



Civil Service HR

Guidance: Application of Success Profiles during HR Director recruitment

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HR Director Success Profiles

Success Profiles for the range of Human Resources Director roles have been developed, covering a combination of elements that can be assessed to find the best candidate.

The profiles have been designed as a framework to assist you in developing a successful recruitment process for these roles, including expressions of interest for temporary roles.

The HR Director roles are:

- HR Director: Leading a Function
- HR Director: Centre of Excellence 1. Talent, Organisational Development and Diversity and Inclusion
- HR Director: Centre of Excellence 2. Policy, Employee Relations and Workforce Strategy
- HR Director: Chief Operating Officer or HR Operations

There will be differences and more specific requirements for each discrete role depending on the organisational context and the Success Profile templates are not designed to be used prescriptively, they have been produced as a starting guide.

In particular, the strengths element of the four Success Profiles provide examples of the types of strengths you may wish to assess a candidate against and it is important to remember that these will vary depending on the composition and relative strengths of the Senior Leadership Team as well as the organisational context.

How to plan your recruitment

Phase 1 Planning your recruitment campaign



Analyse the job role and define the role requirements



Having defined the role requirements, refer to the relevant HRD Success Profile template and select relevant elements to define the Success Profile for the specific role. Choose the assessment method(s) you will use.

Phase 2 Attracting the right applicants

Advertise



Draft job description and advert



Phase 3 Selecting the best candidate

Sift



Assess



Select the successful candidate



By carefully considering selection criteria and using the right shortlisting and assessment tools, the successful candidate will demonstrate all elements of the Success Profile that are key to **effective performance** in the role.

Phase 4 Making a job offer



Provide feedback to all applicants



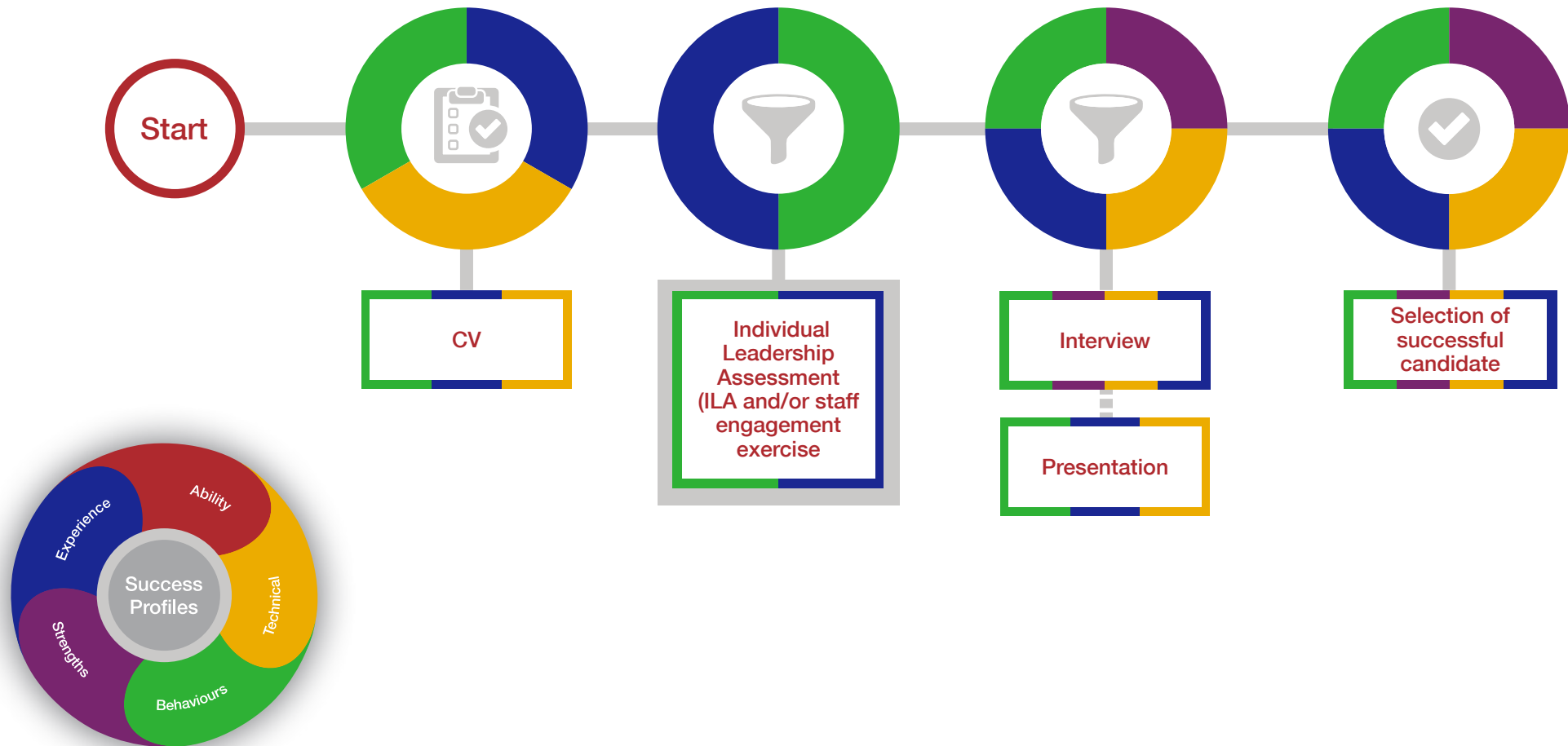
Provide an offer of employment

Assessment matrix

Success Profile element	Sift		Leadership assessment(s)		Decision making assessment	
	CV/Statement of Suitability	Expression of Interest	Individual Leadership Assessment	Staff Engagement Exercise	Interview	Presentation
T	Yellow	Yellow	Grey	Grey	Yellow	Yellow
B	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
S	Grey	Grey	Grey	Grey	Purple	Grey
E	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue

HR Director roles will test Technical, Experience, Behaviours, and Strengths elements. Leaders at this level should be able to demonstrate their professional authority and this may be better tested with an experience based assessment. Senior Civil Servant recruitment already operates in a way that follows the Success Profiles methodology for blended and role-centred testing.

Assessment options for HR Directors



Senior leadership roles (example only)

Assessment options for HR Directors

Sifting assessment

At sift candidates submit a CV and statement of suitability. Evidence of the candidates' **behaviours**, **technical** skills and **experience** are considered together and a single score awarded, using a three point scale of:

- A - candidate meets all the criteria
- B - borderline/candidate meets some of the criteria
- C - candidate does not meet the criteria

Those who clearly meet the criteria will progress to the next stage. Those who meet some of the criteria may progress to the next stage of assessment depending on the places available.

Leadership assessment

The Individual Leadership Assessment (ILA) and staff engagement exercise (SEE) assess **experience** and **behaviours**.

The staff engagement exercise (SEE) will assess behaviours and strengths.

The leadership assessment options are not scored. A feedback report is produced from each exercise which acts as a steer to the interview panel on areas to probe during the interview.

Interview assessment

The blended interview will assess **experience**, **technical**, **behaviours** and **strengths**.

It will also include a 5-minute presentation covering a set topic related to the candidate's leadership experience.

Candidates will be assessed and an overall score agreed, informed by all the information the Panel has considered. The scoring scale for this is as follows:

- **A** - outstanding
- **B** - very good
- **B/C** - clearly above the minimum acceptable level
- **C** - acceptable
- **D** - near miss
- **E** - clearly not acceptable

Interview process

Interview questions should be designed to allow the candidate ample opportunity to provide the required level of evidence to demonstrate their capability for the role.

The Occupational Psychology Team can assist with the design of assessment materials. Please note, there will be a cost associated and advanced notice is required in most cases with this service. For further details please contact:

occupationalpsychologyteam@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

All interview panels for HR Director roles will be chaired by a member of the Civil Service Commission. Further information on the Commission is available at:

<https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/>

All interview panels for centrally managed Senior Civil Service recruitment run by Whitehall departments, the Scottish and Welsh Governments and their associated agencies should have at least one panellist who is from an ethnic minority background and/or has a disability.

All panellists should have undertaken training on interview skills prior to sitting on an interview panel.

Diversity and Inclusion

Success Profiles were introduced in the Civil Service to attract and retain people of talent and experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life.

Success Profiles were designed to move recruitment away from using a purely competency based system of assessment. It introduces a more flexible framework which assesses candidates against a range of elements using a variety of selection methods. This will give the best possible chance of finding the right person for the job, driving up performance and improving diversity and inclusivity.

When developing the Success Profiles, we considered academic research which examined the impact of different assessment methods on diversity and inclusion. This research found that there were no adverse impacts on candidates with protected characteristics, provided interviews are delivered in a structured and consistent way and training was undertaken by those who were involved in delivering assessments and making selection decisions. This is supported by further academic research which similarly found that increased structure in interviews effectively reduced the influence of same-race bias when judging candidates*.

*See the following:

1. McCarthy, J.M., Van Iddekinge, C.H., & Campion, M.A. (2010). Are highly structured job interviews resistant to demographic similarity effects? *Personnel Psychology*, 63(2), 325-359.
2. De Kock, F.S., & Hauptfleisch, D.B. (2018). Reducing racial similarity bias in interviews by increasing structure: A quasi-experiment using multilevel analysis. *International Perspectives in Psychology: Research, Practice, Consultation*, 7(3), 137.

Further guidance

Please note, you may need to sign into your Civil Service Learning account to access some of the guidance:

[Success Profiles: Overview](#)

[Success Profiles: Experience](#)

[Success Profiles: Civil Service Strengths dictionary](#)

[Success Profiles: Civil Service Behaviours](#)

[Success Profiles: Technical](#)

[Success Profiles: Interview methodology](#)

[Success Profiles: Scoring case studies](#)

End.