts on work productivity afterwards	0,1	1
Dealing with someone else in that role (the advertised position?)	0,1	1
Negative work-life balance; Expectation of always being available; More out of hours meetings	2,2	4
More responsibility; being across multi-tasks; additional pressure; CEO is liable for organisational breaches; stress about delivering in an environment where expected to do more with less	3,2	5
Less job security; Less support	2,1	3
Have to work more with elected members; Being employed by less skilled people (i.e., elected members) would be stressful; dealing with untrained Mayor and elected members.	2,3	5
Not winning the job;	1,0	1
Wasted time working on the application	1,1	2
Realising that you were not competitive	1,1	2
Getting misleading advice which meant you misunderstood Council	1,0	1

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priorities		
(The CEO position) is a less intense (rewarding?) position compared with Director; Not an appealing role;	1,1	2
Having to performance manage staff	0,1	1
Beholden to the whims of elected members	1,1	2
Moving out of my specialist role to a generalist role	0,1	1
Having to compete with others at my level	0,1	1
Managing people who are currently your peers	0,1	1
The CEO is often caught between the elected members and the organisation	1,0	1
Like living in a fishbowl in a small community	1,0	1
Council and community may feel disappointed at my leaving	1,0	1

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INJUNCTIVE NORM	FREQUENCY	
<i>People who would approve or encourage</i>	M,F	Total
My peers; colleagues; my team	2,8	10
Current CEO; current superior (CEO/GM)	3,7	10
Key staff	2,2	4
Elected members; key councillors	2,1	3
Friends	2,2	4
Family; parents	3,4	7
Spouse/partner	2,1	3
Mentors	1,0	1
Immediate past CEO; Other CEOs	2,0	2
Current and past chairpersons	1,0	1
Directors in other councils	0,1	1
People in other organisations watching my career.	0,1	1
People who have benefited from my leadership to date.	0,1	1
Past colleagues who can be referees	1,0	1
People inside the organisation where the vacancy is.	1,0	1
<i>People who would disapprove or discourage</i>		
My peers; colleagues; my team	2,4	6
Others applying for the job	2,3	5
Current CEO; current superior (CEO/GM)	0,3	3
Key staff	1,1	2
Elected members; key councillors	0,2	2
Friends	2,1	3
People intimidated by my success	0,1	1
Family	2,1	3
Nobody; pretty positive culture here; no one really; no one I can think of.	1,3	4
Mentors	1,0	1
People used to me fulfilling my current role	0,1	1
Spouse/partner	2,0	2
Chairperson from previous council	1,0	1
People with old fashioned leadership style less interested in collaboration	0,1	1
People worried about work-life balance	0,1	1
The boys club	0,1	1
People who have been around for a while	0,1	1
Competitors	2,0	2

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DESCRIPTIVE NORM	FREQUENCY	
	M,F	Total
<b><i>People most likely to apply</i></b>		
People who are ambitious; think they are worthy of it; take the initiative; looking to stretch themselves; career driven people	4,4	8
People who want to impress; looking for status	2,0	2
Peers	1,2	3
People external to local government; career based govt people (state and fed) and key private sector people;	4,2	6
People interested in helping the organisation grow; people who see an opportunity to do more	1,1	2
People with good leadership qualities	1,1	2
People seeking financial benefit	1,0	1
People passionate about local govt;	0,1	1
People willing to be controversial	0,1	1
People with strong opinions	0,1	1
People who have a lot of background in local govt.	1,1	1
People who believe in community	0,1	1
People working in planning and governance sections	0,1	1
Competitors	0,1	1
Men more than women	0,1	1
Older people	0,1	1
People unhappy where they are	1,0	1
People from the support side of local government (IT, HR)	0,1	1
<b><i>People least likely to apply</i></b>		
Those comfortable with where they are; those who don't like change;	3,4	7
People who have no drive or ambition; People who are quiet, do their job, don't receive encouragement for promotion and know much more than others but don't have the required arrogance; Those who are 'just in a job'; those who under-rate themselves	1,6	7
People who have no skills; less equipped; no support networks	0,3	3
Women; working mums	0,3	3
Risk averse people; Those who want to keep their "no forced redundancy" condition	1,1	2
Senior execs from corporates	1,0	1
High level execs from government	1,0	1
Local govt middle management; Staff in second and third levels down; junior people.	4,2	6
Those without debt	1,0	1
Those who don't want to commit the time; don't want to work long hours; People with full personal lives; people who want work-life balance	2,4	6
Those who are inexperienced	0,1	1
People with specialist skills (e.g., IT, HR, Finance and Marketing)	0,1	1
People who don't like the politics of local govt.	0,1	1
People from state and federal govt.	1,0	1
Don't know	1,0	1
People who don't think it's worth it.	0,1	1
Those with family who are entrenched where they are	1,0	1
Operational managers	0,1	1

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PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL	FREQUENCY	
<i>Circumstances that would make it easy or enable you to apply</i>	M,F	Total
Being older	1,0	1
Having the skills for the job; Previous work experience; being able to deliver	4,4	8
Councillors that are willing to take a punt on someone with innovation	1,0	1
Knowing where you are heading; Having confidence; desire to be a leader	2,4	6
Having personal influence/connections	0,2	2
Having a mentor; active support from peers; supportive work environment	3,5	8
Knowing if you are ready (through feedback from others)	1,1	2
Knowing about the role, understanding the organisation's intentions for the role;	0,2	2
Knowing the council can afford competent staff	1,0	1
Knowing that people within the organisation are capable; need exposure to elected members and executive networks	2,0	2
Knowing the council is capable of completing all work; Council has no financial difficulties; Council not undertaking controversial projects	3,0	3
Organisational culture prepared to work away from the old culture; Council and senior management working together well.	2,0	2
Organisation with a strong and well-defined set of contractual arrangements; Policy in place for CEO position that supports good working conditions; Job duration needs to be a fair time	2,1	3
Being without family and commitments	1,0	1
Is the role already taken?	0,1	1
A good/fair recruitment process; Confidential recruitment process	0,2	2
The right location – not too far from home	1,1	2
Difficult or divided community	1,0	1
Need provision for recourse if you come under scrutiny by Councillors or the community	0,1	1
<i>Circumstances that would make it difficult or prevent you from applying</i>		
Pressure to apply (may mean going too early)	0,1	1
Not having access to the information you need; Unclear feedback; Lack of clarity role perceived fit	0,3	3
Negative work culture or colleagues; Being hamstrung by elected members; lack of confidence	1,2	3
Uncertainty about recruitment process; Peer involvement in who gets the job; red tape; poor recruitment; confidential recruitment	2,3	5
Having to apply for promotion in another council which is difficult for family and commuting reasons; location of council,	2,2	4
Being in a specialised role means often being stuck because executive roles require more general skills; Lack of experience	0,2	2
Size of council	1,0	1
Insufficient salary	1,0	1
Conservative councils; Reputation of council and organisation; difficult working with a dysfunctional elected body; Difficult/dysfunctional Mayor, divided community, or a political council;	4,2	6
Lack of opportunities to apply	1,0	1
Lack of opportunities to develop	0,1	1
My "green-ness" in local government	0,1	1

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Family commitments; lack of family support	0,2	2
Having to manage people you know are difficult (inside your own organisation)	0,1	1
The way councils negotiate – staff are way over paid	1,0	1
CEO employment arrangements with own contract; forgoing job certainty because of fixed-term contract.	2,0	2
Stress and mental health risks	1,0	1
Lack of confidence – not comfortable doing financial work; Could I be effective?	1,1	2
Lack of good lifestyle options; good work-life balance	2,1	3
Remote office access and flexible working arrangements	0,1	1
Not having a good relationship with elected members (e.g. when a boy's club exists)	0,1	1

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