Succession Planning in UK FRS

Background

We know leadership at all levels matters. It is clear (and supported by research) that having a well-led organisation creates greater engagement, higher performance, and improved community outcomes. But why does managing succession or talent matter?

Delivering an excellent service to our communities and being able to thrive in a constantly evolving environment relies on having people with the capabilities, commitment and behaviours needed for current and future organisational success.

This means ensuring the right people are in the right roles, with the right values and behaviours but also that these people have access to the right opportunities, exposure, stretch and development to reach their potential, whether this be in their current role or for a future role.

Fire and Rescue Organisations are going through turbulent times as they face changing demands. The need for a broad range of talent from firefighting professionals to IT, Strategic HR, procurement, Business Safety means each Service needs to forecast the type and number of people it needs. Beyond that it also needs to nurture and develop all its employees and ensure leaders for the future.

Definitions and Approach

The major difference between human resource planning or workforce planning and succession planning/talent management lies in the approach to each.

HR Planning is a macro-level approach dealing with the workforce in general, aiming to ensure that the organisation has the required number of personnel with the required skills at the required time. It is a straightforward cut-and-dried approach and does not concern itself with any specific employee on an individual basis. Human resource planning (HR Planning) concerns itself with the quality and quantity of the entire workforce whereas succession planning concerns itself with the competence of a person in a specific post.

Succession Planning is a micro-level approach concerned with individual employees on an individual basis, for the eventuality of the incumbent leaving at a future time that is still uncertain and indefinite. The process of identifying and developing potential future leaders or senior managers, as well as individuals to fill other

business-critical positions, either in the short- or the long-term. As well as training and development activities, succession planning programmes typically include the provision of practical, tailored work experience relevant for future senior or key roles. The aim is for the organisation to be able to fill key roles effectively if the current post holder were to leave the organisation.

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) definition of Talent Management is: 'Talent management seeks to attract, identify, develop, engage, retain and deploy individuals who are considered particularly valuable to an organisation. By managing talent strategically, organisations can build a high-performance workplace, encourage a learning organisation, add value to their branding agenda, and contribute to diversity management.'

<u>Each Service will choose whether it wants to use the word talent or succession and whether:</u>

a) You want to apply a whole organisation approach - roles, not jobs – the use of pools

While some jobs will always require specialists, there is a growing focus on identifying and developing groups of jobs to enable potential successors to be identified for a variety of roles. So, jobs might be clustered by role, function and/or level so that the generic skills required for particular roles can be developed. The aim is to develop pools of talented people, each of whom is adaptable and capable of filling a number of roles. Because succession planning is concerned with developing longer-term successors as well as short-term replacements, each pool will be considerably larger than the range of posts it covers.

Modern succession planning looks quite different from the old version, with a broader vision, greater openness and diversity and closer links to wider talent management practices. For example, progressive organisations who adopt an inclusive whole workforce approach to managing and developing talent will look to identify business critical roles at multiple levels within their organisation.

b) Identify the business-critical positions or roles in the organisation for which potential successors are needed.

It is possible for succession planning schemes to include individual senior or key positions or to take a more generic approach targeting a 'pool' of positions for which similar skills are required. One example could be non-leadership technical roles that could leave an organisation vulnerable, if unfilled promptly. Succession planning typically covers the most senior jobs in the organisation, together with short-term and longer-term successors for these posts. The latter group are in effect on a fast-track and may be developed through job moves or secondments within various parts of the business.

This focus on the most senior posts means that even in large organisations, only a few hundred people at any given time would be subject to the succession planning process. The relatively low numbers involved can help make the process more manageable.

Some Considerations

Insiders' versus 'outsiders'

All organisations need new recruits directly at senior levels to bring in new ideas and approaches to newly created or unanticipated roles. Many, however, seem to rely either too much on outsiders or too much on insiders, suggesting that it is difficult to find the right balance.

It's also sometimes argued that outsiders should not be brought in at board level but somewhere below it, so that people with outside experience can become accustomed to the corporate culture and undergo development before making the next step up. Others, though, argue that if an objective business case can be made for bringing in outsiders at board level, this should be done where appropriate, and in particular that a failing business needs to recruit from outside - and to be seen to be doing so - to satisfy stakeholders.

Secondments need to be used more to provide such opportunities, especially when an organisation is working with increasingly flat structures. Services can benefit from both inward and outward secondments as these can be a very useful way of providing development to meet both individual and organisational needs and sharing knowledge across the business. However, secondment opportunities must be properly planned and supported throughout their duration in order to ensure their success.

Openness, fairness, and diversity

Employees need to understand the succession process. Transparency should be given to the methods used to judge potential successors and the kinds of jobs that are considered suitable for each individual. Hence the previously confidential nature of the succession planning process has been reduced, and advertising of senior internal jobs is more common.

With openness should go fairness; objective assessments of all available candidates need to be made, and succession development committees (under a variety of names) exist in many large companies to review and challenge key talent and succession plans and to examine how to improve the process.

All employees need to feel empowered to grow or they may opt out of the succession process. Valuing diversity means we as employers are increasingly aware of the need to ensure that diverse talents are properly developed and that diversity considerations are built into talent development strategies.

The modern version of succession planning takes account of the growing recognition that people need to make their own career decisions and to balance career and family responsibilities.

Identification of talent should not be exclusive to full-time employees and should recognise the growing requirements of both employees and employers for flexibility in employment contracts. Flexible working options can also be attractive for new talent, especially as employee expectations have changed in recent years regarding their jobs, careers, progression, and work-life balance. The adoption of flexible working practices can enhance the effectiveness of succession planning by increasing the available talent pool.
programmes

Honesty

Sometimes the hardest thing is starting the conversation about what people really want to do, their broader career aspirations and life goals and what they are capable of. It is also the most critical rule that people must not be lead on to believe they will gain promotion if they are not ready or indeed do not have the right skills. Age needs to be handled sensitively and in recognition of bias and challenging of stereotype, i.e. Older workers may still ambition, and younger workers may have great management skills.

Harness your senior workers' expertise

Think about how senior workers can pass on their skills and expertise, so it does not leave your Service when they do. If you are considering a business leader or senior manager's succession, could they work alongside their successor for 6-12 months, then continue part-time in a mentor-style capacity to support key decisions as and when required? Be sure to allow enough time for them to pass on their contacts, business and client insight, processes, tips and to help smooth over any issues while they are still around. Could older workers at any level of the business help with inducting and training new staff? Whether the focus is on using equipment or customer service, their experience and insight can be invaluable – so do not waste it.

Develop your Deputies

Do not assume succession is a simple matter of a deputy stepping up to a leadership position when a leader retires. Deputies can sometimes be more used to working in the wake of their leader and have not had enough opportunity to be challenged in the leadership role before actually stepping up to the position permanently. So, invest in their learning, development and leadership training before that leader retires, and give them the opportunity to make key decisions, coached by their leader if necessary.

Find an effective way for generations to learn from each other

From younger workers training older colleagues in using technology and social media, to innovative approaches like reverse mentoring, there are plenty of ways older workers can develop further to sharpen their talents and keep their skills fresh.

Senior workers need the humility to accept that younger, less experienced colleagues may be able to see a faster, better way of doing something.

It is not just about technology – from ideas generation to new approaches for customer service, older workers should embrace the fact that you are never too old to learn. Be prepared to experiment; try new approaches and then evaluate how they worked, so both sides can learn from the experience. It will promote positive communication and collaboration.

Flexibility

Your succession plan does not have to be carved in stone; it is an evolving conversation, not a binding contract. Update it regularly as circumstances change. Both the business and the individual will need the flex to adapt to the unexpected – but doing this within a clear strategy is always more effective.

Models of Succession Planning

If the Service is applying whole organisation succession planning as opposed to selected business critical roles there are three potential models which will allow for transparency.

1)   Open Recruitment
The Service can choose to openly advertise internally for each post and manage through selection against a person spec the top people who go through to interview and other assessment tests. This has its advantages in that everyone can feel they can apply for jobs as they emerge, but it relies on two precursors:

   a)   That appraisal and continuous dialogue with a person is ensuring they are ready to apply or someone may become a serial applicant without the right skills and become embittered as they fail. The manager is failing to give honest feedback.

   b)   That excellent feedback is given at the deselection stages, so people feel the process has been transparent and fair.

2)   The ADC process
In effect anyone can apply to go into the process for the next level appointments and through an assessment centre process the people who pass at the highest level go through into a pool for later interviews for specific posts. In the pool the people are then offered additional development to allow for readiness for promotion.

This has the advantage of openness but is an expensive way to manage selection and has a high level of people who may be 'failing' the test and can lead to disappointment. It relies again on honest self-reflection and conversation before people enter the process.

3)   Talent Benchmark system. Supporting Talent and Career Aspiration Conversations across the Service. See below for whole system approach.

Talent Benchmark system – for whole Service application (A Service may choose to call it succession system.)

Introduction

We know leadership matters. It is clear (and supported by research) that having a well-led organisation creates greater engagement, higher performance, and improved community outcomes. But why does Talent Management matter?

Delivering an excellent service to our communities and being able to thrive in a constantly evolving environment relies on having people with the capabilities, commitment and behaviours needed for current and future organisational success.

This means ensuring the right people are in the right roles, with the right values and behaviours but also that these people have access to the right opportunities, exposure, stretch and development to reach their potential, whether this be in their current role or for a future role.

Talent management considers everyone as an individual who can bring value and make a difference to the Service either through immediate contribution or, in the longer-term, by demonstrating the highest levels of potential in future or more senior roles. This means not only identifying those that are looking for promotion but also how each and every person working at *Service continues to develop, remains competent, professional, and able to do a good job.

Having a skilled, motivated, well supported & developed workforce is our greatest assurance in providing the services needed to reduce harm and save lives in the communities we serve.

What is a Talent Management conversation?

Talent management covers a wide range of activities designed to recruit, develop, and retain talented individuals. A talent management conversation is simply a discussion (usually between a manager and employee) that focusses on the value and strengths the individual brings, identifies development required and encourages thinking about the position(s) that best suit their skills currently and into the future.

The main driver is to encourage open honest and constructive conversations between managers and staff to explore where they are, where they want to be and how to support them in getting there – or simply to identify and maximise how they are currently performing.

Talent management conversations are a way to support development, engagement, and career progression. We all need to feel listened to, understood and valued in our roles.

Who are talent conversations for?

Talent management conversations should take place for all individuals in the organisation. Whilst there are different progression routes and opportunities for Green and Grey book colleagues, career development and maximising potential is necessary for all in maintaining skills and personal motivation no matter seniority, role, or conditions of employment.

A talent management conversation can support:

- Someone new in role needing targeted support to reach their potential
- A professional to maintain CPD in their current role
- An individual who has mastered their current role and shows potential to move upwards
- A future leader, role modelling behaviours and values showing potential to move upwards several levels

How does a Talent management conversation differ from an appraisal?

A Talent conversation is much like an appraisal conversation and many organisations combine the two discussions as they naturally fit together. An appraisal tends to be more focussed on an employee's immediate contribution in their current role and maximising their potential within it. A talent conversation is more focussed on their longer-term potential, what the employee is able to achieve in the future and how to maximise development that will support this.

A talent conversation like an appraisal evaluates performance (what is done) and behaviour (how it is done) but also introduces thinking about an employee's readiness (ability, engagement, aspiration) for progression/promotion. A talent conversation will also often involve the use of a talent grid or tool to benchmark where someone sits at a given point of time.

Talent conversations can be standalone or complement appraisal discussions, 121's and ongoing career discussion throughout year. They can also be used to capture an organisational picture of talent (talent bench review) and to identify who will be nominated for promotion pools, Leadership development programmes and assisting in succession planning.

This guide has been designed to introduce a simple and consistent approach to reviewing talent in * Service which supports the appraisal process, career progression, succession planning and provides equality of opportunity for everyone to demonstrate their potential.

Introducing the *Service talent tool

The real value of the talent management conversation lies in the open, honest and constructive conversation between the manager and employee however use of a talent grid helps align the development available to the individual, maximising performance in role and/or preparing them for their next role.

The *Service talent grid has three core areas **Improve, Nurture** and **Develop**. A person will fall into one of these areas based on an evaluation of their performance and behaviours against their readiness (ability, engagement, and current aspiration) for progression.

Everyone is individual and people will have different skill sets, strengths, and ambitions, all of which should be explored during the talent or career conversation. Through the talent conversation you should consider examples of performance and behaviour and explore an individual's ambition to get a sense of where they are in the career, whether they want progression, how ready they are for progression and any development that would support them. All of this allows you to identify where an individual sits on the talent grid.

When using the grid, it is important to consider:
1.Whilst this process is clearly motivating to some, we need to bear in mind that it may be sensitive to other people who are seeking promotion and have not been currently identified as being ready for promotion. Each person is entitled to a development plan and should be given the opportunity to develop and achieve their aspirations. Feedback needs to be honest and useful. See Appendix on Feedback.
2.Performance (what you achieve) is equally as important as behaviours (how you achieve it) – this is fundamental when identifying those individuals working towards promotion. We need leaders who positively demonstrate the leadership behaviours at the right level, all the time who also have the skills and knowledge to do the job.
3.Being a key contributor means consistently delivering what is required in a way that aligns with organisational behaviours – the organisation is successful because of these individuals and they should be valued and thanked for the work they do. We would expect most people to be placed in this section!

There is a difference between high performance and high potential – someone may be a master in their current role and a good role model of behaviours which makes them great at the job they are doing. When we think about identifying those seeking promotion they need to be motivated **and** capable of a more challenging roles. If someone is not motivated to progress, they should not fall in the top row of the grid and this is okay!

General descriptors for people in each areas of the grid

Develop	These people are consistent high performers who behave and role model values delivering what they are tasked to do with drive. They are often demonstrating mastery in their current roles and possibly have a lot more to offer. They may naturally focus on self- development, advancing their area of expertise and/or demonstrate a desire to move into a wider leadership role. These are high value employees and we must have conversations about their potential and look for ways to maximise this within the organisation.
Nurture	People in the nurture category are fundamental to the service delivering its objectives – They are integral, and their contribution should be recognised and valued. They are generally the people who meet performance expectations, demonstrate the right behaviours, and can be relied upon to do a good job. Most of our employees should fall into this category, but we must consider how we support their development, engagement and on-going commitment and offer stretching opportunities where appropriate and welcomed.
Improve	For these individuals it is about acknowledging they need targeted support. This could be because they are new to role and learning the job or have stepped up into a more senior role and are developing to meet new expectations. Additionally, it can be those who for various reasons need support to reach expectations in their current role or identifying where else their skills might be more effective.

Further guidance on how to evaluate performance, behaviour and readiness to promotion can be found in the remainder of this guide. When identifying where someone sits on the talent grid the general descriptors for each area can be a useful starting point.

Readiness to move		
Potential for upwards move (1-3 years)	Ready for upwards move (0- 12 months)	Ready for upwards move and potential for further progression

		Emerging Talent	**Advancing Talent**	**High potential**
Develop	**Exceeding expectations**	• High performing in own area • Role model for behaviours • Consistently bringing added value • Upward potential - may be less ambitious at this time	• Consistent high performance across a variety of tasks • Adds value beyond own area • Role models behaviours • Ambitious to move upwards • Likely move one level upwards	• Role model highest level of performance, potential and ambition • High performance, commitment, and role of behaviours • Potential capacity immediate advancement and higher

		Key contributors
Nurture	**Meeting expectations**	• Fundamental to the service - our teams would fall apart without these individuals • Behaves professionally in line with role • Happy doing the job they are doing • May show potential for progression but less ambition for upwards move or move outside of field • Mastery and/or expertise in field or role and committed to continuous improvement

		Not reaching potential	**Developing in new role**
Improve	**Partially meeting expectations**	☐ Lower level of performance and/or behaviour ☐ Strengths and values may be misaligned ☐ May be bored, under-used or in the wrong place	☐ Recently started role (0-12 months) ☐ Still developing, no expectation to be expert ☐ Future performance will allow assessment of where they fall in grid longer term

Succession Planning in the UK FRS v0.1 – document to form part of the Talent Management Guidance.

Evaluating performance

When evaluating performance it should be fairly easy for an employee and manager to understand and distinguish levels of performance by considering the outputs of their work and how they fulfil the objectives, tasks and ongoing work responsibilities of their role.

When using the talent grid, we suggest performance fits into three levels:

Partially meeting expectations	Employees can evidence they have met some objectives, tasks or ongoing work responsibilities set for them but not all.
Meeting expectations	Employees are clearly able to evidence how they are meeting their objectives, tasks and work responsibilities and the demands within their role
Exceeding expectations	Employees not only evidence how they have met the expectations of their objectives, tasks, and work responsibilities but also how they have taken these to the next level. They will demonstrate accountability and ownership of the tasks and work responsibilities for their role.

Evaluating behaviour

Evaluating behaviour is often harder than performance as it is about how people perceive what you do. Whilst we do not fully define how employees should behave at work we do have a set of clearly defined leadership behaviours in the Inspiring Leadership Framework. Both the manager and employee should refer to the Inspiring leadership Framework and consider the extent and level to which these behaviours are demonstrated in their role and the evidence that supports this.

If you would like to add more structure when evaluating behaviour, you can introduce 360 feedback – this can be as simple as asking a group of colleagues for feedback on how they see you demonstrating the leadership behaviours or via a more formal approach such as a 360 questionnaire. When using the talent grid, we suggest evaluating behaviour fits into three levels:

Partially meeting expectations	Does not consistently display the level of behaviours required in role and/or at times may demonstrate negative examples
Meeting expectations	Consistently displays the behaviours required for their role/grade
Exceeding expectations	Consistently displays the behaviours required for their role and often demonstrates behaviours beyond current role/grade. Acts as a role model of behaviours in a way that others should aspire to.

Evaluating readiness to promotion

High potentials, or those ready for promotion are frequently mistaken for those who are performing well – when we think about identifying high potentials we need to identify high performers who also have the attributes to be successful in more challenging or senior roles. We have defined three distinguishing attributes to help identify potential for promotion: Ability, Aspiration and Engagement. Each of these attributes has several components to explore during a talent conversation, further guidance can be found in the How to structure career conversation document Appendix

Ability is about how capable they are of doing a more senior position. This includes thinking about their managerial and leadership capability, professional and technical competence and core aptitude and ability.

Aspiration is about considering the individuals motivations and actions that promote career success. Are they motivated by the drivers in more senior roles? Do they see themselves as a leader? How committed are they to development and career progression?

Engagement is about considering an individual's emotional commitment to the organisation. When considering readiness for promotion we need to look for those that are not only connected with their current work but those who are aligned to the organisations mission, direction, and longer-term success.

Documentation and follow up

The conversation should be the catalyst for development and the outcome of the talent conversation should be developing the individual, whether maintaining their development to continue doing the job they are doing, addressing specific development needs identified within their current role, or tapping into development and strengths to prepare them for their next role. This can be documented in a CPD log owned by the individual however Managers also have a responsibility to work with individuals and the HR and L&D teams to ensure people have support and access to the most appropriate development.

Being mindful of confidentiality and only sharing what is necessary and relevant, it is good practice for managers undertaking talent conversations to benchmark outcomes with other managers. This helps to remove any bias and allows support between managers to evaluate talent consistently. It also allows open and transparent discussion around employees and how the organisation is helping them maximise their potential, creating more fluid links to succession planning.

How do talent conversations and outputs of the talent grid align with succession plans?

Bi-annually we will record and collate the outcomes of Talent conversations in a talent bench review. Guidance on how to complete the Talent bench review forms can be found in the Talent and Career aspiration meeting 'aide memoir'

As a result of talent bench review, it makes sense that those people who have been identified through this process, will have targeted development and priority in their application for promotion over other candidates (although discretion may be applied according to the circumstances). Policy around this is under consideration.

How to Structure Career Conversations

Before you have the meeting	Read through and familiarise yourself with the "Supporting Talent and career aspirations conversations in *S" document, particularly the descriptions contained within the six-box grid and the "Develop – Nurture – Improve" boxes. Also look at the behaviours contained within the Inspiring Leadership framework. Think about evidence or examples that you have seen from the person over the last year in terms of their performance, their behaviour, and what strengths they are displaying throughout their work. Check out the talent bench review form ("Talent Management in *S) to find out what information you will need to input after the meeting. There are two things it is important to remember about holding a talent conversation: - • Use your coaching skills – ask for their perspective and feedback by using open questions before sharing yours • Give honest and constructive feedback when needed Remember that when you are offering feedback it should be based on what you have observed, and good constructive feedback should follow this model: - **E** – Example. What actually happened? Be specific rather than offering a general perspective. **E** – Effect. What the impact of their actions was on yourself or on other people. **C** – Change/Continue. What they need to do differently (or continue doing if it is good feedback) in future. All feedback should be something that someone is capable of acting on and changing. Don't make any assumptions about where they might sit on the talent grid before your conversation, and remember that it is about a conversation – this is only a guide as to what you could cover and shouldn't be followed as a checklist or a form.
During the meeting – setting the scene	Explain what the process is about and why we have talent conversations. Set out that in the meeting you will explore their: - • Current performance (what they have done) • The behaviours and strengths that they are displaying (the way they are going about it)
	• Their readiness for promotion (in terms of their ability, their aspirations, and their engagement – see "Supporting Talent and career aspirations conversations in *S" document for further information

Current Performance	This is where you might want to discuss specific projects or tasks that they have achieved over the last year. Ask first for their views on their performance before sharing your own perspective. Areas to explore could include (but are not limited to): • How satisfied are you with your performance in your current role? • Is there anything you would improve about your performance? • How have you contributed to the team/station over the last year? • What do other people say about your performance?
Behaviours & Strengths	This is where you would want to explore *how* they have approached their work over the last year and what areas of that work energise them. Again, ask coaching questions to get them to think this through before you share your observations. Areas to explore could include (but are not limited to): • What motivates you and makes you feel valued at work? • What do you feel your particular strengths are and how can the organisation best utilise them? (feel free to use the list of 24 strengths attached as an appendix to explore this further) • What behaviours in the leadership framework do you identify with or find easiest/hardest to practice? • What do other people say about your behaviour and what you bring to the team? • What personal styles help you? What personal styles hinder you?
Readiness for promotion/ career aspirations	This section is where you want to explore both how ready someone is for promotion, and how willing they are to go upwards in the organisation. Remember that if someone is performing well in their role it does not necessarily mean they are ready for promotion – they need to be capable of moving upwards and to want to do it. Areas to explore in the course of discussing career aspirations: - **Aspiration – how much do you want and seek progression?** • Where do you want to be in (or out) of the organisation in 1 year? 3 years? 5 years? At the end of your career? • Why do you want to achieve this position? • Which role/s do you feel most energised and motivated by? • When looking at the roles, which ones do you think would make best use of your strengths? • What is your 'profile' within the organisation and how might this be developed?

	• What learning or development have you done recently to support your progression in the organisation? **Ability** – **do you have what it takes to be effective in more senior/ challenging roles?** • Are you demonstrating behaviours that we expect from people in senior roles (refer to the Inspiring Leadership framework)? • What do you feel are the required leadership behaviours you may need to develop? • How do you lead and inspire the people around them? • What professional/operational development might you require to get you to the next level? **Engagement – how committed are you to the organisation?** • How optimistic are you when dealing with and helping others deal with change? • How much do you volunteer to do extra/more complex work or help others when needed? • How much do you prioritise *Service needs ahead of your own personal needs/interests?
Summary – closing the meeting	Summarise with the person themes that have come out of the meeting and have an honest discussion about where your perspective matches or differs with theirs around their performance, strengths and behaviours, and aspirations. Agree with them where you intend to place them in the talent grid, and why. Explain what will happen with that information and what the next steps will be. Information will be used to form promotion pools and these promotion pools will be offered development opportunities as appropriate.
After the meeting	Fill out the talent bench review form that you have been emailed – you can save as you go along but please only submit once you have done the review with your whole team. Type out the names of all your team in the relevant boxes on the grid. The information from the top 3 boxes will be pulled through to the second page, in order for us to collect more information about why you have placed them in those boxes. Fill out the table on the second page with evidence around the names in the top 3 boxes. When you are happy that you have filled out all the relevant information, press submit, and this will be emailed automatically to a central point for collection. You can find further information about how to complete the talent bench review form on the document "Manager Guidance for saving and submitting Talent Bench Review form".

Good practice in Giving Feedback

This brief introduction to Giving Feedback should help you an understanding of the need for feedback in managing people and teams. It should also help you consider additional knowledge and skills you may need to practice in order to be effective as a person who can coach and mentor others by giving effective feedback.

Johari Window

Let us start with a model which will help you think about what the purpose of feedback.

Like some other behavioural models (e.g., Tuckman, Hersey/Blanchard), the Johari Window is based on a four-square grid - the Johari Window is like a window with four 'panes'. Here is how the Johari Window is normally shown, with its four regions.

Four regions

1. What is known by the person about themselves and is also known by others
- **open area, open self, free area, free self, or 'the arena'**. The aim in any group or between two people is always aim to develop the 'open area' for every person, because when we work in this area with others we are at our most effective and productive, and the group is at its most productive too. The open free area, or 'the arena', can be seen as the space where good communications and cooperation occur, free from distractions, mistrust, confusion, conflict, and misunderstanding. Trust builds between people and groups when information about us becomes open.

2. What is unknown by the person about themselves, but which others know - **blind area, blind self, or 'blind spot'.** Johari region 2 is what is **known** about a person by others in the group but is **unknown** by the person themselves. By seeking or soliciting feedback from others, the aim should be to reduce this area and thereby to increase the open area i.e. to increase self- awareness. This blind area is not an effective or productive space for individuals or groups. This blind area could also be referred to as ignorance about oneself, or issues in which one is deluded. A blind area could also include issues that others are deliberately witholding from a person. We all know how difficult it is to work well when kept in the dark. No-one works well when subject to 'mushroom management'. People who are 'thick-skinned' tend to have a large 'blind area'. Group members and managers can take some responsibility for helping an individual to reduce their blind area - in turn increasing the open area - by giving sensitive feedback and encouraging disclosure. Managers should promote a climate of non-judgemental feedback, and group response to individual disclosure, which reduces fear and therefore encourages both processes to happen.

3. What the person knows about themselves that others do not know - **hidden area, hidden self, avoided area, avoided self or 'facade'.** Johari region 3 is what is **known** to us but kept hidden from, and therefore **unknown**, to others. This hidden or avoided self represents information, feelings, etc, anything that a person knows about him/self, but which is not revealed or is kept hidden from others. The hidden area could also include sensitivities, fears, hidden agendas, manipulative intentions, and secrets - anything that a person knows but does not reveal, for whatever reason. It is natural for very personal and private information and feelings to remain hidden, indeed, certain information, feelings and experiences have no bearing on work, and so can and should remain hidden. However, typically, a lot of hidden information is not very personal, it is work- or performance-related, and so is better positioned in the open area.

Relevant hidden information and feelings, etc, should be moved into the open area through the process of 'disclosure'. The aim should be to disclose and expose relevant information and feelings - hence the Johari Window terminology 'self-disclosure' and 'exposure process', thereby increasing the open area. By telling others how we feel and other information about ourselves we reduce the hidden area, and increase the open area, which enables better understanding, cooperation, trust, team-working effectiveness, and productivity. Reducing hidden areas also reduces the potential for confusion, misunderstanding, poor communication, etc, which all distract from and undermine team effectiveness.

Organisational culture and working atmosphere have a major influence on group members' preparedness to disclose their hidden selves. Most people fear judgement or vulnerability and therefore hold back hidden information and feelings, etc, that if moved into the open area, i.e. known by the group as well, would enhance mutual understanding, and thereby improve group awareness, enabling better individual performance and group effectiveness.

The extent to which an individual discloses personal feelings and information, and the issues which are disclosed, and to whom, must always be at the individual's own discretion. Some people are more keen and able than others to disclose. People should disclose at a pace and depth that they find personally comfortable. As with feedback, some people are more resilient than others - care needs to be taken to avoid causing emotional upset.

4. What is unknown by the person about themselves and is also unknown by others - **unknown area or unknown self.** Johari region 4 contains information, feelings, latent abilities, aptitudes, experiences etc, that are **unknown** to the person themselves and **unknown** to others in the group. These unknown issues take a variety of forms: they can be feelings, behaviours, attitudes, capabilities, aptitudes, which can be quite close to the surface, and which can be positive and useful, or they can be deeper aspects of a person's personality, influencing their behaviour to various degrees. Large unknown areas would typically be expected in younger people, and people who lack experience or self-belief.

Examples of unknown factors are as follows, and the first example is particularly relevant and common, especially in typical organisations and teams:
- an ability that is under-estimated or un-tried through lack of opportunity,

encouragement, confidence, or training

- a natural ability or aptitude that a person does not realise they possess

- a fear or aversion that a person does not know they have

- an unknown illness

- repressed or subconscious feelings

- conditioned behaviour or attitudes from childhood

The processes by which this information and knowledge can be uncovered are various, and can be prompted through self-discovery or observation by others, or in certain situations through collective or mutual discovery, of the sort of discovery experienced on team courses, projects, new tasks or other deep or intensive group work.

Whether unknown 'discovered' knowledge moves into the hidden, blind, or open area depends on who discovers it and what they do with the knowledge, notably whether it is then given as feedback, or disclosed.

The principles and 'rules' of feedback

Developing your coaching and mentoring skills will help as you will learn to guide people through their own thinking but the base of effective relationship and performance management (this means the broad act of managing people to give their best) lies in being able to give feedback.

There are some simple human truths we need to accept to make regular feedback effective:
- Everyone is unique - some people may want a formal one-to-one meeting in the year alongside regular feedback - some not. Some will need a lot of feedback and affirmation; others will prefer less but need an occasional thank you and little gifts of feedback. All of us need support to keep growing our skills.

- Everyone deserves sensitive truth giving. It is a horrible feeling to think that your manager or peers know you are lacking skill in some aspect or are displaying a

difficult attitude but say nothing. The blind spot area has aspects you will unaware of, but others will discuss – everyone is entitled to know information about your own performance. Managers need to overcome fear or lack of skills in giving difficult feedback to ensure people can perform.

- It is also your responsibility to seek feedback and try and manage your defensive reaction – if every time someone offers you feedback you block, cry, or become aggressive people will stop helping!

- Recognise that feedback is of its moment and is destructive when carried out too late as people think "you've thought that about me for ages and didn't say."

It is important to note that feedback does not need to be recorded at all – it about helping that person develop their strengths and may need to be repeated until a new skill or approach is acquired. Your Service Capability process is there if you do have real concerns that the process of coaching and feedback is not working.

There are six simple rules for giving effective feedback.

1. **Be specific** versus general.
2. **Describe** versus evaluate.
3. **Focus on the behaviour** versus the person.
4. **Maintain the relationship** versus indulge in self-serving behaviour.
5. **Do not give too many points of feedback** – it will overwhelm
6. **Own statements with 'I'**

The first rule, that feedback should be specific and not general. There we explain that coaches need to paint clear pictures so that people can self-adjust their performances.

Why you need to be specific

Even positive feedback needs to be very specific if we are going to increase the performer's competence. General feedback like, "*You were terrific, Muhammad,*" or "*That was a great speech to the Dementia Club last night, Ashley,*" may make the person feel good, but it does little to improve their competence. How can Muhammad stay terrific if he has no idea what he did, specifically, that you thought was terrific?

The third rule reminds you to focus on the behaviours you wish to improve, change, or reinforce in the other person. Reinforcement of the positive is vital.

I may have an excellent employee with a bad habit I would like them to change. Let us say, for example, that one has a tendency to interrupt people in mid-sentence in meetings. It is the interrupting that I choose to focus on. *"Adam, you interrupted Jacques three times during his presentation this morning. A rule of thumb in those situations is to let people finish talking before you comment or ask questions."* If I think he needs to be made aware of the impact he had on at least one person, I might add a comment on my feelings: *"I must admit I felt a bit frustrated by the interruptions."*

In the above example I chose to take a teaching approach and did not assume competence on Adam's part — I did not assume he knew not to interrupt — and so fed

back to him a picture of the appropriate behaviour. Had I chosen to use a more consultative style I would have asked, "*Adam, are you aware that you interrupted Jacques three times during his prepared presentation in the meeting this morning?*"

Using the mentoring style

The consulting style — asking questions and actively listening — is focused on developing self-awareness and self-responsibility in the other person. If he answers casually, "*Yeah, so what?*" then clearly he does not have enough awareness yet, so I might move to a second question: "*Well, I know how I feel when I have prepared something I want people to hear in its entirety and I get interrupted. How do you feel when that happens? to you?*"

A third possibility is to use a mentoring style. Mentoring is simply coaching that focuses on a career path or survival in the organisation. In this instance my feedback would sound more like this: "*Adam, as you know, one of the things that is really valued in this organisation is that we treat each other with respect and dignity. Interrupting Jacques three times during his prepared statement in the meeting this morning might be interpreted by some as disrespectful. I am sure that wasn't your intention, but I must admit I felt a little frustrated by it.*"

The fourth rule reminds us to give feedback for one reason and one reason only: to help the other person get better. Feedback is not meant to be self-serving to the person giving it. This is not where you get even or show them, you are smarter. Whatever approach you take, you should be able to give feedback — all feedback — in a way that maintains the relationship.

If your feedback is to have maximum impact in bringing about increased competence on the part of the performer, then it should also be timely, varied, and frequent.

Just because we said it once does not mean people got it. For them to get the message clearly, you need to communicate it repeatedly, as often as you can, in as many ways as possible. As for timeliness, research tells us that the effectiveness of feedback starts to decline 0.4 seconds after the act. The best time to tell someone? Now!

Do not try to achieve too much in one sitting. You and your team member can only achieve so much in one meeting – it is much more about giving feedback when it happens and regular discussions.

Use 'I' statements rather than 'you' statements, e.g. "I find your description confusing" rather than "you sound confused here". Do not be tempted to say someone told me as a means of offsetting response or ownership. If there is discussion about a colleague's performance get a specific example and offer that in your feedback. Also try and stop negative gossip about the person!

Recognise that an immediate response to negative feedback may be defensive. Be prepared for these kinds of responses since without addressing them the feedback is unlikely to have much effect.

Some things to consider when receiving feedback

1. Self-assess your ideas and work beforehand	Prepare some specific questions that you want the other person to provide feedback on.
2. Ask for help in finding solutions to the difficulties	For instance, "Can you tell me what you think would work better?"
3. Remember that it is easy not to "hear" feedback, particularly if it is negative.	There are several ways in which individuals may prevent themselves from taking in negative feedback. They may justify (e.g. "Well, you'd have done the same thing in that situation"), explain (e.g. "Well you don't really know the situation"), deny or become angry or hurt.
4. Remind yourself that all feedback, even negative, can be useful.	Take notes so that you can think through more thoughtfully the specifics of any negative feedback you receive.
5. Check that you have fully understood the specifics of the feedback.	For instance, "So the main things I should focus on are xxx, yyy, etc."

Here is an additional help in giving feedback after a selection process.

The legislation around recruitment states that feedback is not a legal requirement unless the request is put in writing. However good practice suggests that you should offer at least three points as to why someone was unsuccessful and not the bland "there was a better candidate on the day". This is especially true for internal candidates but also in a sector which works closely together we should take time to offer external candidates from other Services useful feedback.
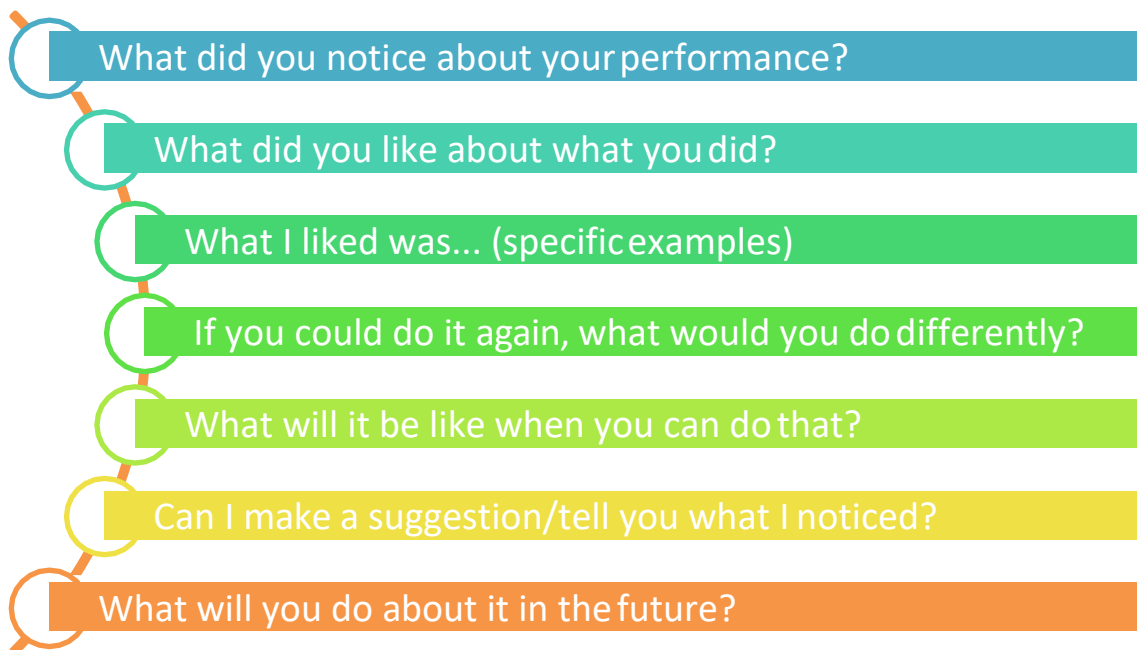
Why is feedback important?

- To be clear about why someone was or was not offered a position
- To help the candidate reflect on their performance and identify where they could have improved
- To give guidance on how they could improve (which needs to be clear, specific, and actionable) or what they need to do differently going forward
- To ensure candidates feel fairness and inclusion has been applied throughout

Things to be aware of:

- Their feelings about the feedback you are giving them – this does not mean you should not say what you need to say, but give them a chance to express and own their feelings about what you are saying
- Your own feelings about giving honest feedback to someone – do not shy away from giving honest feedback because you do not want them to think badly of you
- Negative feedback always tends to stick more than positive so make sure you also identify and emphasise what they did well while communicating what they need to improve
- People cope better with feedback if they identify it first for themselves, so always give people a chance to do this and talk about their mistakes before you have to point them out

On this note, it is always best to adopt a coaching approach to feedback (unless it is a time-critical or risk-critical situation where there is not time to take this approach). This means adopting the following structure: -

What did you notice about your performance?

What did you like about what you did?

What I liked was… (specific examples)

If you could do it again, what would you do differently?

What will it be like when you can do that?

Can I make a suggestion/tell you what I noticed?

What will you do about it in the future?

When you are sharing your feedback during this structure the following model can be really useful in structuring what you are saying and making it clear and actionable by the candidate:

Succession Planning in the UK FRS v0.1 – document to form part of the Talent Management Guidance.

E – Example. Tell the person what they did, give facts and be specific. It needs to be something they can change or influence.

E – Effect. Tell them the effect their actions had on you, the panel, or the process

C – Change or Continue. State clearly the change you are suggesting/expecting, ask the person to come up with ideas on how they could change their behaviour, or how they could continue to evidence positive behaviour

It is always fairer to someone to be honest and transparent in your feedback, while remembering that they will have an allowable reaction to what you are saying.

Try and leave any feedback session checking with the candidate that:

- They are clear what they need to change or improve on
- They understand what specifically they need to do about that change, and
- They have a plan in place for doing that (with support where needed).

Remember that a plan could include many development activities and doesn't have to rely on going on a course – it could be shadowing someone, arranging coaching or mentoring, getting some interview practice, taking on a project, completing some reading or eLearning, or many different activities.