HR DELIVERY
Making Sure HR Delivers

STANDALONE DIAGNOSTIC MANUAL / SPF

Succession Planning Diagnostics

Protect critical work and build readiness through credible evidence and owned development.

Exact questions. Clear evidence. Useful next steps.



01
Interview

02
Focus group

03
Survey

04
Large-group intervention

PRACTITIONER EDITION / OCTOBER 2026

8 dimensions / 32 survey items / Retained instrument DIR-2.0

ABOUT THIS EDITION

A manual you can use independently

What this manual contains

This standalone succession planning manual brings together the framework, four diagnostic formats, working pages and practical guidance. It is designed for a practitioner who needs the actual words, not only a description of a method.

The retained DIR-2.0 materials contain 8 dimensions, 40 interview questions, 32 focus-group questions and 32 survey items across the printed route(s). Three complete large-group methods and 24 dimension-level station questions are included.

> **One manual, two kinds of judgement**
>
> The survey produces numerical signals. A confirmed organisational practice level comes from the separate behaviour criteria and checked evidence.

How to use the working pages

Print the relevant participant pages or use the wording in an authorised portal. Keep the item identifiers, route, response labels and version. Do not give the structured and mixed-order form to the same person.

What has been added

The expanded framework explanation, fictional worked case, completed decision record, implementation guidance and reusable forms are new practitioner support. They do not amend the retained diagnostic questions, indicators or scoring rules.

Development status

These are framework-aligned practitioner instruments. The four levels, case counts and numerical boundaries are transparent operating conventions, not established norms, validated maturity cut-offs or evidence of a causal relationship.

This diagnoses succession planning, not an individual's potential or probability of appointment. No public workshop may discuss named successors or private readiness evidence.

Foreword and publication control

The foreword is drafted for Dr Phillip Welsh's approval before external publication. It is not a previously published statement or a claim that he has reviewed this edition.

> **Version control**
>
> SPF-M1.0 / October 2026; diagnostic item version DIR-2.0; language en-plain-2.0. Record any local wording change as a new version and review comparability.

Framework Directory, p. 31; linked HR Delivery framework page.

FOREWORD / DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

A practical way to make progress



FOREWORD

Dr Phillip Welsh

Draft for approval before publication

A succession list can look reassuring while leaving important work exposed. Familiar names do not necessarily provide cover, and a person who is ready for today's role may need different experience for tomorrow's requirements.

This diagnostic moves the conversation from names to continuity and readiness. It asks what work matters, what future contribution is required, what evidence is available and which development or cover actions are funded. The aim is an honest, useful plan that can change as circumstances change.

Start with the organisational question and the experience of the people involved. You do not need to use every tool at once. Choose a proportionate route and be clear about what the review can and cannot establish.

This manual is designed to help you take that first step with confidence. It provides exact questions, complete participant forms and clear rules for considering evidence. Use the words carefully, allow people time to think and remain curious when an answer differs from your expectation.

Treat the four levels as a constructive description of practice, not a judgement about people. A low result is useful when it leads to the right support, a manageable action and a visible review. Where evidence is missing, say so rather than filling the gap with a confident label.

Most importantly, return to those who contributed. Explain what you heard, what will change and what remains unresolved. The value of the diagnostic lies in what becomes clearer and what improves afterwards.

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Participant print route: Full framework: participant introduction p. 41; mixed-order questionnaire pp. 42-46. Keep scoring keys and practitioner pages separate.

QUICK START

Start with a useful question

Choose the method around the decision, the people who can answer and the evidence you need. You do not have to run every method on every assignment.

Your need	Use	What the tool gives you
Understand one person's experience	Diagnostic interview	A structured account, relevant examples and a provisional evidence judgement.
Compare experiences safely	Diagnostic focus group	Different perspectives, concrete episodes and evidence gaps without forcing consensus.
Collect a wider pattern	Diagnostic survey	A controlled dimension profile and explicit numerical survey signals.
Bring a system into the conversation	Large-group intervention	Shared inquiry, practical options and owned experiments, with evidence reviewed separately.
Decide the next level of practice	Behaviour guide	Observable criteria, confirmation rules and a specific next-level action.

First commission: agree the scope and period, select the complete relevant route, arrange a protected route for concerns, and decide how findings will be shared. A smaller, properly scoped review is more useful than a rushed full portfolio.

UNDERSTAND THE FRAMEWORK

The framework in one view



Read it as a connected model

The S8 cycle comprises Scan, Segment, Specify, Source, Scrutinise, Synchronise, Strengthen and Sustain. It begins with strategic demand and critical work, defines target-role standards, explores supply, reviews evidence, calibrates readiness and converts the review into development and continuity action.

Keep the structures distinct

The eight stages form the diagnostic profile. Keep performance, potential, role fit, aspiration, cover and readiness distinct. A four-level organisational rating says something about the succession process, not whether a named person should be appointed. Readiness is conditional on the target role and current evidence.

Framework Directory, p. 31; linked HR Delivery framework page.

SOURCE FRAMEWORK / PRACTITIONER ORIENTATION

Purpose, use and practical value

The framework in brief

Succession planning protects important work before a vacancy exposes a continuity gap. This framework helps leaders identify critical roles and future requirements, examine credible supply options and build development and cover arrangements. It makes readiness assumptions and portfolio dependencies visible so succession discussions lead to owned action.

When the framework helps

- Critical knowledge or authority depends on a small group of people. - Succession lists name familiar candidates without sufficient evidence of readiness. - Future role requirements differ from assumptions in existing continuity plans.

Applying it in practice

Choose a role whose absence would disrupt delivery. Define future requirements and compare cover with relevant evidence. Examine supply options and shared-candidate dependencies, then agree funded development, knowledge transfer or contingency action with a readiness review date.

Framework approach

The S8 cycle starts with future strategic demand and critical work, then builds role standards, supply options and candidate evidence. Calibrated readiness leads to funded development and continuity action. Ongoing assurance revisits assumptions, shared-candidate dependencies and exposure as circumstances change.

Organisation and people value

- Makes critical work and consequential continuity exposure clear to leaders. - Connects readiness conclusions with target-role evidence and explicit conditions. - Assigns ownership for development, knowledge transfer and realistic contingency arrangements.

Keep the decision visible

Where is critical work exposed, and what evidence-led development or continuity action is needed?

> **Use boundary**
>
> This diagnoses succession planning, not an individual's potential or probability of appointment. No public workshop may discuss named successors or private readiness evidence.

Framework Directory, p. 31; linked HR Delivery framework page.

EXPANDED FRAMEWORK EXPLANATION

The dimensions / 01-02

D01 / Scan

Starting succession planning with future work.

Scan examines future strategic demand and the work whose continuity matters. Succession should not begin and end with today's senior job titles. Review how changing services, capabilities or operating conditions affect future requirements. The diagnostic asks whether the organisation understands what it needs to protect or develop before assembling a list of familiar potential successors.

What you need to understand

What future business changes could alter the roles or expertise the organisation must protect?

Which current successor assumption would no longer fit that future?

What working practice looks like

Succession reviews use current strategy and plausible future needs. Role assumptions are checked with business owners.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Strategic demand; future-role requirements; development lead times

A practical development direction

Include future work requirements in each succession review rather than copying last year's list.

D02 / Segment

Identifying critical work and continuity risks.

Segment distinguishes critical work and the consequences of a gap. Some roles require formal succession attention; others may need knowledge transfer, cover or a broader supply response. Examine the rationale for prioritisation rather than assuming that hierarchy alone defines criticality. A transparent distinction helps direct development and continuity resources to the work that matters most.

What you need to understand

How do you decide which roles or areas of knowledge need priority succession attention?

What knowledge, authority or relationship makes the role critical?

What working practice looks like

Criticality criteria are applied across relevant role groups. Plans consider delivery impact, scarcity and time to replace capability.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Criticality criteria; disruption scenarios; knowledge and authority dependencies

A practical development direction

Apply the same criticality questions to leadership, specialist and operational roles.

Dimension names and working criteria: DIR-2.0 SPF. Practitioner commentary is additional.

EXPANDED FRAMEWORK EXPLANATION

The dimensions / 03-04

D03 / Specify

Defining the target role before judging people.

Specify defines the target-role standard and future contribution. Current performance in another role cannot establish readiness without this reference. Review the capabilities, experience, scope and conditions required, including how they may change. Keep the standard separate from a preferred candidate so the succession conversation does not quietly rewrite requirements around a familiar person.

What you need to understand

What evidence describes success in the future role?

What can a temporary cover arrangement safely do and what can it not do?

What working practice looks like

Readiness criteria cover capability and relevant experience for the target role. Role owners and specialists check the criteria.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Target-role profile; critical decisions; cover boundaries

A practical development direction

Test the criteria with role specialists and distinguish current from future demands.

D04 / Source

Building a realistic range of successor and cover options.

Source explores credible supply options. Internal candidates, broader benches, capability pools and external sources can play different roles. Examine actual access, lead times and participant aspirations rather than treating a long list as reliable cover. The diagnostic also asks whether several plans depend on the same person or supply route without acknowledging that dependency.

What you need to understand

What internal and external options could provide the capability needed for this role?

What evidence supports availability and willingness without assuming either?

What working practice looks like

Internal development, external supply and temporary cover are considered separately. Access to consideration is based on clear criteria.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Supply options; access rules; authorised aspiration and availability information

A practical development direction

Check availability and development lead time before treating an option as credible.

Dimension names and working criteria: DIR-2.0 SPF. Practitioner commentary is additional.

EXPANDED FRAMEWORK EXPLANATION

The dimensions / 05-06

D05 / Scrutinise

Examining readiness using relevant evidence.

Scrutinise examines the quality and relevance of candidate evidence. A nomination, reputation or strong current performance may raise a useful question but does not answer the target-role readiness question. Review what has been demonstrated, under what conditions and what is missing. Keep the evidence authorised and proportionate to the decision being considered.

What you need to understand

What evidence supports the view that a person could meet the target role's requirements?

Which requirement is demonstrated and which remains an assumption?

What working practice looks like

Multiple relevant sources inform important readiness conclusions. Aspiration, availability and development needs are considered separately.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Target-role evidence record; observed experience; limitations

A practical development direction

Record capability evidence, aspiration, availability and remaining questions in separate fields.

D06 / Synchronise

Checking consistency and dependencies across the succession plan.

Synchronise brings readiness judgements, aspirations and portfolio dependencies into a consistent review. Calibration should examine evidence, not simply align opinions with the most senior voice. Check whether the same person is being relied upon for incompatible needs and whether future requirements are understood in the same way. Uncertainty should remain visible in the resulting plan.

What you need to understand

How are succession views compared across leaders and roles?

Which shared-candidate or timing dependency makes the current plan fragile?

What working practice looks like

Reviews challenge differences using evidence rather than seniority. The plan checks timing, availability and competing demands on candidates.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Calibration record; shared-candidate dependencies; simultaneous-loss scenario

A practical development direction

Map candidates appearing in several plans and agree which coverage is genuinely possible.

Dimension names and working criteria: DIR-2.0 SPF. Practitioner commentary is additional.

EXPANDED FRAMEWORK EXPLANATION

The dimensions / 07-08

D07 / Strengthen

Turning succession discussion into funded action.

Strengthen turns the succession review into funded development and continuity action. A named person on a list does not build readiness. Examine the assignments, practice, support, knowledge transfer and cover arrangements that have actually been agreed. Distinguish an employee's development opportunity from a promise that they will later receive a particular appointment.

What you need to understand

What actions will strengthen readiness or protect continuity before a vacancy occurs?

Who provides the opportunity, feedback and release time?

What working practice looks like

Actions include resources, support and review evidence. Knowledge transfer and contingency arrangements are tested in practice.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Funded development; experience access; knowledge-transfer and cover plan

A practical development direction

Fund the action and test the cover arrangement on a real or simulated task.

D08 / Sustain

Maintaining readiness and continuity assurance.

Sustain keeps the succession plan current as people, roles and circumstances change. The organisation needs an owned review of readiness assumptions and continuity exposure, not a list refreshed only for an annual meeting. Examine what triggers reassessment and how learning from development or cover is used. Keep current evidence and the dates behind conclusions visible.

What you need to understand

How is the succession plan kept current and tested over time?

How are outdated readiness claims or lost availability identified?

What working practice looks like

Reviews use current development and continuity evidence. Leaders record decisions on unresolved exposure and contingency.

> **Useful evidence**
>
> Trigger log; updated evidence; continuity tests and decisions

A practical development direction

Review the most exposed roles using current evidence rather than last year's labels.

Dimension names and working criteria: DIR-2.0 SPF. Practitioner commentary is additional.

MODEL ARCHITECTURE AND BOUNDARIES

Read the model without mixing its parts

The main structure

The S8 cycle comprises Scan, Segment, Specify, Source, Scrutinise, Synchronise, Strengthen and Sustain. It begins with strategic demand and critical work, defines target-role standards, explores supply, reviews evidence, calibrates readiness and converts the review into development and continuity action.

What is being rated

The eight stages form the diagnostic profile. Keep performance, potential, role fit, aspiration, cover and readiness distinct. A four-level organisational rating says something about the succession process, not whether a named person should be appointed. Readiness is conditional on the target role and current evidence.

Keep the scope precise

Review a defined portfolio of critical work and target roles. Use the current succession cycle and latest changes to role requirements.

Connect to related work

Connect to Workforce Planning for future supply and demand, Capability Assessment for relevant evidence, Career Paths for opportunities and Coaching and Mentoring for support. One candidate may appear against several roles; shared dependencies need an explicit continuity response.

An important distinction

Do not equate potential, strong current performance or a development nomination with readiness. Each answers a different question and needs its own evidence.

What the additional checks do

The supplementary model checks later in this manual ask whether a related design or approval decision has enough support. Record Ready, Needs work, Not enough evidence or Not relevant. These statuses do not add points to the diagnostic.

> **No automatic conversion**
>
> Stages, pillars, evidence layers, individual capability scales and organisational practice levels answer different questions. Keep their names and purposes separate.

Framework Directory, p. 31; linked HR Delivery framework page.

WORKED EXAMPLE / FICTIONAL

A completed framework decision record

Fictional practitioner example. The fictional Harbour Services has one senior specialist listed as successor for three critical roles. The person has not discussed all three options and some future requirements have changed. The diagnostic examines critical-work exposure, evidence, aspiration and the dependency before the next talent review.

Record field	Worked example
Critical work, future role and horizon	Critical work: maintaining specialist fault-resolution capability over the next eighteen months.
Vacancy consequence and cover boundary	Distinguish short-term cover from full role readiness and record the consequence of a vacancy.
Target-role standard and authorised evidence	Define future target-role requirements and use authorised, relevant evidence.
Supply, aspiration and shared-candidate dependencies	Review internal and external supply, the individual's aspiration and the three-role shared-candidate dependency.
Funded development and knowledge-transfer owner	Fund targeted experience and knowledge transfer; assign a separate owner for practical cover.
Readiness conditions and continuity review	Review readiness conditions and continuity exposure when the role, person or operating context changes.

This is a learning example, not a real client record or an approved operational recommendation. It illustrates how to keep a decision, its evidence and its owner connected.

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Your framework decision record

Organisation / unit: _____ Period: _____
Decision owner: _____ Reviewer / version: _____

Critical work, future role and horizon

Vacancy consequence and cover boundary

Target-role standard and authorised evidence

Supply, aspiration and shared-candidate dependencies

Funded development and knowledge-transfer owner

Readiness conditions and continuity review

FROM EVIDENCE TO DELIVERY

Turn the review into useful outputs

What this framework should produce

Output 01

Critical-work risk map

Output 02

target-role standards

Output 03

readiness evidence and limits

Output 04

funded development and cover plan

- Critical-work risk map identifying roles, future requirements and continuity gaps. - Succession evidence record explaining requirements, readiness assumptions and limitations. - Development and continuity plan assigning experiences, cover, resources and owners.

A practical handover

Every material conclusion needs a named recipient, a clear decision and an acceptance test. Give the receiving owner the evidence, the limits and the unresolved questions, not only a colour-coded result.

Keep four things separate

First, what people reported. Second, what the checked work evidence supports. Third, what remains uncertain. Fourth, the action proposed. This makes challenge possible without dismissing anyone's experience.

Decision to support

Where is critical work exposed, and what evidence-led development or continuity action is needed?

Receiving owner and acceptance test

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Commission the diagnostic

Complete this brief with the sponsor before asking people for information. Do not collect a wider set of personal data than the agreed decision needs.

Decision the review must support

Unit, population, route and reference period

Sponsor, decision owner and practitioner responsibilities

Evidence access, permitted use and private concern route

Reporting groups, access and retention arrangements

Dates for fieldwork, feedback and action review

PREPARE AND PROTECT PARTICIPANTS

Involve people who can help you understand

The intended audience

Business leaders, HR, role experts and development owners. Employee listening concerns access and development, not named successor lists.

Choose cases before seeing the results

Start with the latest five distinct relevant work cases within scope. Include the ordinary flow and relevant exceptions. Record the selection rule and why any case is excluded. Do not choose only successful examples.

Where only two to four relevant cases exist, examine all of them and label the limited case base. With fewer than two, a Performing level cannot be confirmed under the retained rule.

Separate access from permission

A participant may know that a record exists without being authorised to share it. Use de-identified material or an agreed observation instead of requesting private case files.

Use complementary perspectives

Invite people who deliver the work and people who experience its consequences. A senior owner may explain intent; a user or work colleague may explain how it operates. Neither perspective is automatically the complete account.

Check the quality of an example

Record the date or period, the relevant task, what happened, the source and a contrary case. Distinguish first-hand observation from a second-hand account. A workshop story is useful but remains an account until checked.

> **Evidence to begin with**
>
> Strategic demand; future-role requirements; development lead times

Missing perspective or record to obtain

PARTICIPANT CARE

Make participation clear, safe and accessible

Use plain words and time to think

Read one question at a time. Offer a pause and repeat the wording without implying a preferred answer. A person may explain in their own words or ask what a term means. Use the glossary and record any ambiguity for the pilot review.

Support language and access

Test the questions with intended users before launch. For another language, use a reviewed translation, independent checking and a small comprehension trial. Do not assume that a translated form is equivalent merely because the words look similar.

Explain information use

State who sees notes or raw responses, who receives group findings, how long information is retained and how a concern can be raised privately. Do not promise anonymity in an interview or a focus group.

Concerns needing a separate response

Named succession or aspiration information would be shared in public discussion.

One person is assumed to cover simultaneous critical gaps without a viable alternative.

Protect identity in the report

The default numerical reporting base is ten eligible people per dimension. It is not a guarantee of anonymity. Consider rare roles, intersecting groups and identifying comments. Suppress or combine only where this preserves meaning and protects people.

> **Read aloud**
>
> You may pause, ask for clarification or choose not to answer. Please use the agreed private route for a personal or urgent concern rather than naming people in this discussion.

BEHAVIOURAL RATING MODEL

Four organisational practice levels

These labels help you describe progress constructively. The specific behaviour indicators for each dimension are the decision criteria; this summary is not a substitute for them.

Level	What the label means	The next development task
1 / Foundational	Important practice is absent, unclear or dependent on informal effort. A relevant weak pattern must actually be observed.	Establish one clear, owned way of working and test it in a real case.
2 / Developing	The basic arrangement exists and has at least one real operating example. It is not yet dependable enough to claim consistent delivery.	Use the arrangement across representative cases and correct avoidable variation.
3 / Performing	The Developing requirements and both Performing indicators are supported across the required case base.	Review sustained use and respond to what the evidence shows.
4 / Sustaining	Performing practice is maintained, reviewed and adapted with evidence over time.	Keep it useful as circumstances change and learn from exceptions.

Not yet confirmed is an evidence status, not a fifth level. Do not assign Foundational merely because information is missing.

EXACT EVIDENCE RULES / RETAINED DIR-2.0

Decide the level from evidence, not votes

Start with the observed pattern

Confirm Foundational only when at least one printed Foundational pattern is directly observed and the higher-level rules are not met. An unanswered question is not evidence of a weak practice.

Developing / Level 2

Both Developing indicators must be supported, with at least one recent real operating example. A policy, plan or intention alone is not enough.

Performing / Level 3

Developing must be supported. Both Performing indicators must hold in at least four of the latest five relevant distinct cases. For a larger pre-agreed sample, require at least 80%. If only two to four relevant cases exist, examine all and require both indicators in every case; label the limited case base. Fewer than two cannot confirm Level 3.

Sustaining / Level 4

Performing must be supported. Both Sustaining indicators must hold, with two reviews at least 28 days apart showing continued use and a reasoned decision to continue or change the practice.

Confirm the judgement

A second relevant perspective AND a record or observation are required for confirmation. One interview alone stays provisional. Material unresolved contradictions remain Not yet confirmed. A relevant serious unresolved concern prevents confirmation of Performing or Sustaining.

Keep a profile

Do not add or average ordinal behaviour levels. Where a conservative headline is needed, use the lowest confirmed required dimension in one pre-scoped route. Give no headline when any required dimension is unconfirmed.

> **Operating conventions**
>
> The case counts, 80% rule, 28-day interval and four level labels are explicit DIR-2.0 rules, not validated norms or universal standards.

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Record a defensible rating

Use the printed dimension guide. Decide against each indicator, not the general impression of the conversation.

Dimension, required indicators and scope

Cases reviewed, selection rule and observed evidence

Both indicators at the candidate level: supported / not supported

Contrary examples, limitations and any serious unresolved concern

Second perspective and record or observation used for confirmation

Highest complete supported level, status, reviewer and next check

TOOL 01 / INTERVIEW / READ-ALOUD SCRIPT

Run a supportive, structured interview

Read this opening

"Thank you for taking part. We are reviewing succession and continuity planning. This is about how the work is organised and experienced, not about judging you. I will ask for examples of what works and what is difficult. You may pause, ask for clarification or choose not to answer."

Agree the scope

Review: a defined portfolio of critical work and target roles. Period: the current succession cycle and latest changes to role requirements. Invite: Business leaders, HR, role experts and development owners. Employee listening concerns access and development, not named successor lists.

Explain information use

"Before we begin, I will explain who can see the notes, how findings will be reported and the limits of confidentiality. Please avoid names or private case details. Is that clear, and are you comfortable to continue?"

Plan the conversation

Allow 10 minutes for opening, about six minutes per dimension, and ten minutes to review and close. For each route, work through its question cards in order. Split any route longer than eight dimensions into two appointments. Do not rush to finish the book.

Use the exact question cards

Ask all five questions on each card, one at a time. The second question is a specific follow-up. The later questions establish a real example, a different experience and evidence. Request the listed record only where the participant can properly share it.

Test the behaviour guide

After each dimension, read the two checks in the most likely level row. Ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Note the evidence against each check. Do not ask the person to defend a number.

Read this closing

"Let me check my understanding. What should we keep? What is the most useful next improvement? Which record or person could help us check anything still uncertain? Is there something important that my questions missed?"

Rating and boundaries

Use the behaviour rules on the shared rating-rules page. One interview is provisional until checked with another relevant perspective and a record or observation. Review succession practice and continuity arrangements, not public lists of named successors. Keep aspiration, current performance and readiness for a future role distinct.

Opening and instructions retained from DIR-2.0 SPF, p. 626.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D01 / Scan

Starting succession planning with future work.

01 What future business changes could alter the roles or expertise the organisation must protect?

02 Which current successor assumption would no longer fit that future?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Strategic demand; future-role requirements; development lead times

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D02 / Segment

Identifying critical work and continuity risks.

01 How do you decide which roles or areas of knowledge need priority succession attention?

02 What knowledge, authority or relationship makes the role critical?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Criticality criteria; disruption scenarios; knowledge and authority dependencies

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D03 / Specify

Defining the target role before judging people.

01 What evidence describes success in the future role?

02 What can a temporary cover arrangement safely do and what can it not do?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Target-role profile; critical decisions; cover boundaries

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D04 / Source

Building a realistic range of successor and cover options.

01 What internal and external options could provide the capability needed for this role?

02 What evidence supports availability and willingness without assuming either?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Supply options; access rules; authorised aspiration and availability information

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D05 / Scrutinise

Examining readiness using relevant evidence.

01 What evidence supports the view that a person could meet the target role's requirements?

02 Which requirement is demonstrated and which remains an assumption?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Target-role evidence record; observed experience; limitations

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D06 / Synchronise

Checking consistency and dependencies across the succession plan.

01 How are succession views compared across leaders and roles?

02 Which shared-candidate or timing dependency makes the current plan fragile?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Calibration record; shared-candidate dependencies; simultaneous-loss scenario

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D07 / Strengthen

Turning succession discussion into funded action.

01 What actions will strengthen readiness or protect continuity before a vacancy occurs?

02 Who provides the opportunity, feedback and release time?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Funded development; experience access; knowledge-transfer and cover plan

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

TOOL 01 / EXACT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

D08 / Sustain

Maintaining readiness and continuity assurance.

01 How is the succession plan kept current and tested over time?

02 How are outdated readiness claims or lost availability identified?

03 Please describe the most recent example. What did people do, and what happened?

04 Where has this worked differently? Please describe a recent exception.

05 What record or example could we look at together to check this?

> **Request only appropriate evidence**
>
> Trigger log; updated evidence; continuity tests and decisions

After the card, ask: "Which parts of this description match what happens here? What does not match?" Use the relevant behaviour guide; one interview remains provisional until checked.

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Summarise the interview

Read the summary back to the participant. Correct your understanding without asking them to defend a score.

Scope, participant perspective and period - do not put a name in a shared report

Practices to keep and evidence supporting them

Difficulties, exceptions and who experiences them

Provisional dimension judgements and indicator evidence

Records or other perspectives needed before confirmation

Agreed next step, safe reporting wording and feedback date

TOOL 02 / FOCUS GROUP / FACILITATOR SCRIPT

Listen for different experiences

Read this opening

"Thank you for joining. We are here to understand succession and continuity planning. Different experiences are useful. We are not trying to reach the same answer. Please speak about work practices without naming people. You may pass on any question."

Who takes part

Use six to eight participants and a facilitator. A separate note-taker is helpful. Group people so they can speak freely. Explain that participants hear one another, so the session is not anonymous. Ask everyone to avoid repeating identifiable comments outside it.

Before the discussion

Use the printed private rating sheet after the question cards. Give the matching behaviour guides first. Say: "Choose the description that best matches what you have seen. Choose Not yet confirmed where you cannot judge. This is your starting view, not a vote about the final result." Keep individual ballots private.

Run each question card

Ask the four printed questions on each card. After the first question, allow a minute of quiet thought. Invite examples around the group, allowing people to pass. Ask the different-experience question even when the first answers agree.

After the discussion

Say: "Has your view changed after hearing the examples? You may keep it or change it. Please note what evidence influenced you." Record the range of experiences. The reviewer uses the behaviour rules; do not average levels or declare the majority correct.

Close supportively

"What is one thing we should keep, and one thing we should make easier? We will explain what we heard, check the gaps and share an update on the agreed date." Review succession practice and continuity arrangements, not public lists of named successors. Keep aspiration, current performance and readiness for a future role distinct.

TOOL 02 / COVERAGE AND TIMING

Plan the focus-group sessions

Run one 90-minute session for each batch below. Each has up to four dimensions. Repeat with other relevant groups where needed to compare experiences. session 1: D01, D02, D03, D04; session 2: D05, D06, D07, D08.

Route	Session	Dimension cards
Full framework	1	D01, D02, D03, D04
Full framework	2	D05, D06, D07, D08

Retained running order: 0-10: Welcome, purpose and boundaries. 10-15: Private starting ratings. 15-63: Discuss four cards, about 12 minutes each; divide time equally if fewer. 63-75: Compare patterns and useful actions. 75-85: Private closing ratings and evidence gaps. 85-90: Confirm next steps. Use fewer cards where language support or sensitive evidence needs more time; schedule an additional session rather than omit questions.

TOOL 02 / EXACT QUESTIONS / FULL FRAMEWORK

Focus-group question cards

Full framework

D01 / Scan

Starting succession planning with future work.

01 Which future demands should shape succession planning now?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What future-work scenario should change the succession brief?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Strategic demand; future-role requirements; development lead times

Different experiences / examples

Full framework

D02 / Segment

Identifying critical work and continuity risks.

01 Which absences would most disrupt important work, and why?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What critical-work segment should be brought into the continuity plan?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Criticality criteria; disruption scenarios; knowledge and authority dependencies

Different experiences / examples

TOOL 02 / EXACT QUESTIONS / FULL FRAMEWORK

Focus-group question cards

Full framework

D03 / Specify

Defining the target role before judging people.

01 Are future role requirements clear enough to assess readiness fairly?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What target-role standard would make readiness discussion more defensible?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Target-role profile; critical decisions; cover boundaries

Different experiences / examples

Full framework

D04 / Source

Building a realistic range of successor and cover options.

01 Which supply options are credible, and which are being assumed without evidence?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What supply route should be investigated before the set of activities is finalised?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Supply options; access rules; authorised aspiration and availability information

Different experiences / examples

TOOL 02 / EXACT QUESTIONS / FULL FRAMEWORK

Focus-group question cards

Full framework

D05 / Scrutinise

Examining readiness using relevant evidence.

01 How do we distinguish current performance, aspiration and future-role readiness?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What experience or assessment would resolve the most important uncertainty?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Target-role evidence record; observed experience; limitations

Different experiences / examples

Full framework

D06 / Synchronise

Checking consistency and dependencies across the succession plan.

01 Where might plans rely on the same person or use different readiness standards?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What set of activities-level contingency would reduce that dependency?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Calibration record; shared-candidate dependencies; simultaneous-loss scenario

Different experiences / examples

TOOL 02 / EXACT QUESTIONS / FULL FRAMEWORK

Focus-group question cards

Full framework

D07 / Strengthen

Turning succession discussion into funded action.

01 Which development, knowledge-transfer or cover action should happen next?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What supported assignment or continuity action should be mobilised now?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Funded development; experience access; knowledge-transfer and cover plan

Different experiences / examples

Full framework

D08 / Sustain

Maintaining readiness and continuity assurance.

01 What would tell us that a succession or cover assumption needs to change?

02 Please think silently of a recent example. What helped, and what got in the way?

03 Who had a different experience? What might explain the difference?

04 What trigger and owner would keep the set of activities current?

> **Facilitator evidence check**
>
> Trigger log; updated evidence; continuity tests and decisions

Different experiences / examples

PARTICIPANT WORKING SHEET / FOCUS OR WORKSHOP

Private starting and closing views

Full framework. Read the relevant behaviour guide before choosing. Your view may stay the same or change. You may pass. Do not add your name to a shared sheet.

Dimension	Starting view	Closing view	Evidence that influenced your view
D01 / Scan	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D02 / Segment	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D03 / Specify	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D04 / Source	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D05 / Scrutinise	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D06 / Synchronise	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D07 / Strengthen	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	
D08 / Sustain	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	1 2 3 4 Not yet confirmed	

1 Foundational / 2 Developing / 3 Performing / 4 Sustaining. These are private views, not numerical votes or a confirmed organisational result.

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Capture the group's evidence

Keep the record about work practices. Remove identifying details and do not attribute comments to named individuals in a shared report.

Route, dimensions, work period and group coverage

Examples of practice that participants recognise

Different experiences and possible explanations

What is directly evidenced and what remains an account

Useful action ideas, decisions outside this group and dissent

Evidence checks, owners and date for feedback

TOOL 03 / ADMINISTRATOR GUIDE

Prepare the survey administration

Who should receive this survey

Business leaders, HR, role experts and development owners. Employee listening concerns access and development, not named successor lists. Review succession practice and continuity arrangements, not public lists of named successors. Keep aspiration, current performance and readiness for a future role distinct.

Which form to use

Choose one form for an administration: the complete structured form or the complete mixed-order participant form. Both contain the same wording. Do not give both to the same person. Print the relevant route only.

A simple launch check

Before launch, read the form with a small group of intended users. Ask what they think each item means. Check reading support, access, navigation and translations. Record changes as a new version rather than quietly changing a live questionnaire.

Portal settings

The portal must retain the item ID, route, wording, 1-5 scale and separate missing-answer codes. Do not force an answer or turn a blank into zero. Present one item per screen where this improves accessibility. Preserve the same fixed order for the fieldwork cycle.

The result has two parts

The numerical result is a survey signal. The confirmed organisational practice level comes from the separate behaviour guide and evidence. The actual scoring key and a worked example follow the complete forms.

> **Instrument boundary**
>
> The eight stages form the diagnostic profile. Keep performance, potential, role fit, aspiration, cover and readiness distinct. A four-level organisational rating says something about the succession process, not whether a named person should be appointed. Readiness is conditional on the target role and current evidence.

Use only the relevant route. Do not merge item banks, change response labels or add reverse scoring to this release.

TOOL 03 / PARTICIPANT INTRODUCTION / FULL FRAMEWORK

Before you begin

Participant introduction - use as written

"We would like to understand succession and continuity planning so that we can choose useful improvements. Please answer from your own experience. There are no right or wrong answers. Do not answer for other people or describe how you think things should be."

Reference period and response instructions

"Please consider the current succession cycle and latest changes to role requirements. For each item, choose one response using the printed scale. Choose DK when you do not know or cannot judge, NA when the item does not apply or you have no relevant opportunity, or PN when you prefer not to answer. You may leave an item blank."

Your questionnaire

Full framework / 32 statements.

Privacy wording

"Please do not put your name or other people's names in the questionnaire or comments. Before you start, the administrator will explain the purpose, reporting groups, who can access responses, how long they will be retained and the private route for urgent concerns."

You can ask for help

Please tell the administrator if the wording, language, reading format or access makes participation difficult. You may choose not to answer any item.

> **Choose one form**
>
> The mixed-order and structured forms contain the same statements. Complete the form you have been given, not both.

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Participant survey / mixed order

Full framework / form page 1 of 4. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

01 / SPF-D04-S01

We consider more than familiar internal candidates.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

02 / SPF-D03-S01

Target-role requirements are clear.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

03 / SPF-D05-S01

Readiness judgements use target-role evidence.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

04 / SPF-D08-S01

Succession assumptions are reviewed when circumstances change.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

05 / SPF-D02-S01

Critical roles are identified using clear continuity criteria.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

06 / SPF-D07-S01

Development actions are linked to specific readiness gaps.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

07 / SPF-D01-S01

Succession planning considers future strategic requirements.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

08 / SPF-D06-S01

Readiness judgements are calibrated across relevant reviewers.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Participant survey / mixed order

Full framework / form page 2 of 4. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

09 / SPF-D07-S02

Critical development experiences have resources and owners.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

10 / SPF-D01-S02

Changes in critical work are reflected in the review.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

11 / SPF-D06-S02

The set of activities identifies candidates counted against several roles.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

12 / SPF-D02-S02

Role criticality is distinguished from seniority.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

13 / SPF-D04-S02

Potential supply options are reviewed for realistic availability.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

14 / SPF-D05-S02

Evidence limitations are recorded.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

15 / SPF-D03-S02

Readiness criteria refer to relevant work evidence.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

16 / SPF-D08-S02

Readiness evidence is refreshed at an appropriate interval.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Participant survey / mixed order

Full framework / form page 3 of 4. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

17 / SPF-D02-S03

The consequences of a vacancy are documented.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

18 / SPF-D03-S03

Emergency cover is distinguished from full role readiness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

19 / SPF-D08-S03

Reviews lead to updated development or continuity decisions.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

20 / SPF-D01-S03

The planning horizon matches the time needed to build readiness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

21 / SPF-D07-S03

Knowledge-transfer and cover actions are included where needed.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

22 / SPF-D06-S03

Continuity plans consider simultaneous vacancies or absences.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

23 / SPF-D05-S03

Performance in the current role is distinguished from future-role readiness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

24 / SPF-D04-S03

Employee aspirations are considered through an appropriate private process.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Participant survey / mixed order

Full framework / form page 4 of 4. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

25 / SPF-D06-S04

Succession plans check when the same person is relied on for several roles.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

26 / SPF-D05-S04

Readiness conclusions make important evidence gaps clear.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

27 / SPF-D07-S04

Succession actions include practical development or continuity measures with clear owners.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

28 / SPF-D03-S04

Succession readiness is assessed against the future role's requirements.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

29 / SPF-D04-S04

Succession planning considers realistic alternatives to a single named successor.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

30 / SPF-D02-S04

Roles are prioritised for succession because of their effect on continuity, not title alone.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

31 / SPF-D08-S04

An accountable owner checks whether agreed succession actions have been completed.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

32 / SPF-D01-S04

Business leaders explain the delivery risks that the succession plan should address.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / OPTIONAL PARTICIPANT QUESTIONS

Your comments

Full framework. These questions are optional. Please do not include names, medical details or identifying case information. Use the agreed private route for a personal or urgent concern.

What is one thing about succession and continuity planning that we should keep?

What is one thing about succession and continuity planning that would most help you if it improved?

What should we understand before deciding what to change?

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Structured survey / grouped form

Full framework / form page 1 of 5. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

D01 / Scan

01 / SPF-D01-S01

Succession planning considers future strategic requirements.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

02 / SPF-D01-S02

Changes in critical work are reflected in the review.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

03 / SPF-D01-S03

The planning horizon matches the time needed to build readiness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

04 / SPF-D01-S04

Business leaders explain the delivery risks that the succession plan should address.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

D02 / Segment

05 / SPF-D02-S01

Critical roles are identified using clear continuity criteria.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

06 / SPF-D02-S02

Role criticality is distinguished from seniority.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

07 / SPF-D02-S03

The consequences of a vacancy are documented.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Structured survey / grouped form

Full framework / form page 2 of 5. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

D02 / Segment

08 / SPF-D02-S04

Roles are prioritised for succession because of their effect on continuity, not title alone.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

D03 / Specify

09 / SPF-D03-S01

Target-role requirements are clear.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

10 / SPF-D03-S02

Readiness criteria refer to relevant work evidence.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

11 / SPF-D03-S03

Emergency cover is distinguished from full role readiness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

12 / SPF-D03-S04

Succession readiness is assessed against the future role's requirements.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

D04 / Source

13 / SPF-D04-S01

We consider more than familiar internal candidates.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

14 / SPF-D04-S02

Potential supply options are reviewed for realistic availability.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Structured survey / grouped form

Full framework / form page 3 of 5. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

D04 / Source

15 / SPF-D04-S03

Employee aspirations are considered through an appropriate private process.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

16 / SPF-D04-S04

Succession planning considers realistic alternatives to a single named successor.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

D05 / Scrutinise

17 / SPF-D05-S01

Readiness judgements use target-role evidence.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

18 / SPF-D05-S02

Evidence limitations are recorded.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

19 / SPF-D05-S03

Performance in the current role is distinguished from future-role readiness.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

20 / SPF-D05-S04

Readiness conclusions make important evidence gaps clear.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

D06 / Synchronise

21 / SPF-D06-S01

Readiness judgements are calibrated across relevant reviewers.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Structured survey / grouped form

Full framework / form page 4 of 5. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

D06 / Synchronise

22 / SPF-D06-S02

The set of activities identifies candidates counted against several roles.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

23 / SPF-D06-S03

Continuity plans consider simultaneous vacancies or absences.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

24 / SPF-D06-S04

Succession plans check when the same person is relied on for several roles.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

D07 / Strengthen

25 / SPF-D07-S01

Development actions are linked to specific readiness gaps.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

26 / SPF-D07-S02

Critical development experiences have resources and owners.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

27 / SPF-D07-S03

Knowledge-transfer and cover actions are included where needed.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

28 / SPF-D07-S04

Succession actions include practical development or continuity measures with clear owners.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / FULL FRAMEWORK

Structured survey / grouped form

Full framework / form page 5 of 5. Choose one response for each statement.

1 Strongly disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree

DK: do not know / cannot judge. NA: not applicable / no opportunity. PN: prefer not to answer. A blank is also allowed.

D08 / Sustain

29 / SPF-D08-S01

Succession assumptions are reviewed when circumstances change.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

30 / SPF-D08-S02

Readiness evidence is refreshed at an appropriate interval.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

31 / SPF-D08-S03

Reviews lead to updated development or continuity decisions.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

32 / SPF-D08-S04

An accountable owner checks whether agreed succession actions have been completed.

☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ DK ☐ NA ☐ PN

TOOL 03 / STRUCTURED KEY

Survey item key / Full framework

ADMINISTRATOR ONLY. Every item retains its 1-5 value. DK, NA, PN, blank and NOT_ROUTED remain missing. There are no reverse-keyed items in DIR-2.0.

Dimension	Exact item identifiers	Scoring control
D01 / Scan	SPF-D01-S01 SPF-D01-S02 SPF-D01-S03 SPF-D01-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct
D02 / Segment	SPF-D02-S01 SPF-D02-S02 SPF-D02-S03 SPF-D02-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct
D03 / Specify	SPF-D03-S01 SPF-D03-S02 SPF-D03-S03 SPF-D03-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct
D04 / Source	SPF-D04-S01 SPF-D04-S02 SPF-D04-S03 SPF-D04-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct
D05 / Scrutinise	SPF-D05-S01 SPF-D05-S02 SPF-D05-S03 SPF-D05-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct
D06 / Synchronise	SPF-D06-S01 SPF-D06-S02 SPF-D06-S03 SPF-D06-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct

Calculate only with the printed minimum valid answers per person-dimension. The two participant forms use exactly the same items. Print the scoring key separately from participant material.

TOOL 03 / STRUCTURED KEY

Survey item key / Full framework / continued

ADMINISTRATOR ONLY. Every item retains its 1-5 value. DK, NA, PN, blank and NOT_ROUTED remain missing. There are no reverse-keyed items in DIR-2.0.

Dimension	Exact item identifiers	Scoring control
D07 / Strengthen	SPF-D07-S01 SPF-D07-S02 SPF-D07-S03 SPF-D07-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct
D08 / Sustain	SPF-D08-S01 SPF-D08-S02 SPF-D08-S03 SPF-D08-S04	4 expected 3 required AG / direct

Calculate only with the printed minimum valid answers per person-dimension. The two participant forms use exactly the same items. Print the scoring key separately from participant material.

TOOL 03 / EXACT DIR-2.0 SCORING

Calculate and classify the survey signal

1 / Check each response

Accept only whole values 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 and the explicit missing codes. Reject values outside the scale. Keep the response labels matched to the item scale. All items are directly keyed.

2 / Apply dimension completeness

For each person, require at least 75% of the expected items, rounded up. Use the printed key: for example 3 of 4, all 3 of 3, 5 of 6, 6 of 8 or 8 of 10. Do not replace a missing response with zero or a midpoint.

3 / Calculate the person mean

Add that person's valid answers for the dimension and divide by the number of valid answers. If the completeness requirement is not met, leave the person-dimension result missing.

4 / Calculate the group mean

Average the eligible person-dimension means with equal weight for each person. Do not pool raw answers across people as a substitute for this calculation.

5 / Protect the reporting base

Report a numerical group dimension only with at least ten eligible people. Record the eligible base, total invited or in-scope population where known, valid item responses and missing-answer pattern. Review identity risk even where ten is reached.

6 / Use the unrounded mean

1.00 to below 2.50: Foundational signal.
2.50 to below 3.50: Developing signal.
3.50 to below 4.25: Performing signal.
4.25 to 5.00: Sustaining signal.

For example, 4.249 remains Performing even if a display rounds it to 4.25. Classify first, then round only for display.

Optional favourable percentage

Among eligible people's valid item answers, divide the number of 4 or 5 responses by all valid item responses, then multiply by 100. Show that denominator. It is a descriptive percentage, not a behavioural level.

> **Do not combine unlike results**
>
> Keep dimensions visible, routes separate and survey signals distinct from evidence-confirmed practice. Do not invent a global total or validated benchmark.

TOOL 03 / NUMERICAL BOUNDARIES

Points only when every item is answered

These total-point ranges are a convenience for one completely answered person-dimension. They are not group totals, pass marks or an alternative scoring method.

Items	Minimum valid	Foundational	Developing	Performing	Sustaining
4	3	4-9	10-13	14-16	17-20

For partial but eligible responses, use the mean of valid answers. For a group, average eligible person means. Never apply these complete-response point ranges to a partially completed dimension or to pooled group points.

TOOL 03 / WORKED ARITHMETIC

Work through the calculation

FICTIONAL NUMERICAL EXAMPLE

D01 / Scan

A fictional participant answers the 4 statements as follows: 2, 3, 3, 4.

The total is 12. All 4 answers are valid. The mean is 12 / 4 = 3.0000. This is a Developing signal.

Now consider the group

Ten eligible fictional participants with this same response pattern produce the same group mean, 3.0000. The group meets the default numerical reporting base. One person with that pattern would not be a reportable group.

> **What the number does not say**
>
> It does not confirm the behaviour level, explain the cause or establish that an action will work. Use the work evidence and the specific indicator guide.

Partial completion example

The key requires at least 3 valid answers out of 4. With only 2 valid answers, there is no person-dimension score. The person may still contribute eligible results to other dimensions.

Equal weighting matters

If one eligible person has more valid item answers than another, both still have one person-dimension mean in the group calculation. More answered items do not give that person extra weight.

Boundary checks

2.500 belongs to Developing. 3.500 belongs to Performing. 4.250 belongs to Sustaining. Values below those boundaries remain in the lower band, regardless of a rounded display.

Your calculation / eligible n / reviewer

TOOL 03 / ADMINISTRATOR IMPLEMENTATION

Build the survey portal without changing the test

This is an implementation specification, not a deployed portal. The supplied question wording and item key remain the authority for this release.

Field or setting	Required behaviour
Instrument and language	Store DIR-2.0 and en-plain-2.0. Store any reviewed local translation as its own controlled version.
Route and item identity	Store framework code, route, exact item ID, wording version and the presented order.
Responses	Accept 1-5; keep DK, NA, PN, blank and NOT_ROUTED distinct. No forced answers, zero imputation or reverse keys.
Participant form	Use the complete selected route in either the fixed mixed order or the structured order. Show the correct scale on every screen or page.
Reporting	Calculate eligible person means, then group dimension means; suppress small or identifying cells. Do not publish row-level responses.
Access and testing	Agree access, retention and deletion. Test keyboard use, screen layout, reading support and all missing-answer cases before launch.

TOOL 04 / LARGE-GROUP DIAGNOSIS

Choose a method and confirm the scope

Three worked choices are provided. Choose the method that fits the decision, participants and available evidence. Running a workshop does not remove the need for later evidence confirmation.

Option	Working duration	The conversation it supports
01 / Scenario and decision-testing lab	180 minutes	Use when a plan, process or capability needs testing against different future demands or difficult cases. Mixed groups of work experts, users and decision owners. Give all groups the same baseline facts and clearly marked hypothetical scenarios.
02 / Parallel Nominal Group Technique	150 minutes	Use when you need clear, balanced contributions and a transparent way to prioritise a small number of issues. Parallel groups of five to seven, each with a facilitator. Ask one focal question at a time. Collect ideas silently before discussion.
03 / Future Search-informed system review	240 minutes; local adaptation	Use when the problem crosses several groups and the organisation needs a shared view of past experience, present pressures and future possibilities. Include people who know the work, receive its results, control resources and can act. Use mixed tables and visible evidence records.

For structured methods, use batches of up to four dimensions and repeat or run parallel sessions for wider coverage. For Open Space, participants create the agenda; optional dimension cards must not become an imposed agenda. Keep unexamined dimensions unconfirmed.

TOOL 04 / OPTION 01 / 180 MINUTES

Scenario and decision-testing lab

Set up the room or online space

Use when a plan, process or capability needs testing against different future demands or difficult cases. Mixed groups of work experts, users and decision owners. Give all groups the same baseline facts and clearly marked hypothetical scenarios.

Read this opening

"We are here to understand succession and continuity planning. Different experiences matter. Use real examples without names. You may pass or use the private route."

> **Protect the quality of discussion**
>
> The scenarios are fictional tests. They do not prove how people actually work now.

Prepare before participants arrive

Use the agreed route and printed dimension cards. Prepare the relevant behaviour guides, private starting and closing sheets, and the method-specific capture page. Check room access, language support and the protected route for concerns.

Use these exact questions

01 Scenario A: The holder of a critical role is unexpectedly unavailable. What would our current arrangement actually allow us to do?

02 Scenario B: The same potential successor appears in plans for three roles. Which assumption, control or capability would be tested most?

03 Which action is useful in both scenarios, and what trigger would tell us to change the plan?

What this method cannot establish

A discussion, imagined response or action ranking is not evidence that the current practice is embedded. Keep current examples, hypothetical tests and proposed improvements in separate records.

Scope / table assignments / evidence to bring

TOOL 04 / FACILITATOR TIMETABLE

Running order / Scenario and decision-testing lab

180 minutes. Use the full questions on the preceding method page.

Minutes	Stage	What to do
00-15	Welcome and private ratings	Read the opening; mark the two cases as fictional and agree the diagnostic scope.
15-40	Agree current facts and assumptions	Separate facts about current practice from planning assumptions. Assign domain cards to tables.
40-75	Test scenario A	Read Q1 in full. Record which real controls and evidence support the proposed response.
75-110	Test scenario B	Read Q2 in full. Test the changed demand or exception without inventing current capability.
110-135	Compare robust choices and weak points	Ask Q3. Compare actions that remain useful and assumptions that require a trigger.
135-160	Review evidence and ratings	Use current work evidence for ratings; keep hypothetical performance separate.
160-180	Agree actions and change triggers	Name owners, resources, trigger measures and dates for checking current evidence.

Use one workshop for each batch of up to four dimensions: session 1: D01, D02, D03, D04; session 2: D05, D06, D07, D08. Repeat or run parallel workshops for wider coverage; do not assume every attendee knows every dimension. Private starting and closing views are not maturity votes. Confirm levels later against the behaviour guide and checked evidence.

TOOL 04 / METHOD-SPECIFIC WORKING PAGE

Capture sheet / Scenario and decision-testing lab

Use with the corresponding exact questions and running order. Keep current work evidence separate from hypothetical tests, private views and action rankings.

Baseline facts and current controls - with evidence references

Scenario A: what the present arrangement would allow and its limits

Scenario B: which assumption, control or capability is tested

Action useful in both scenarios and the trade-off it creates

Trigger, measure and threshold for reopening the decision

Owner, resources and real-work evidence to obtain

TOOL 04 / OPTION 02 / 150 MINUTES

Parallel Nominal Group Technique

Set up the room or online space

Use when you need clear, balanced contributions and a transparent way to prioritise a small number of issues. Parallel groups of five to seven, each with a facilitator. Ask one focal question at a time. Collect ideas silently before discussion.

Read this opening

"We are here to understand succession and continuity planning. Different experiences matter. Use real examples without names. You may pass or use the private route."

> **Protect the quality of discussion**
>
> Priority votes choose what to investigate or improve. They do not determine organisational maturity or prove the size of a problem.

Prepare before participants arrive

Use the agreed route and printed dimension cards. Prepare the relevant behaviour guides, private starting and closing sheets, and the method-specific capture page. Check room access, language support and the protected route for concerns.

Use these exact questions

01 What is the single most useful improvement we could make to succession and continuity planning within our agreed scope?

02 What does each proposed improvement mean in practice, and what evidence supports the need?

03 Which three improvements should be investigated or tested first, and why?

What this method cannot establish

A discussion, imagined response or action ranking is not evidence that the current practice is embedded. Keep current examples, hypothetical tests and proposed improvements in separate records.

Scope / table assignments / evidence to bring

TOOL 04 / FACILITATOR TIMETABLE

Running order / Parallel Nominal Group Technique

150 minutes. Use the full questions on the preceding method page.

Minutes	Stage	What to do
00-15	Welcome and private ratings	Read the opening and collect private starting views.
15-30	Silent individual ideas	Ask Q1. Each person writes ideas silently; do not discuss them yet.
30-55	Round-robin recording	Take one idea per person in turn; allow a pass and record every distinct idea.
55-80	Clarify the ideas	Ask Q2. Clarify meanings and evidence without campaigning for votes.
80-95	Private priority ranking	Ask Q3. Privately give 3, 2 and 1 points to three different proposals, or fewer if needed.
95-115	Compare patterns across groups	Sum proposal points within groups; show participation counts. Do not convert votes into maturity.
115-135	Evidence review and closing ratings	Use actual examples and the behaviour guide to review the evidence separately.
135-150	Agree next actions	Owners choose feasible next steps and explain any decision not to take the top-ranked idea.

Use one workshop for each batch of up to four dimensions: session 1: D01, D02, D03, D04; session 2: D05, D06, D07, D08. Repeat or run parallel workshops for wider coverage; do not assume every attendee knows every dimension. Private starting and closing views are not maturity votes. Confirm levels later against the behaviour guide and checked evidence.

TOOL 04 / METHOD-SPECIFIC WORKING PAGE

Capture sheet / Parallel Nominal Group Technique

Use with the corresponding exact questions and running order. Keep current work evidence separate from hypothetical tests, private views and action rankings.

Dimension and question used for independent idea generation

Distinct ideas recorded before group discussion

Clarifications and overlapping ideas - keep dissent visible

Private ranking of action options, where used: 3 / 2 / 1 points

Ranked action options and feasibility checks - never maturity votes

Action owner, resources and evidence check

TOOL 04 / OPTION 03 / 240 MINUTES; LOCAL ADAPTATION

Future Search-informed system review

Set up the room or online space

Use when the problem crosses several groups and the organisation needs a shared view of past experience, present pressures and future possibilities. Include people who know the work, receive its results, control resources and can act. Use mixed tables and visible evidence records.

Read this opening

"We are here to understand succession and continuity planning. Different experiences matter. Use real examples without names. You may pass or use the private route."

> **Protect the quality of discussion**
>
> Keep disagreement visible. Do not label a short workshop a complete Future Search or treat an imagined future as current evidence.

Prepare before participants arrive

Use the agreed route and printed dimension cards. Prepare the relevant behaviour guides, private starting and closing sheets, and the method-specific capture page. Check room access, language support and the protected route for concerns.

Use these exact questions

01 Which past events most shaped the way succession and continuity planning works today, and what did we learn?

02 Which current pressures and different experiences of succession and continuity planning must our future approach address?

03 What future arrangement can we support together, what differences remain, and what action will each group own?

What this method cannot establish

A discussion, imagined response or action ranking is not evidence that the current practice is embedded. Keep current examples, hypothetical tests and proposed improvements in separate records.

Scope / table assignments / evidence to bring

TOOL 04 / FACILITATOR TIMETABLE

Running order / Future Search-informed system review

240 minutes; local adaptation. Use the full questions on the preceding method page.

Minutes	Stage	What to do
00-20	Purpose, boundaries and private ratings	Read the opening. Include work, user, resource and decision perspectives.
20-55	Past: events and lessons	Ask Q1. Build a shared timeline, distinguishing events from interpretations.
55-100	Present: pressures and current evidence	Ask Q2. Compare pressures and current examples from different groups.
100-145	Future: describe a workable result	Ask Q3. Describe a workable future without calling it current evidence.
145-185	Common ground and differences	Record common ground and genuine disagreement. Do not force consensus.
185-215	Action groups and commitments	Action groups choose bounded work they can own and support.
215-230	Private closing ratings	People record closing views privately; untested claims remain unconfirmed.
230-240	Coverage and follow-up check	Check which dimensions and voices are missing and assign follow-up.

Use one workshop for each batch of up to four dimensions: session 1: D01, D02, D03, D04; session 2: D05, D06, D07, D08. Repeat or run parallel workshops for wider coverage; do not assume every attendee knows every dimension. Private starting and closing views are not maturity votes. Confirm levels later against the behaviour guide and checked evidence.

TOOL 04 / METHOD-SPECIFIC WORKING PAGE

Capture sheet / Future Search-informed system review

Use with the corresponding exact questions and running order. Keep current work evidence separate from hypothetical tests, private views and action rankings.

Past events and the learning participants identify

Current pressures and differing stakeholder experiences

Preferred future arrangement and why it matters

Areas of common ground and differences that remain

Commitment each group can own within its authority

Owner, first step and evidence for reviewing progress

TOOL 04 / PRINT OR DISPLAY / FULL FRAMEWORK

Dimension question cards

Full framework

D01 / Scan

01 Which future demands should shape succession planning now?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What future-work scenario should change the succession brief?

Evidence to look for

Strategic demand; future-role requirements; development lead times

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

Full framework

D02 / Segment

01 Which absences would most disrupt important work, and why?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What critical-work segment should be brought into the continuity plan?

Evidence to look for

Criticality criteria; disruption scenarios; knowledge and authority dependencies

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

TOOL 04 / PRINT OR DISPLAY / FULL FRAMEWORK

Dimension question cards

Full framework

D03 / Specify

01 Are future role requirements clear enough to assess readiness fairly?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What target-role standard would make readiness discussion more defensible?

Evidence to look for

Target-role profile; critical decisions; cover boundaries

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

Full framework

D04 / Source

01 Which supply options are credible, and which are being assumed without evidence?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What supply route should be investigated before the set of activities is finalised?

Evidence to look for

Supply options; access rules; authorised aspiration and availability information

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

TOOL 04 / PRINT OR DISPLAY / FULL FRAMEWORK

Dimension question cards

Full framework

D05 / Scrutinise

01 How do we distinguish current performance, aspiration and future-role readiness?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What experience or assessment would resolve the most important uncertainty?

> **Evidence to look for**
>
> Target-role evidence record; observed experience; limitations

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

Full framework

D06 / Synchronise

01 Where might plans rely on the same person or use different readiness standards?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What set of activities-level contingency would reduce that dependency?

> **Evidence to look for**
>
> Calibration record; shared-candidate dependencies; simultaneous-loss scenario

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

TOOL 04 / PRINT OR DISPLAY / FULL FRAMEWORK

Dimension question cards

Full framework

D07 / Strengthen

01 Which development, knowledge-transfer or cover action should happen next?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What supported assignment or continuity action should be mobilised now?

> **Evidence to look for**
>
> Funded development; experience access; knowledge-transfer and cover plan

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

Full framework

D08 / Sustain

01 What would tell us that a succession or cover assumption needs to change?

02 Which current practice can we support with a real example? What is still an assumption?

03 What trigger and owner would keep the set of activities current?

> **Evidence to look for**
>
> Trigger log; updated evidence; continuity tests and decisions

Real example / contrary example

Possible action / evidence owner

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Bring the workshop evidence together

Do not report a workshop majority as the organisational level. Use the behaviour guides and confirmation rules after the event.

Method, route, dimensions and participant coverage

Current practice supported by a real example or record

Different accounts, contradictions and missing perspectives

Hypothetical findings and action ideas - kept separate

Private views received and evidence needed for later confirmation

Owned action, resources, communication and next review

INTERPRETATION / BEHAVIOURAL GUIDES

Interpret the profile constructively

Start with the pattern, not a verdict

Read the dimension results alongside the scope, period, eligible base and differences in experience. A survey signal identifies an area to understand; the behaviour guide provides a separate judgement about demonstrated practice.

Use the exact guide

Each following page contains all eight printed indicators: two at each of the four levels. Apply the full evidence rules, beginning with the lower requirements. Do not select only the most flattering sentence.

Confirm or keep provisional

A single perspective may provide a useful provisional view. Confirmation needs another relevant perspective and a record or observation. Leave material contradictions unresolved until the evidence can explain them.

Respond to a lower level

Choose the next printed move, identify who controls the relevant practice and agree what support is needed. A low result should create a useful development conversation, not a judgement about the worth of the people involved.

Do not hide a serious issue in an average

Deal with a relevant serious unresolved concern through the agreed protected route. It prevents confirmation of Performing or Sustaining in the affected dimension, even where other evidence is positive.

> **Framework-specific caution**
>
> Do not equate potential, strong current performance or a development nomination with readiness. Each answers a different question and needs its own evidence.

Priority dimension and reason

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D01 / Scan

Starting succession planning with future work.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Plans repeat current names and roles. 2. Future strategy or work changes receive little attention.
2 / Developing	1. The team identifies an important future business demand. 2. It explains the implication for a role or area of expertise.
3 / Performing	1. Succession reviews use current strategy and plausible future needs. 2. Role assumptions are checked with business owners.
4 / Sustaining	1. Leaders compare earlier assumptions with emerging demands. 2. The succession plan changes when critical work changes.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Discuss one future business change and its implications for a critical role.

2 to 3 / Include future work requirements in each succession review rather than copying last year's list.

3 to 4 / Revisit an earlier assumption and update the plan where future work has changed.

Evidence: Strategic demand; future-role requirements; development lead times.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D02 / Segment

Identifying critical work and continuity risks.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Criticality is based mainly on seniority. 2. Specialist or operational dependencies are overlooked.
2 / Developing	1. A role is assessed for the effect of an absence. 2. The team identifies a significant knowledge or authority dependency.
3 / Performing	1. Criticality criteria are applied across relevant role groups. 2. Plans consider delivery impact, scarcity and time to replace capability.
4 / Sustaining	1. Leaders review criticality as work and supply change. 2. New dependencies are identified before they become urgent.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Examine one role using absence impact, scarce knowledge and replacement lead time.

2 to 3 / Apply the same criticality questions to leadership, specialist and operational roles.

3 to 4 / Review changes in dependencies and add newly critical work to the plan.

Evidence: Criticality criteria; disruption scenarios; knowledge and authority dependencies.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D03 / Specify

Defining the target role before judging people.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Successors are discussed before requirements are clear. 2. The current holder becomes the model by default.
2 / Developing	1. The role has clear outcomes and responsibilities. 2. Important future requirements are described through work examples.
3 / Performing	1. Readiness criteria cover capability and relevant experience for the target role. 2. Role owners and specialists check the criteria.
4 / Sustaining	1. Criteria are reviewed when strategy or the role changes. 2. Readiness conclusions are reconsidered against the updated requirements.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Write the target role's outcomes, decisions and critical capability requirements.

2 to 3 / Test the criteria with role specialists and distinguish current from future demands.

3 to 4 / Review the role requirements before the next readiness discussion.

Evidence: Target-role profile; critical decisions; cover boundaries.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D04 / Source

Building a realistic range of successor and cover options.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Planning names familiar internal candidates only. 2. Availability and external supply are assumed.
2 / Developing	1. The team identifies more than one plausible supply route. 2. It checks basic availability and relevant experience.
3 / Performing	1. Internal development, external supply and temporary cover are considered separately. 2. Access to consideration is based on clear criteria.
4 / Sustaining	1. Leaders review whether supply options remain available. 2. They broaden or change the plan when dependencies or market conditions shift.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Identify internal development, external recruitment and temporary cover options for one critical role.

2 to 3 / Check availability and development lead time before treating an option as credible.

3 to 4 / Review shared candidates and supply changes and build an alternative where needed.

Evidence: Supply options; access rules; authorised aspiration and availability information.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D05 / Scrutinise

Examining readiness using relevant evidence.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Readiness relies on reputation or current performance. 2. Missing evidence is treated as proof of ability or inability.
2 / Developing	1. A readiness view refers to a target-role criterion. 2. The record distinguishes evidence from assumptions and unknowns.
3 / Performing	1. Multiple relevant sources inform important readiness conclusions. 2. Aspiration, availability and development needs are considered separately.
4 / Sustaining	1. Readiness is reviewed using new work evidence. 2. Earlier conclusions are revised when the evidence or target role changes.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Review one readiness claim and identify the work evidence behind it.

2 to 3 / Record capability evidence, aspiration, availability and remaining questions in separate fields.

3 to 4 / Obtain new target-role evidence through a supported assignment and update the readiness view.

Evidence: Target-role evidence record; observed experience; limitations.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D06 / Synchronise

Checking consistency and dependencies across the succession plan.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Leaders use different standards. 2. One person is counted as ready cover for several roles without a realistic plan.
2 / Developing	1. Leaders compare a readiness view against shared criteria. 2. The team identifies a shared-candidate dependency.
3 / Performing	1. Reviews challenge differences using evidence rather than seniority. 2. The plan checks timing, availability and competing demands on candidates.
4 / Sustaining	1. Leaders review whether earlier readiness assumptions held. 2. They improve standards and contingency choices using the learning.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Compare two readiness judgements against the same target-role evidence rules.

2 to 3 / Map candidates appearing in several plans and agree which coverage is genuinely possible.

3 to 4 / Review actual moves or cover tests and improve the readiness and dependency checks.

Evidence: Calibration record; shared-candidate dependencies; simultaneous-loss scenario.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D07 / Strengthen

Turning succession discussion into funded action.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Plans list names but little development or contingency action. 2. Owners and resources are unclear.
2 / Developing	1. A priority gap has a named action owner. 2. A development experience or cover arrangement is agreed.
3 / Performing	1. Actions include resources, support and review evidence. 2. Knowledge transfer and contingency arrangements are tested in practice.
4 / Sustaining	1. Leaders review whether readiness and continuity improved. 2. They adapt actions when development or cover does not work as planned.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Agree one supported assignment or knowledge-transfer action for the largest continuity gap.

2 to 3 / Fund the action and test the cover arrangement on a real or simulated task.

3 to 4 / Review new evidence of readiness and change the plan where the gap remains.

Evidence: Funded development; experience access; knowledge-transfer and cover plan.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

FOUR-LEVEL BEHAVIOUR GUIDE / FULL FRAMEWORK

D08 / Sustain

Maintaining readiness and continuity assurance.

Level	Both printed indicators at this level
1 / Foundational	1. Plans are updated only for annual reporting. 2. Changed roles, availability or development progress are missed.
2 / Developing	1. The plan has an owner and review date. 2. Important changes in role or availability trigger a check.
3 / Performing	1. Reviews use current development and continuity evidence. 2. Leaders record decisions on unresolved exposure and contingency.
4 / Sustaining	1. The organisation tests whether its planning protected real continuity. 2. Learning from moves, absences and failed assumptions improves the next cycle.

NEXT-LEVEL MOVES

1 to 2 / Set review triggers for role changes, candidate availability and development milestones.

2 to 3 / Review the most exposed roles using current evidence rather than last year's labels.

3 to 4 / Learn from an actual move or cover test and improve the succession process.

Evidence: Trigger log; updated evidence; continuity tests and decisions.

Apply the shared evidence rules. L2 needs both checks and a real operating example. L3 adds the case-consistency rule. L4 adds sustained reviews. Confirm with a second perspective AND a record or observation. Missing or materially conflicting evidence stays Not yet confirmed.

Level: _____ Confirmed / Provisional / Not yet confirmed Evidence reference: _____

Indicator evidence / contrary example	Next action / owner / review date

NEXT-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT / DIMENSION-SPECIFIC

Help the practice move forward

D01

Scan

Foundational to Developing

Discuss one future business change and its implications for a critical role.

Review against: The team identifies an important future business demand. It explains the implication for a role or area of expertise.

Developing to Performing

Include future work requirements in each succession review rather than copying last year's list.

Review against: Succession reviews use current strategy and plausible future needs. Role assumptions are checked with business owners.

Performing to Sustaining

Revisit an earlier assumption and update the plan where future work has changed.

Review against: Leaders compare earlier assumptions with emerging demands. The succession plan changes when critical work changes.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

D02

Segment

Foundational to Developing

Examine one role using absence impact, scarce knowledge and replacement lead time.

Review against: A role is assessed for the effect of an absence. The team identifies a significant knowledge or authority dependency.

Developing to Performing

Apply the same criticality questions to leadership, specialist and operational roles.

Review against: Criticality criteria are applied across relevant role groups. Plans consider delivery impact, scarcity and time to replace capability.

Performing to Sustaining

Review changes in dependencies and add newly critical work to the plan.

Review against: Leaders review criticality as work and supply change. New dependencies are identified before they become urgent.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

NEXT-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT / DIMENSION-SPECIFIC

Help the practice move forward

D03

Specify

Foundational to Developing

Write the target role's outcomes, decisions and critical capability requirements.

Review against: The role has clear outcomes and responsibilities. Important future requirements are described through work examples.

Developing to Performing

Test the criteria with role specialists and distinguish current from future demands.

Review against: Readiness criteria cover capability and relevant experience for the target role. Role owners and specialists check the criteria.

Performing to Sustaining

Review the role requirements before the next readiness discussion.

Review against: Criteria are reviewed when strategy or the role changes. Readiness conclusions are reconsidered against the updated requirements.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

D04

Source

Foundational to Developing

Identify internal development, external recruitment and temporary cover options for one critical role.

Review against: The team identifies more than one plausible supply route. It checks basic availability and relevant experience.

Developing to Performing

Check availability and development lead time before treating an option as credible.

Review against: Internal development, external supply and temporary cover are considered separately. Access to consideration is based on clear criteria.

Performing to Sustaining

Review shared candidates and supply changes and build an alternative where needed.

Review against: Leaders review whether supply options remain available. They broaden or change the plan when dependencies or market conditions shift.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

NEXT-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT / DIMENSION-SPECIFIC

Help the practice move forward

D05

Scrutinise

Foundational to Developing

Review one readiness claim and identify the work evidence behind it.

Review against: A readiness view refers to a target-role criterion. The record distinguishes evidence from assumptions and unknowns.

Developing to Performing

Record capability evidence, aspiration, availability and remaining questions in separate fields.

Review against: Multiple relevant sources inform important readiness conclusions. Aspiration, availability and development needs are considered separately.

Performing to Sustaining

Obtain new target-role evidence through a supported assignment and update the readiness view.

Review against: Readiness is reviewed using new work evidence. Earlier conclusions are revised when the evidence or target role changes.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

D06

Synchronise

Foundational to Developing

Compare two readiness judgements against the same target-role evidence rules.

Review against: Leaders compare a readiness view against shared criteria. The team identifies a shared-candidate dependency.

Developing to Performing

Map candidates appearing in several plans and agree which coverage is genuinely possible.

Review against: Reviews challenge differences using evidence rather than seniority. The plan checks timing, availability and competing demands on candidates.

Performing to Sustaining

Review actual moves or cover tests and improve the readiness and dependency checks.

Review against: Leaders review whether earlier readiness assumptions held. They improve standards and contingency choices using the learning.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

NEXT-LEVEL DEVELOPMENT / DIMENSION-SPECIFIC

Help the practice move forward

D07

Strengthen

Foundational to Developing

Agree one supported assignment or knowledge-transfer action for the largest continuity gap.

Review against: A priority gap has a named action owner. A development experience or cover arrangement is agreed.

Developing to Performing

Fund the action and test the cover arrangement on a real or simulated task.

Review against: Actions include resources, support and review evidence. Knowledge transfer and contingency arrangements are tested in practice.

Performing to Sustaining

Review new evidence of readiness and change the plan where the gap remains.

Review against: Leaders review whether readiness and continuity improved. They adapt actions when development or cover does not work as planned.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

D08

Sustain

Foundational to Developing

Set review triggers for role changes, candidate availability and development milestones.

Review against: The plan has an owner and review date. Important changes in role or availability trigger a check.

Developing to Performing

Review the most exposed roles using current evidence rather than last year's labels.

Review against: Reviews use current development and continuity evidence. Leaders record decisions on unresolved exposure and contingency.

Performing to Sustaining

Learn from an actual move or cover test and improve the succession process.

Review against: The organisation tests whether its planning protected real continuity. Learning from moves, absences and failed assumptions improves the next cycle.

> **Make support explicit**
>
> Name the owner, protected time, access or authority needed. Collect a real example and review whether the next row is supported; completion of the action alone does not award a higher level.

SUPPLEMENTARY FRAMEWORK CHECKS

Use the additional model checks

Questions for related decisions

The following questions retain the framework depth checks from the master directory. They help you examine the stages, standards, lenses or safeguards associated with this model without turning every feature into a survey scale.

Four response statuses

Ready: the relevant evidence supports proceeding within the agreed scope. Needs work: a specific gap needs an owned action. Not enough evidence: a decision cannot yet be supported. Not relevant: the check is outside scope, with the reason recorded.

> **No extra points**
>
> Do not add these statuses to a dimension mean or ordinal level. A failed safeguard can constrain a decision even where survey results are favourable.

Keep the model relationships clear

The eight stages form the diagnostic profile. Keep performance, potential, role fit, aspiration, cover and readiness distinct. A four-level organisational rating says something about the succession process, not whether a named person should be appointed. Readiness is conditional on the target role and current evidence.

A practical sequence

Ask the exact question. Record the evidence reference, relevant contradiction and reviewer. Decide the status, then name the next evidence check or action. State who has authority to make the related approval decision.

Decision / applicable checks / reviewer

EXACT SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS / NOT SCORE POINTS

Six distinctions that protect interpretation

Record the evidence and decision separately from the diagnostic score.

Check	Ask exactly	Look for	Record status
Performance	What has the person delivered in the present role, and what does that evidence not establish?	Current-role evidence kept separate.	Ready Needs work Not enough evidence Not relevant
Potential	What specifically defined future capacity is being considered and what evidence supports only a tentative inference?	Explicit construct, method and limitations; no generic potential score from this diagnostic.	Ready Needs work Not enough evidence Not relevant
Role fit	Which target-role requirements are met or remain untested?	Target-role criterion-to-evidence map.	Ready Needs work Not enough evidence Not relevant
Aspiration	Has the employee's preferred direction been explored privately and without pressure?	Voluntary, current aspiration information.	Ready Needs work Not enough evidence Not relevant
Cover	What can the temporary arrangement safely sustain, and for how long?	Availability, authority and continuity test.	Ready Needs work Not enough evidence Not relevant

Evidence reference / reviewer / action owner / due date: _____

EXACT SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS / NOT SCORE POINTS

Six distinctions that protect interpretation / continued

Record the evidence and decision separately from the diagnostic score.

Check	Ask exactly	Look for	Record status
Readiness	Which target tasks and conditions support the readiness conclusion today?	Current target-role evidence, conditions and review date.	Ready Needs work Not enough evidence Not relevant

Evidence reference / reviewer / action owner / due date: _____

RESULTS WORKSHEET

Your results and next-step profile

Full framework. Keep survey and behaviour judgements in separate columns. Mark a missing or unsafe-to-report result rather than inventing a value.

Dimension	Survey signal	Behaviour level / status	Evidence, limitation and next action
D01 / Scan	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D02 / Segment	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D03 / Specify	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D04 / Source	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D05 / Scrutinise	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D06 / Synchronise	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D07 / Strengthen	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	
D08 / Sustain	Mean: _____ Eligible n: _____	1 / 2 / 3 / 4 Status: _____	

Do not average behaviour levels. Any optional conservative headline uses the lowest confirmed required dimension in the agreed route.

REPORTING / WORKED EVIDENCE JUDGEMENT

A worked interpretation, not just a score

FICTIONAL PRACTITIONER EXAMPLE

The fictional Harbour Services has one senior specialist listed as successor for three critical roles. The person has not discussed all three options and some future requirements have changed. The diagnostic examines critical-work exposure, evidence, aspiration and the dependency before the next talent review.

Focus dimension

D01 / Scan

Evidence available in this illustration

The reviewer has one recent operating example supporting both Developing indicators: The team identifies an important future business demand. It explains the implication for a role or area of expertise.

A second relevant perspective and an appropriate record confirm that account. In the latest five relevant cases, both Performing indicators hold in only two. The evidence does not meet the four-of-five rule.

The supported conclusion

Developing / Confirmed is supported for this fictional dimension, assuming no material unresolved contradiction. Performing is not supported. Do not describe the whole framework as Developing when only one dimension has been reviewed.

The next useful action

Include future work requirements in each succession review rather than copying last year's list.

What to check next

Collect the relevant case evidence against both Performing indicators: Succession reviews use current strategy and plausible future needs. Role assumptions are checked with business owners.

> **Why the distinction matters**
>
> An action completed, an enthusiastic workshop or a favourable survey signal does not itself satisfy the behavioural evidence rule.

SENSE-MAKING / ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Test the explanation before choosing the response

A plausible alternative

A named successor may be unavailable, interested in another route or counted as cover for several simultaneous vacancies.

What might change the conclusion?

Look for a recent case that does not fit the main explanation. Check whether the population, task, opportunity or period differs. Record the limitation rather than force all evidence into one story.

Ask the decision owner

Where is critical work exposed, and what evidence-led development or continuity action is needed?

Main explanation / rival explanation

Make the interpretation readable

Use a short statement of what was observed, where it was observed and why it matters for the agreed decision. Name the evidence source, a relevant limitation and the next action. Avoid labelling people or claiming a cause the design cannot establish.

> **Framework-specific watchpoint**
>
> Do not equate potential, strong current performance or a development nomination with readiness. Each answers a different question and needs its own evidence.

A useful report sentence

Within the agreed scope and period, we found [specific practice]. This is supported by [evidence] and limited by [gap or difference]. We recommend [action] with [owner], then review [observable change] by [date].

Evidence needed before a stronger claim

FEEDBACK / READ-ALOUD FACILITATION

Run the feedback conversation

Suggested 75-minute standalone feedback meeting. Extend the discussion when the evidence is contested; do not force a decision to keep to time.

Minutes	Read or ask	Record
00-10	"We are reviewing practices, not judging people. Let us check the scope, the evidence and what remains uncertain."	Scope and limits confirmed.
10-25	"Which parts of this profile match your experience? Where do you see something different?"	Agreement, contrary examples and missing perspectives.
25-40	"What explanation best fits the evidence? What other explanation should we test before deciding?"	Main and rival explanations.
40-55	"Which improvement matters most, and who has the authority and support to deliver it?"	One to three proportionate priorities.
55-65	"What would the next level look like in real work, and what evidence will we review?"	Indicators, cases and practical support.
65-75	"What will we tell participants, when will we review progress, and what remains open?"	Owners, feedback date and unresolved decisions.

REUSABLE WORKING PAGE

Agree an action that can be delivered

Use the next-level action printed for the dimension. Adapt implementation to the organisation, but do not award the next level until the actual evidence rule is met.

Priority dimension, current supported level and reason for acting

Specific next-level move and observable practice to establish

Owner with authority, supporting people and practical resources

First real-work test, relevant cases and safeguards

Evidence, review date and criterion for continuing or adapting

What participants will be told, by whom and when

FOLLOW-THROUGH AND REASSESSMENT

Review progress and keep the learning

Before the first review

Check whether the agreed action has an owner, time, access and authority. Ask what has changed in practice, not only whether a document or event has been completed.

At the review

Use the same dimension definitions and comparable work scope. Review ordinary cases and exceptions. Record both improvement and any condition that has made the original plan less suitable.

If a survey is repeated

Keep the item version, response labels, route and reporting base comparable. Explain changes in population, timing or participation. A different score is not automatically evidence that the action caused the change.

If the result is still low

Ask whether the action addressed the right explanation and whether its operating conditions were provided. Narrow the test or change the response where the evidence supports that decision. A missed target is information to learn from, not a reason to change the scoring boundary.

If the practice has improved

Confirm the next row only when its indicators and evidence rule are supported. Sustaining needs two reviews at least 28 days apart, continued use and a reasoned decision to continue or change.

> **Close the listening loop**
>
> Tell participants what was heard, what was decided, what changed and what remains unresolved. Explain a decision not to act rather than letting silence look like inattention.

REFERENCE / PLAIN LANGUAGE

Plain-language glossary

Term	Meaning in this manual
Critical work	Work whose interruption would have a material consequence for the organisation.
Cover	A bounded arrangement to keep essential work operating during an absence.
Readiness	Evidence-based suitability for defined target-role requirements under stated conditions.
Shared-candidate dependency	Reliance on the same person as an answer to more than one succession need.
Survey signal	A descriptive numerical band from the questionnaire, not a confirmed behaviour level.
Provisional	A working view that has not yet met the confirmation requirements.
Not yet confirmed	An evidence status used when a complete level cannot be supported.
Eligible response base	People who meet the required item completeness for the reported dimension.
Contrary example	Relevant evidence that challenges the main interpretation.
Controlled version	A recorded set of wording, response scales, ordering and scoring rules.

SOURCE REGISTER / VERSION CONTROL

Sources, links and instrument control

1 / Approved presentation template

HR Strategy Diagnostic Manual, 85-page standalone edition approved in this conversation. Its sequence, typography, dual-column reading pages and practical working-page approach govern this series.

2 / Retained diagnostic source

HR Delivery Framework Diagnostics Rebuilt Edition 2, 983 pages, DIR-2.0 / en-plain-2.0. Succession Planning Framework: source master pages 625-655. The associated controlled JSON bank supplies exact items, question cards, indicators, moves and mixed orders.

3 / Framework Directory

HR Delivery - Framework Directory, Draft 1 / October 2026, 46 pages. This framework is on page 31. The original artwork is retained without changed labels or proportions.

4 / Live HR Delivery framework

https://hr.delivery/hr-delivery/succession-planning-framework

Framework name, main architecture and links checked against the live framework page for this series on 10 October 2026. The supplied directory remains the local artwork and explanatory source; the current downloadable file was not byte-compared.

5 / Branding source

HR Delivery Branding Pack, Version 2.0 / 28 September 2026. Original logo artwork, navy/teal palette, Montserrat headings and Source Sans 3 body type are retained.

What is new in this manual

The foreword draft, expanded teaching commentary, fictional case, completed example, extra capture sheets and implementation explanations are standalone practitioner additions. They are not new assessment validation evidence.

> **Source distinctions**
>
> The eight stages form the diagnostic profile. Keep performance, potential, role fit, aspiration, cover and readiness distinct. A four-level organisational rating says something about the succession process, not whether a named person should be appointed. Readiness is conditional on the target role and current evidence.

METHOD SOURCES AND LIMITS

Large-group method references

These links identify the method references recorded in the source master. This series expands the working materials; it does not claim a licence, certification or fresh verification of every external method page.

Method	Reference recorded in the master	Use boundary
Scenario and decision-testing lab	https://www.shell.com/news-and-insights/scenarios/what-are-shell-scenarios.html	Retained DIR-2.0 practitioner adaptation. Use the exact local questions and timetable; method choice does not validate a maturity score.
Parallel Nominal Group Technique	https://stacks.cdc.gov/view/cdc/24407/cdc_24407_DS1.pdf	Retained DIR-2.0 practitioner adaptation. Use the exact local questions and timetable; method choice does not validate a maturity score.
Future Search-informed system review	https://futuresearch.net/about/methodology/	Local adaptation; not a full Future Search conference.

Framework page: https://hr.delivery/hr-delivery/succession-planning-framework

LOCAL RELEASE CHECK

Check the manual before local use

This is a reusable practitioner manual, not a certification of a local diagnostic project. The project owner still needs to approve its scope, safeguards and intended use.

Check	What to verify
Framework and scope	Correct framework, dimension names, route, unit and reference period.
Interview and focus group	40 interview questions and 32 distinct focus-group questions retained.
Participant surveys	32 unique items retained across the route(s); both structured and fixed mixed-order forms included.
Behaviour criteria	64 indicators and 24 next-level moves retained; exact evidence rules printed.
Large-group work	All three source method question sets and timetables, plus dimension cards and method-specific capture pages.
Publication status	Foreword draft marked for approval; fictional material and source boundaries explicit.
Practical review	Confirm local suitability, access, language comprehension, privacy and authorised use before fieldwork.

Retained instrument: DIR-2.0 / en-plain-2.0. Standalone edition: SPF-M1.0 / October 2026.

HR DELIVERY

Making Sure HR Delivers

Understand.
Decide.
Improve.

Protect critical work and build readiness through credible evidence and owned development.

Making Sure HR Delivers

hr.delivery

SPF-M1.0 / October 2026

For responsible practitioner use / Foreword draft subject to approval