

## Civil Service Cadet Program

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**Organisation:** Government of Israel

**Country:** Israël

**Level of government:** Central government

**Sector:** General public services

**Type:** Human Resources, Organisational Design

**Launched in:** 2010

**Overall development time:** 2 year(s)

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# Description

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The Civil Service Cadet Program (CSCP) is a new, innovative, and unique initiative created by a resolution passed by the Israeli government in January 2010. The purpose of the program is to build and train a management cadre that will catalyse change in Israel's civil service.

Each year, this cadre is identified, screened, and recruited into a 6 year training and placement track, after which each cadet is placed in a key position in the civil service.

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## Why the innovation was developed

- In an era where the pace and the nature of change are rapidly evolving, the public sector must develop the capacity to identify, sort, train, place and develop its civil servants in a way that will better prepare them for making decisions that are relevant to the complex challenges of the 21st century.
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## Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve effectiveness

- The program cultivates and integrates a management cadre that can lead transformative change for the civil service. This goal is accomplished by providing a critical mass of top-notch agents of change that are trained academically and professionally within five core clusters:
  - Generating multidisciplinary learning: Focusing on the social sciences in the fields of economics, society, politics, and law in Israel and on how they interact.
  - Shaping public policy: Developing the ability to shape public policy: from defining the problem, analysing case studies, and conducting targeted research to shaping an alternative vision and implementing it on the ground, including monitoring and evaluation and continuous learning processes.
  - Learning and integrating leadership models among influentials within the public sphere: Analysing leadership issues (past, present, and future) using tools designed to contend with dilemmas and challenges that face individuals in positions of leadership, authority, and influence in the public domain in Israel and worldwide, and developing group leadership background and skills.
  - Deepening understanding of Israeli society, the Jewish People and the regional and global arenas: Fostering a rich understanding of the history and values of the Israeli society, as well as of the Jewish People, and developing a comprehensive familiarity with key regional and global issues.
  - Acquiring a box of management tools: Building practical tools (methodological and technological) necessary to lead change, and to manage processes and projects in the public and private sectors.
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## Main beneficiaries

Civil Society, Government bodies, Government staff

- Public servants
- Government

# Results

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## Effectiveness

- The CSCP puts an emphasis on both the theoretical-academic and the practical components. During their training, the cadets are exposed to every module through the theoretical-academic lens, and afterwards they see how the module is reflected in the field.
  - The program is designed to optimize the synergy between the academic component and practical training. In this context, the main challenge is to build different training modules that start with theoretical studies in the classroom and end in the field.
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## Service quality

### Responsiveness:

- The key areas of CSCP are through work organisation, recruitment/selection, performance management, training and development, and leadership. The activity expected to impact employee ability to innovate can be defined in terms of skills and knowledge through several aspects such as:
- Providing knowledge and tools to a management cadre that will be leading change in the civil service .
- Generating a multidimensional perspective of Israeli society, including familiarization with the diverse layers of Israeli society.
- Instilling an understanding of the processes of change in the public sector in Israel and worldwide.
- Teaching different management methods and critical examination of the role of the manager and the leader in the civil service.
- Advancing personal and professional empowerment, including dealing with ethical dilemmas.
- Developing and cultivating the following values and capabilities in the cadets – Vision and long-range thinking, constructive thinking: analysing the context and acting accordingly and the ability to examine the significance of events by constantly moving between different spheres of knowledge, and understanding realities in times of constant change.

# Development

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## Design

The CSCP was founded as a continuation to the program 'Atidim: Cadets for Public Service', which had trained about 150 cadets, in 6 cycles between the years 2003-2009.

The first cohort of the renewed program began in August 2012, and currently includes 3 cohorts, each one consisting of approximately 30 cadets.

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## Testing

- No methods were used to test the innovation.
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## Implementation

### Tools used:

- The organizational structure of the program consists of a Board - headed by the Civil Service Commissioner - and the Department of Civil Service Cadets, which is composed of two main units responsible for training; placement and peer network.
  - The department has an overall responsibility for every aspect of the program as well as for building mechanisms that will absorb and integrate the best and the brightest talent into the Israeli Civil Service.
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## Diffusion

- In order to maximize the program potential to enhance the work in the civil service as a whole, the cadet placement model recognises that policy design and catalysing change processes within the civil service nearly do not exist today under the responsibility or authority of single governmental unit. That is why one of the main challenges in the governmental work is to coordinate action and strengthening interfaces of different units.
  - Annual systematic scanning of government decisions, work plans and national assignments and accordingly identifying the relevant governmental units that will address systemically these topics and allocating annually cadets to these units.
  - Placing cadets in units where there are also other alumni of different training initiatives in the public sphere tightens cooperation between the CSCP and other training initiatives designed to build future public service elite, helps to promote major changes that require devotion of large group of people that is based on the same perceptions, values and priorities, and uses its alumni as mentors to the cadets during the practicum or the placement periods.
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## Challenges and solutions

- How to design, plan and implement policy in a reality that is characterized by a mismatch between the capacity to govern (i.e. fragmentation between the executive and the legislative branches, short political tenures, etc.) and the challenges facing Israel.
- How to recruit "generation Y" cadets - which are often characterized by frequent job turn-over - into a system that requires devotion and commitment for a long period in order to catalyse change.
- There are only a few public leadership programs that include both an academic and a non-academic component. Even fewer of them integrate between the two components by investing the resources required to build the bridge between academic studies and professional field work.
- Integration of the cadets within the existing working environment with minimum friction and conflicts.
- Creating a career path, that from one hand will be on the cadet's responsibility, and from the other hand, based on the system's ability to reduce or release bureaucratic barriers or constraints.
- Grooming peer network that will keep its connectivity through lifelong learning processes and keeping annually the ability to produce unique added value to this network.

# Lessons Learned

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## Lessons Learned

- Within the context of the constantly evolving pace and nature of change, the cadet recruitment process looks for candidates who possess qualities of "foxes" as opposed to "hedgehogs" – a distinction made by Isiah Berlin in ""The Fox and the Hedgehog".
  - According to Berlin, a person that has "fox-like" characteristics, will cope easily with the constantly changing reality, is flexible and open to absorbing new patterns of thought and action, and has the ability to cope with long periods of uncertainty. This is as opposed to "hedgehogs" who tend to examine reality through one unifying principle.
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## Conditions for success

- It is important to emphasize that from the beginning, the target audience are people who are motivated to work in the civil service of Israel since they seek to catalyse changes from inside the public system.
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## Other information

Plans for the future of the program include:

Continuing to strengthen the process of building the bridge between academic studies and practical training.

Establishing fields of specialization within the framework of the training program, such as human resources, policy planning, budgeting or regulation and connecting them content-wise to the relevant cadets and practicum units.

Condensation of the practicum so it will not be only placement oriented.

Strengthening the connection between different leadership training programs in the public sphere and other decision makers in the system (both the cadets and the training staffs) in order to establish a set of reserve cadre of future public service elite.

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