



# Success Profiles

## HR Director, Leading an HR Function

### 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 Success Profiles in recruitment for HR Director roles leading a HR function.

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](#).

# Success Profiles

## HR Director, Leading an HR Function

### 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.
- **Financial literacy** - knowledge in managing a significant budget (£x million+) within agreed limits and knowledge of corporate budgeting and financial processes including delivery of cost reduction/ efficiency programmes.

## Behaviours

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

There are five 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.
- **Communicating and Influencing** - demonstrate and promote communicating with honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity. Ensure there is the infrastructure to support varied communication methods which are cost effective and keep up with advances in digital technology. Develop a culture where colleagues consider the individual needs of people when deciding how to communicate and understand the impacts of the chosen methods. Communicate purpose and direction with respect, clarity and enthusiasm. Overcome objections to gain acceptance of the vision and purpose of the department. Use your influence to make a positive difference across the Civil Service and externally.
- **Working Together** - drive an inclusive and collaborative working culture which values diversity and encourages, openness, approachability and sensitivity. Ensure the wellbeing of all individuals is valued across the organisation. Confront issues and challenge assumptions at the highest levels, no matter how uncomfortable, in an assertive yet constructive way. Create a culture where bullying, harassment and discrimination are unacceptable. Build a strong diverse network of professional relationships across the highest levels of government and with Non-Executive Directors. Act for the wider good of the Civil Service by improving governance at board level to meet Civil Service objectives.

## 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.
- **Making Effective Decisions** - act decisively and make bold, unbiased decisions at a strategic level. Make sense of a wide range of political and national pressures and influences to develop strategies which meet organisational goals. Clearly communicate the purpose and reasons for recommendations and decisions. Consult with others where necessary to ensure decisions meet the diverse needs of the end users. Accept and respond to challenge constructively. Clearly recommend the best option articulating risks and impacts on economic, environmental, political and social factors.

## 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 five 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:

- **Influencer** - expected to influence others and secure the confidence of senior internal stakeholders across government. Quickly build credibility with senior internal and external stakeholders and ministers, at a strategic level, to operate at, provide challenge, influence and persuade at executive board/committee level.
- **Visionary** - ability to create and share a clear vision of the future.
- **Strategic** - highly developed strategic thinking ability, 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.
- **Authentic** - self-aware and true to yourself in all situations, even when under pressure.

## 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** - successfully leading delivery of people focused transformational change management programmes, managing significant and successful cultural change through the use of organisational development and behavioural insight techniques, all on time and to budget, in a complex and diverse multi-stakeholder environment.
- **Building relationships and partnerships** - securing the confidence of both internal and external senior stakeholders at a strategic level and providing challenge and influence at executive/board/committee level to deliver on functional priorities.
- **Using data and evidence to make decisions** - interpreting complex data to create and present evidence based insight that drove excellence in HR systems and practice.
- **Commercial awareness** - working knowledge and understanding of commercial services including procuring for public value and managing contracts successfully. Experience of leading outsourced services and working with third party suppliers through contract bid, negotiation, grant and delivery phases and creating positive, client focused partnerships which deliver value for money.
- **Application of programme/ project management** - ability to lead on delivery of people focused transformational change management programmes and manage significant and successful cultural change through the use of organisational development and behavioural insight techniques.
- **Knowledge of shared services/HR operations** - working knowledge of delivering shared services and understanding of HR systems.

### Desirable experience:

- **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.