

# Business Challenges



**Quick Hit Audit**



## Quick Hit Audit

An exercise to raise awareness of the importance of succession by conducting a 'rough-and-ready' overview of management capability to respond to different business challenges in the short, medium and long-term. The exercise poses eight 'business problems' and requires participants to provide the solutions by nominating individual managers.

### Objectives & Outcomes

- to focus senior management attention on the critical linkage between business success and succession management
- to provide a preliminary audit of the management population to identify major areas of risk and vulnerability
- to highlight and review individual managers seen as representing key players in moving the organisation forward to respond to different strategic challenges

### When best used

- with the top team to gain an initial insight into their perceptions of the key managers within the organisation
- as an initial activity within a succession review committee to emphasise the importance of looking at potential in a business context
- with Business Heads as a first-cut management audit to open up a more extended debate around current and future resourcing to respond to the challenges facing their organisational unit



# Quick Hit Audit

## Support Material

- 8 Business Questions (page 5)
- The Business Challenges Framework
- Work-sheet – Business Challenge and Management Capability (page 6)

## Running and Facilitating the Activity

Outline the purpose of the exercise: to conduct a rough-and-ready audit of the management capability to respond to the organisation's current and emerging business challenges. Emphasise that this activity is not intended to make definitive assessments of individuals or to finalise a succession plan.

Hand out the 8 Business Questions. Although all eight questions will be to some extent relevant, ask participants which questions are particularly critical now? which questions will be critical in the next 3-5 years?

Review observations and comments and explore the reasons. If the group comprises a mix of participants from different parts of the organisation, they may have a different perspective.

Then distribute the work-sheet: Business Challenge and Management Capability.

For each of the 8 Business Challenges, managers have to nominate specific managers- in the short-term; medium-term and longer-term – they consider to have the capability to meet each challenge. Allow managers at least 30 minutes to complete this exercise.

## Key Questions

In reviewing the output from participants, ask:

- how easy was this exercise to complete?
- which questions were more straightforward? which more difficult, why?
- looking at the listing of 'key players' in the immediate term, how do we feel about our
- coverage? how confident are we in our judgments? what additional information do we need to support our initial assessment?
- where do we have strength in depth? where do we seem light? what are the implications – now; for the future?
- are our nominations very 'obvious'? have we missed any individuals? where should we be looking to identify less 'obvious' managers?
- what measures are in place to support the development of these managers?

Repeat these questions:

- for "potential players in the medium term"
- for "future 'bets'" "up and coming" managers' (3-5 years)



## Next step/Conclusions

Re-emphasise that this exercise represents a “first-cut” overview. The intention is not to finalise a definitive succession plan; rather to build awareness of the need to think about successors in the context of different business challenges and to gain an initial insight into our overall capability to respond to these challenges.

In closing, ask:

- what are the key implications emerging from our discussion?
- which “business questions” are particularly critical to us as an organisation now?
- which do we anticipate will be important in the next 3-5 years?
- what does this indicate about our approach to succession management?
- what are the opportunities and risks within the management population?
- what actions need to be undertaken to:
  - provide more detailed and objective information on our managers?
  - develop key individuals to extend their effectiveness?



## 8 Business Questions

Who represents the organisation's source of

### **BUSINESS IMAGINATION**

innovative thinking to generate new business concepts

### **BUSINESS ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

seizing commercial opportunities to expand the business

### **BUSINESS COMMITMENT TO THE CUSTOMER**

improving market share through improved sales, service and support activity

### **BUSINESS INFLUENCE**

advancing corporate interests with key opinion formers and decision makers

### **BUSINESS RENEWAL**

creating innovative people processes to raise capability and motivation

### **BUSINESS EFFICIENCY**

establishing financial control and administrative discipline over work activity

### **BUSINESS FOCUS**

concentrating on fundamental corporate activity to improve productivity and profitability

### **BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION**

utilising IT and progressive organisational processes to create innovative operating systems



## Business Challenge & Management Capability Worksheet

Business Challenge who represents the organisation's source of...

Key players in the immediate term

Potential players in the medium term (1-3 years)

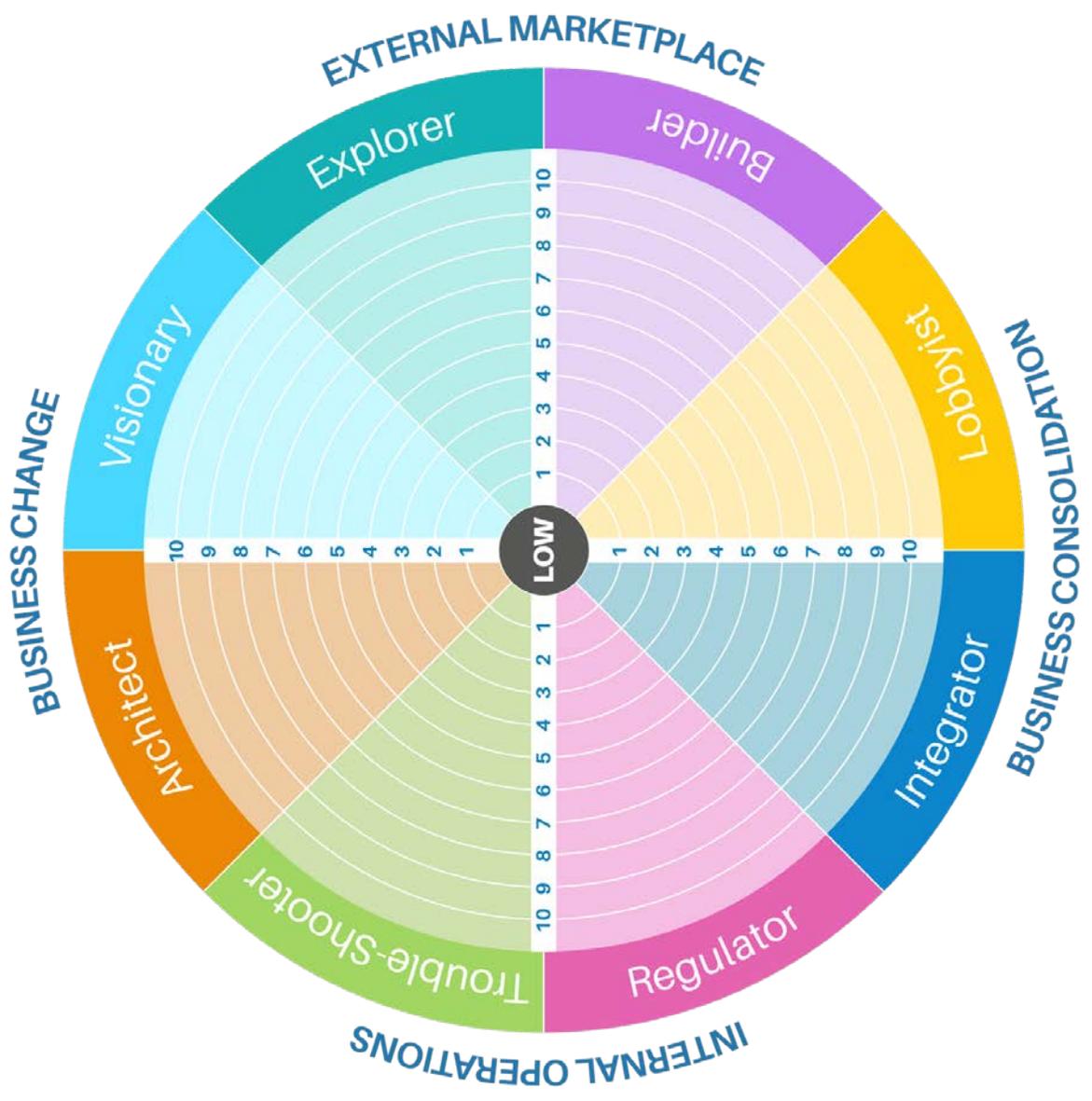
Future 'bets': 'up and coming' managers (3-5 years)

<p><b>Business imagination</b> innovative thinking to generate new business concepts</p>			
<p><b>Business entrepreneurship</b> seizing commercial opportunities to expand the business</p>			
<p><b>Business commitment to the customer</b> improving market share through improved sales, service and activity</p>			
<p><b>Business influence</b> advancing corporate interests with key opinion formers and decision makers</p>			
<p><b>Business renewal</b> creating innovative people processes to raise capability and motivation</p>			
<p><b>Business efficiency</b> establishing financial control and administrative discipline over work activity</p>			
<p><b>Business focus</b> concentrating on fundamental corporate activity to improve productivity and profitability</p>			
<p><b>Business transformation</b> utilising IT and progressive organisational processes to create innovative operating systems</p>			

# Appendix: Slides



# Business Challenges Framework



# Business Challenge Descriptions



## Architect

redefining the organisational infrastructure to create new operating methods and practices; exploiting technological capability to create new organisational structure, systems and operating style; conducting a re-appraisal of the organisational infrastructure in the context of improved technological capability



## Trouble-shooter

identifying and removing unproductive and inefficient business functions; tackling those business activities which are no longer contributing to corporate performance; divesting unprofitable activities which are failing to support corporate priorities and objectives



## Regulator

focusing attention on the efficiency and consistency of all internal processes; monitoring work flow for opportunities to standardise organisational activity; applying financial discipline and administrative control over organisational activity to gain improved levels of efficiency



## Integrator

raising the overall skill level of the work-force through focusing resources on training, development, recognition and reward; raising levels of staff capability and motivation to improve organisational loyalty and pride; breaking down functional differences and resolving complex views to unite the efforts of different groups



## Visionary

planning next generation products and services to formulate an innovative business strategy; developing new business concepts which redefine the rules of business success; addressing the impact of emerging trends and developments in the market-place for the organisation's long-term strategic position



## Explorer

investigating opportunities to break into key markets in pursuit of a diversification strategy; developing relationships with other key players in the industry to explore scope for alliances and joint ventures; identifying opportunities for the future growth and expansion of the business



## Builder

translating business strategy into sales and marketing priorities; reviewing the customer service delivery process for areas of improvement; exploiting the organisation's customer-base through attention to sales and marketing activity



## Lobbyist

representing the organisation's interests across the wider business community to improve corporate image; planning a programme of corporate communication which gains greater influence and freedom of manoeuvre for the organisation; building relationships with key players throughout the industry to improve the company's standing in the market-place