

Looking for your future rail leaders? A new assessment tool to help

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By The OPC

When recruiting for a team manager, it can be a real dilemma whether or not a front-line employee has the capability to make the jump from being an operational team member to a motivational, and skilled leader.

Undertaking a front-line role can be very different to being in a supervisory position managing a team, requiring the oversight and organisation of a teams' work as well as self-management. For example, if we are considering promoting a train driver to a driver manager role, an employee may be a very competent, technically skilled lone-working train driver. But, will they make a good leader? Do they have the people skills that can motivate a team, drive performance being a 'firm but fair' manager in the process. Sitting in the mess room sharing jokes and coffee on a Friday, is very different to sitting in an office planning a team rota on the Monday morning!

However, some front-line employees can have the aptitude to progress into a supervisor's role, demonstrating some key management competencies that would help them excel in a leadership position.

But how can we make the right judgement about whether someone has the relevant competencies to become a good people manager?

OPC Assessment is pleased to launch its latest, new assessment tool – the **Leadership Potential Indicator (LPI)** that can help to solve this dilemma.

We believe there are 5 key managerial competencies that can help to assess leadership potential in a front-line employee. These include:

- Leading others to deliver results;
- People skills to build positive and productive teams;
- Thinking skills e.g., problem-solving, effective decision-making, and;
- Customer focus that delivers professional service to both external and internal customers; and
- Driving improvements in themselves and their team.

Emily Wong, Business Psychologist at OPC Assessment said: “For some time, many rail clients have shared this dilemma with us, whether a front-line employee is capable of being a great manager, or not. With the launch of our new LPI we’ve helped take the ‘guess-work’ out of the decision. It’s a specific tool that can help measure leadership potential and an employees’ aptitude for key management competencies.”

Making the right appointment



Appointing the right calibre employee with most, if not all of the management competencies identified can mean a team's total transformation. The managers empathy and understanding of the operational aspects of the role can mean they're expertly placed to lobby and communicate 'upwards', acting on behalf of a team. However, an ill-advised appointment can take time to impact and it can mean the total derailment of a team leading to poor motivation, low morale and a huge mis-management of very valuable resources.

A rail industry director reflected: "Sometimes it can be a bit of a lottery getting the right person into the right job, and a lot rides on getting it right – the consequences are significant for the organisation, pivotal for the team and momentous for the individual. With the recent pandemic and current morale difficulties the industry faces, it's even more important that we identify leadership potential in our up-and-coming managers of the future."

Using the LPI as a Development Tool

Sometimes an employee may be new to a managerial position, and their leadership potential is yet to be fully realised. They may have really strong task delivery or customer focus, but they may struggle with interpersonal skills making it hard to build productive working relationships. The LPI can also be used as a development tool with existing supervisors and frontline managers to help identify their strengths, and areas to focus on, as part of a Leadership Development Plan.

Want to know more?

Get in touch with the friendly team at OPC Assessment, if you think the new Leadership Potential Indicator (LPI) could help in discovering and developing your future rail leaders.

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