



2017 SHRM Vermont Human Resources State Conference

Using the “9 box” Performance and Potential Matrix to Assess Talent

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My background:

- Leadership Development, OD and HR for RG&E, Kodak, Paychex
- The University of New Hampshire: Exec Ed
- Leadership writer, executive coach, consultant
- 30 years of management experience (and stupid mistakes)
- My “9-box” experience:



Succession Planning: The “Perfect Storm”

- Low unemployment +
- Retiring “boomers” +
- Training cutbacks from 2008 downturn +
- Exciting plans for growth +
- = “thin benches” !!
- Gen X/Y expectations for development





The “Ostrich” approach

- Ignore it and hope for the best
- We’ll cross that bridge when we get to it
- We have more urgent fires to deal with



Facing Reality: the Proactive Approach

- Forecast your leadership needs
 - Growth, retirements, attrition, etc...
- Identify a “pool” of potential candidates
2-3X greater than the projected need
- Start getting them ready *now*



Leadership Talent: Make or Buy?

- Advantages of buying talent?
- Disadvantages of buying talent?
- Advantages of developing your own talent?
- Disadvantages of developing your own?



Who are your Rising Stars?





Questions:

- Could you and your CEO identify your potential senior leaders?
- How confident would you be in the accuracy?

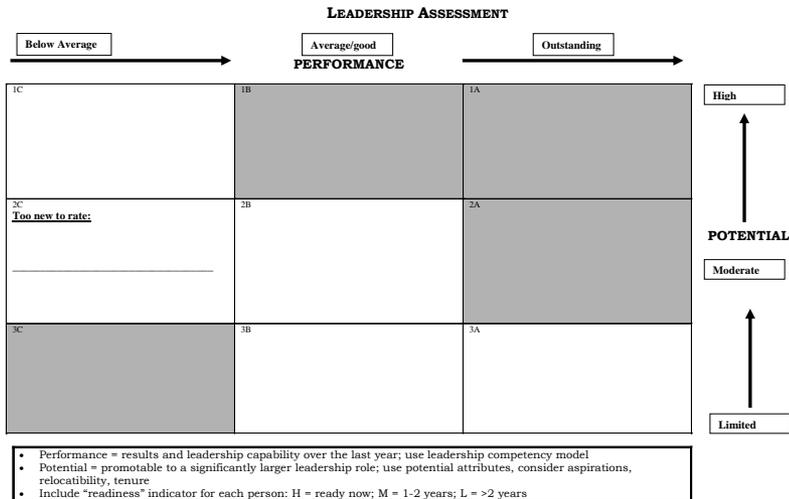


Why “Talent Reviews”

- Multiple perspectives = more accurate assessment
- Low cost assessment methodology
- Shared ownership and teamwork
- More likely to uncover hidden talent
- Calibration of “performance” and “potential”
- Better development plans

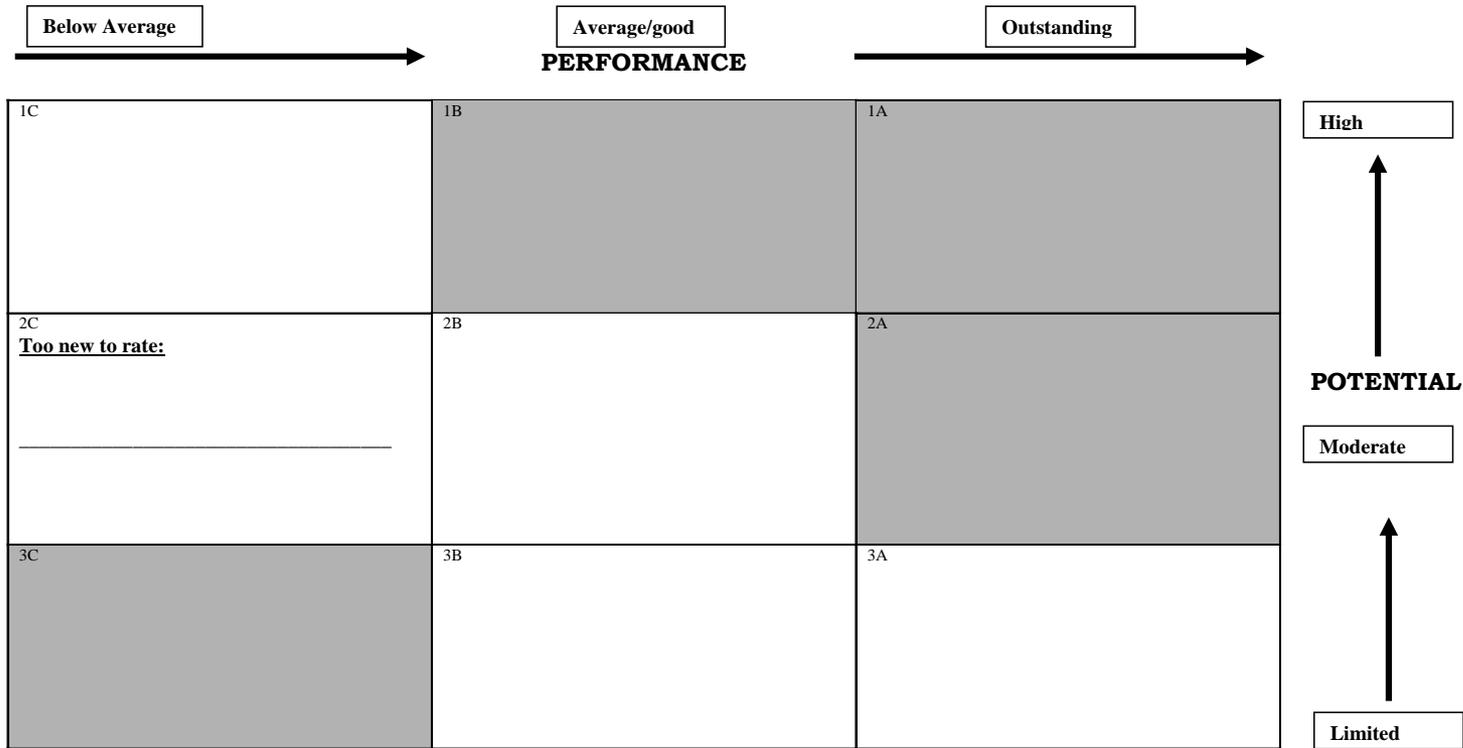


The “9-box”:





LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

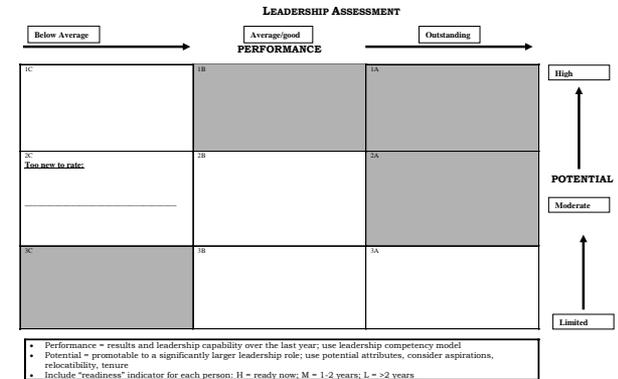


- Performance = results and leadership capability over the last year; use leadership competency model
- Potential = promotable to a significantly larger leadership role; use potential attributes, consider aspirations, relocatability, tenure
- Include “readiness” indicator for each person: H = ready now; M = 1-2 years; L = >2 years



The Performance and Potential Matrix

- Widely used and considered a “best practice”
- Simple, cost-effective, and effective
- More accurate than one opinion
- Considers performance *and* potential
- A catalyst for robust dialog
- Helps define what’s important
- Allows for a *relative* assessment
- Facilitates teamwork and shared ownership
- A diagnostic tool for development





Assessing Talent: Performance vs. Potential

Performance:

- The past
- Measurable results and viable behaviors (what and how)

Potential:

- The future
- Very hard to measure and assess!
- Success in one role does not guarantee success in another



How to use it

- Pre-meeting
- Data collection and consolidation
- Initial meeting: 2-4 hours
- Facilitation
- Start with your poster child (1A)
- Move to your problem child (3C)
- Discuss development needs and actions
- Follow-up



Key Decisions

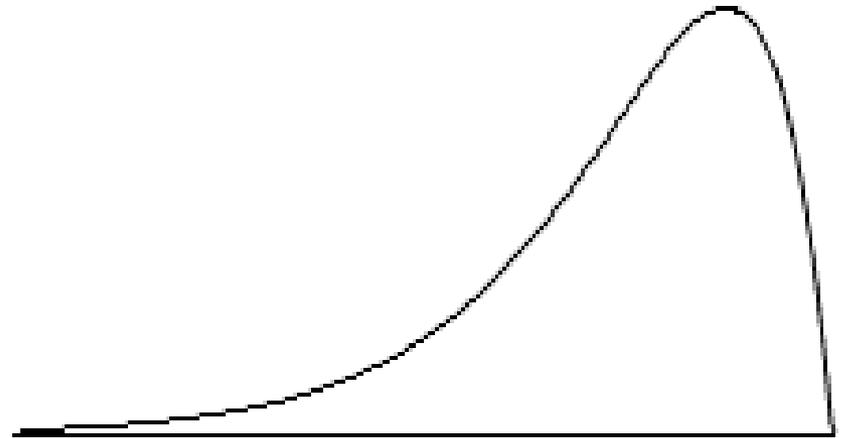
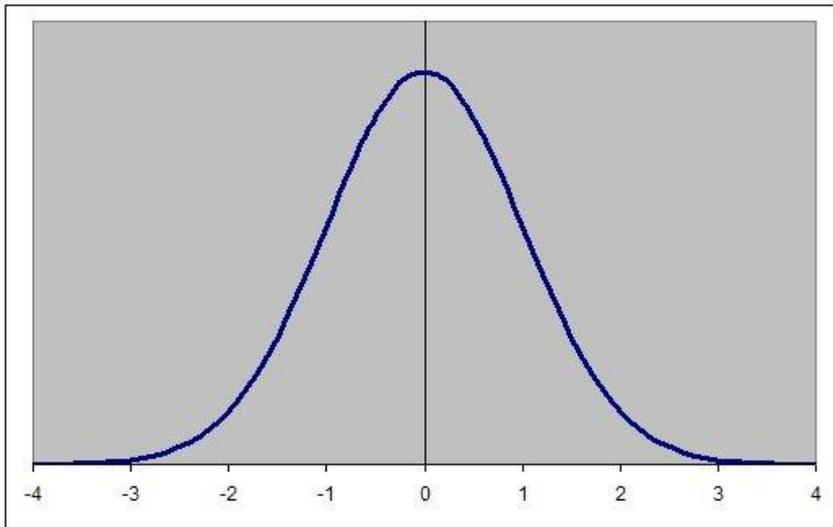
- Who to assess?
- Who to invite?
- Identification of high potential, poor performers, or both?
- Forced distribution?
- Degree of transparency?



Key Decision:

Forced distribution?

Or not?





Meeting Dynamics





Talent Review Group Dynamics

Challenges:

- Lack of trust
- Silence
- Unequal participation
- Power
- Lack of understanding/confidence in the process
- Impatience
- Too much focus on process
- Others?

How to Handle?



Let's Give it a Try!

LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT

Below Average

→

Average/good

→

Outstanding

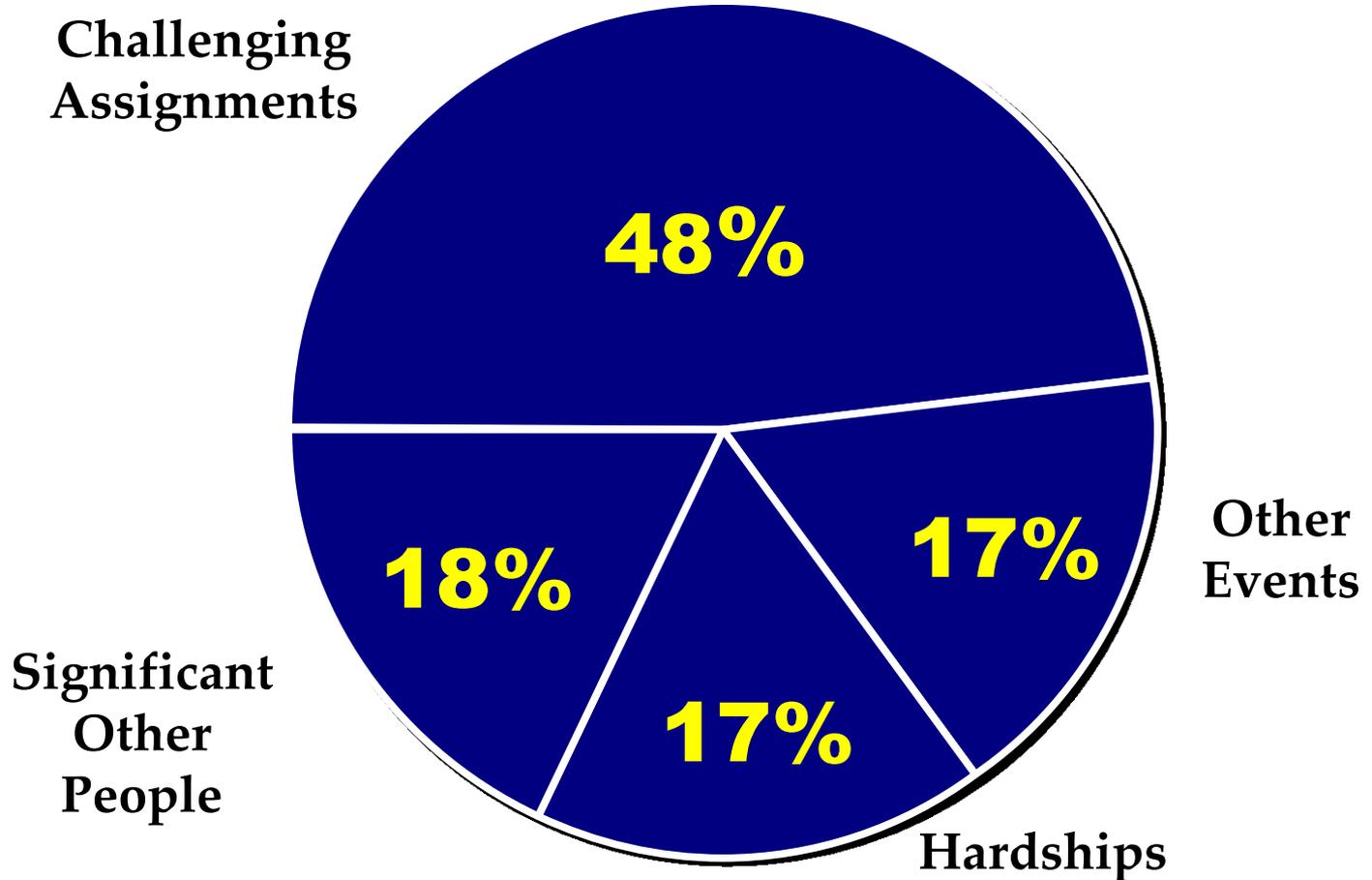
PERFORMANCE

1C	1B	1A	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">High</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;">Moderate</div> <div style="text-align: center;">↑</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Limited</div>
2C Too new to rate: <hr/>	2B	2A	
3C	3B	3A	

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Research from the Center for Creative Leadership





PERFORMANCE AND POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT MATRIX

PERFORMANCE

POTENTIAL

1C

- Find out the root cause of poor performance and together develop an action plan to improve
- Consider moving the high potential to a different role (may have been a poor fit)
- Provide additional support, resources, training
- Look for ways to “attach” to 1As, 1Bs, or 2As
- After a “reasonable” period of time, if performance does not improve, then re-examine your potential assessment

1B

- Development activities similar to 1A
- Difference is current performance level
- Focus more on competency gaps that will move them from B to A performance; good to great performance

1A

- Stretch assignments, things they don’t already know how to do, assignments that take them beyond their current role; high profile, where stakes are high
- Give them a “start-up” assignment, something no one has done, a new product, process, territory, etc...
- Give them a “fix-it” assignment, a chance to step in and solve a problem or repair someone else’s mess
- Job change, rotations, job swaps, - an opportunity to experience a brand new role, short term or long term
- Help them build cross-functional relationships with other A players
- Find them a mentor – at least one level up. Provide an internal or external coach
- Access to exclusive training opportunities
- Access to meetings, committees, etc... one level up; exposure to senior managers, VPs; Advisory Councils
- Watch out for signs of burnout
- Watch for signs of retention risks; know how to “save” a hi-po
- Next level up exposure, responsibilities, shadowing

High

2C

Too New to Rate:

- Focus is onboarding, orientation, relationship building
- Provide a peer mentor
- Provide formal new leader training

2B

- May not be eager or able to advance; don’t push them, allow them to stay where they are
- Continuously check-in regarding willingness to advance, relocate
- Provide occasional opportunities to “test” them
- Provide stretch assignments
- Provide coaching and training
- Help them move from “good to great”
- Tell them they are valued
- Listen to their ideas
- Praise their accomplishments
- Trust them

2A

- Development activities similar to 1A
- Difference is often degree of “readiness” for larger roles. Development is preparation for longer term opportunities

Moderate

3C

- Use a performance management approach, not a developmental approach
- Improvement action plan vs. an IDP
- Clarify expectations
- Identify and remove “blockers”, poor performers that are standing in the way of high potentials
- Provide clearly defined goals
- Be explicit about the ways in which they must improve
- Provide remedial coaching and feedback
- After trying all of the above, after a “reasonable” amount of time, move the person out of the role. Dismiss or move to individual contributor role

3B

- Combination of performance management, training, and coaching to help them move from “OK to good”
- Provide honest feedback about their opportunities for advancement if asked

3A

- Ask what motivates them and how they want to develop
- Provide recognition, praise, and rewards
- Provide opportunities to develop in current role, to grow deeper and broader capabilities and knowledge
- Provide honest feedback about their opportunities for advancement if asked
- Watch for signs of retention risks; know how to “save” a “hi-pro” (high professional)
- Ask them to mentor, teach, and coach others
- Allow them to share what they know, presentations at company meetings, external conferences, to be “the highly valued expert”
- Training that allows them to become more of an expert

Limited



How to Write a Great IDP

1. Start with a goal (why?)
2. Identify the “what”
3. Identify the “how”
4. Assign dates, costs, responsibilities
5. Involve the manager
6. Implement, follow-up, and reflection



www.greatleadershipbydan.com			
<i>Individual Development Plan: Mary Middle Manager</i>			
Development Goal: Improve my effectiveness in current role and prepare for potential senior leadership role.			
Development Needs		Strengths	
1. Improve my ability to lead change		Functional and industry expertise	
2. Improve my ability to think strategically		Financial acumen	
3. Deepen my cross-functional expertise		Problem solving & decision making	
Potential Next Position(s): Vice-President America's Region or another regional VP role			
Challenging Assignments			
Type of assignment	Goal(s) #	Time Frame	
Lead a high level, cross-functional process improvement team. This would leverage some of my existing strengths and allow me to gain experience in leading change and strategic thinking, as well as learn about other company functions.	1,2,3	This year Q2	
Training/Education			
Type of Training/Education/Support	Goal #	When	Cost Estimate
Support Needed			
(e.g., coaching, mentoring, role models, subject matter experts, etc.)			
Notes on Progress, Lessons Learned			
Time Frame			
Start date of plan:		Anticipated completion date:	
Agreement — This plan is agreed to as indicated by the signatures below.			
Plan Participant	Date	Manager	Date



After the Talent Review: Now What?

- Development discussions
- Conduct more formal assessments
- Executive coaching
- Senior leader mentors
- Other subject matter experts
- External training programs
- Custom internal training program
- Talent exchanges
- Special projects
- Company task forces
- Invitation to leadership team meetings
- Non-profits, Boards
- Ongoing feedback
- Collect and monitor development plans
- Follow-up talent reviews

What else???



Questions?



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UNH Leadership Certificate Program:

6 days, Durham NH

360 assessment, coaching, research based content

<http://paulcollege.unh.edu/executive-education/leadership-certificate-program>

Custom or Consortium options too

