



Success Profiles

HR Director, Chief Operating Officer or HR Operations

Background

[Success Profiles](#) were introduced across the Civil Service in January 2019 to attract and retain people of talent and experience from a range of sectors and all walks of life. This is in line with the commitment in the [Civil Service Workforce Plan](#) to support our ambition to become the most inclusive employer in the UK by 2020. This approach supports Civil Service HR in its commitment to strengthening expertise, making Civil Service recruitment clearer and more accessible to a range of candidates. For HR practitioners, the new framework is an opportunity to drive professional standards.



This is a guide for vacancy holders and specialist recruitment teams using the Success Profile in recruitment to HR Director roles for Chief Operating Officer or leading an HR Operations team.

The exact criteria for each role will vary depending on the organisational context and specific requirements of the role. More information on the responsibilities and key skills required for HR Director roles is available in the [HR Career Pathways](#).

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Application of Success Profiles during recruitment

The below matrix indicates a potential approach to assessment. The exact requirements can vary depending on the specifics of the role.

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						
B						
S						
E						

Most HR Director roles will test the following elements; Technical, Experience, Behaviours, and Strengths. The Ability element does not feature in the HR Director Success Profile templates as it is assumed the candidate would have already demonstrated this element at this level.

Candidates 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.

Technical

Specific skills, knowledge or qualifications required to be successful in a professional role. More information is available [here](#)

Core professional knowledge or qualification:

- **Relevant professional qualification or knowledge** - Chartered Fellow/fully qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) or equivalent professional qualification or HR knowledge.

Desirable technical skills, knowledge or qualifications for this role are:

- **Finance qualification** - there are several finance qualifications, for example [CIMA accreditation](#) or [CIPFA accreditation](#) that could be underway, or part qualification, to ensure understanding of accountancy and finance.
- **Project and programme management qualification or knowledge** - a PPM management qualification, e.g. PRINCE 2 or equivalent relevant knowledge.

Behaviours

Specific behaviours expected that will result in effective performance in a job. More information is available [here](#).

There are four overall core behaviours. Depending on the scope of the role the vacancy holder should determine the specific core behaviours required plus further optional ones that could be desirable.

Core behaviours:

- **Leadership** - actively develop and protect the reputation of the Civil Service, creating a sense of pride and passion for public service. Present a clear and focused strategy with direction for the future. Act in ways that are highly visible, inspirational and credible at the most senior levels across and outside of the Civil Service. Create an inclusive environment where diversity is valued and there is equality of opportunity for all. Engage positively in debate and resolve ambiguities, gaining the best possible outcomes for the department. Ability to coach and mentor.
- **Managing a Quality Service** - work across government to ensure delivery of professional excellence and expertise to customers. Ensure the department has an in-depth and evolving understanding of the broad range of customers' requirements. Establish and negotiate service levels and deliverables with delivery partners at a broad strategic level. Promote delivering value for money, emphasising a good return on taxpayers money. Ensure all parts of the delivery chain fully understand the required outcomes for the customer. Ensure all colleagues and stakeholders involved in delivery are clear about the impacts of poor service and communication on the customer.
- **Seeing the Big Picture** - develop an in-depth insight into the dynamics and issues surrounding the department and Government. Understand political, economic, social, environmental and technological impacts at both national and international levels. Establish where the department sits within and aligns across the Civil Service. Ensure teams understand their role within the wider business. Shape the department's role and purpose in delivering civil service priorities which are in the national interest and meet the diverse needs of all stakeholders. Create clear long-term strategies focused on adding value to the nation and making real, lasting change beyond the Civil Service. Fully engage with senior leaders from across government to support strategic decision making structures.

Behaviours (continued)

- **Changing and Improving** - constructively challenge bureaucratic decision making, resourcing structures and processes across the Civil Service. Strive to simplify approaches to create an effective organisation using digital technologies ensuring full consideration of accessibility needs and the diverse range of end users. Proactively champion and lead change, seeking innovative new approaches, policies and systems that add value to the organisation. Create a culture of innovation, flexibility and responsiveness enabling departments to swiftly respond to change. Have the confidence to take calculated risks to change how things are done. Establish an environment where all colleagues feel safe to challenge without fear. Consider the full impact of change on the organisational culture and wider government structures.

Strengths

Specific strengths expected of the post holder to validate that the role is the right fit for them and ensure that they enjoy it and perform well. Strengths may be assessed alongside behavioural elements of the Success Profile to get a more rounded picture of suitability for the role. The information below provides further context specific to the role. More information and a copy of the strengths dictionary, which details the behaviour each strength maps to, is available [here](#).

There are three overall core strengths. The vacancy holder should select the strengths for a particular role in accordance with the scope of the role and the composition of the Senior Leadership Team.

Core strengths:

- **Strategic** - highly developed strategic thinking ability, able to deliver strategy at pace, resilience to sustain the strategy, often through high levels of ambiguity and organisational change.
- **Analytical** - ability to seek and analyse information to inform decisions based on the best available evidence. Balance both strategic thinking and horizon scanning with the pragmatism and programme savvy, to deliver and embed people transformation and culture change.
- **Emotionally Intelligent** - ability to draw insight from your own emotions and those of others to demonstrate empathy. Confront issues and challenge assumptions at the highest levels, no matter how uncomfortable, in an assertive yet constructive way.

Experience

Knowledge or mastery of an activity or subject gained through involvement in or exposure to it. More information is available [here](#).

The overall core experience is outlined below. Specific experience should be chosen based on the role description and specific responsibilities.

Core experience:

- **Leading transformation and change** - shaping and delivering transformation and significant performance improvements within a complex environment. Ensuring this transformation is IT enabled.
- **Building relationships and partnerships** - leading outsourced services and working with third party suppliers through contract bid, negotiation, grant and delivery phases and creating positive, client focussed partnerships.
- **Business delivery focus** - strong operational delivery focus, able to interpret data to create and present evidence-based insight. Effectively running programmes of performance improvement that deliver impact to our users and drive excellence in our HR systems and practices.
- **Commercial awareness** - working knowledge and understanding of commercial services including procuring for public value and managing contracts successfully. Ability to understand resourcing and the ultimate aims of the business.
- **Employment law/relations experience** - a strong working knowledge of employment law issues, best practice processes for disciplinaries, redundancies and payroll is required, as well as experience of employee relations.
- **Application of programme/ project management** - endorsing use of appropriate standards and recognised good practice in programme and project management and learning from the experience of others.

Desirable experience:

- **Cross sector experience** - working with or across different sectors or organisations.