

## Examples to Help Identify Opportunities to Upgrade Talent in Critical Roles



### Performance Results

**Does the incumbent consistently meet or exceed the most critical performance outcomes of the role?**

**Why It Matters:** Evaluates whether the person delivers on what the role truly requires, not just effort or general competence.

#### Probing questions

- What are the 2–3 outcomes this role is truly accountable for?
- Has delivery been consistent at a high standard over time?
- Do they raise the bar, or simply meet expectations?

#### Indicators

- KPI/goal evidence across multiple quarters
- Positive feedback from key stakeholders
- Documented impact on revenue or efficiency



### Internal Talent Comparison

**Could someone inside the organization realistically perform this role significantly better in near future?**

**Why It Matters:** Determines if higher potential talent is within reach and whether the current person is the best match.

#### Probing questions

- Are there known internal candidates who could outperform this person?
- Have we benchmarked against others in similar roles?
- Are we retaining out of familiarity rather than capability?

#### Indicators

- Others in similar roles showing faster progression
- High-potential talent identified but underutilized
- Succession data signals stronger internal options



### External Talent Benchmark

**Could a candidate from the external market perform the role significantly better within 6–12 months?**

**Why It Matters:** Surfaces whether the incumbent is genuinely hard to replace or if better options exist externally.

#### Probing questions

- How does this person compare to external benchmarks?
- If filling the role tomorrow, would we look for someone stronger?
- Would we enthusiastically rehire this person today?

#### Indicators

- Stronger capabilities exist in the external market
- External candidates regularly outshine the incumbent
- Role has not evolved with competitive expectations



### Organizational Influence

**Is the person a role model for others – in how they perform, lead, or influence outcomes?**

**Why It Matters:** Assesses whether the individual not only excels but elevates others through mindset, behavior, and influence.

#### Probing questions

- Do others seek this person out to model best practices?
- Does their presence raise the standard of those around them?
- Do they embody key leadership or organizational values?

#### Indicators

- Tapped to mentor or lead cross-team initiatives
- Recognized as a cultural or leadership example
- Track record of helping others grow or succeed



### Strategic Risk and Impact

**If this person left tomorrow, would it create a significant capability gap and impact key business goals?**

**Why It Matters:** Reveals how essential the person is to current success and whether a succession risk or backup plan exists.

#### Probing questions

- What would be delayed or disrupted if this person left tomorrow?
- Do we have a ready-now or ready-soon successor identified?
- Would replacement require significant time or onboarding investment?

#### Indicators

- No clearly identified successor or talent pipeline
- Heavy dependency on this person for critical knowledge
- Business continuity risks surfaced in recent reviews

