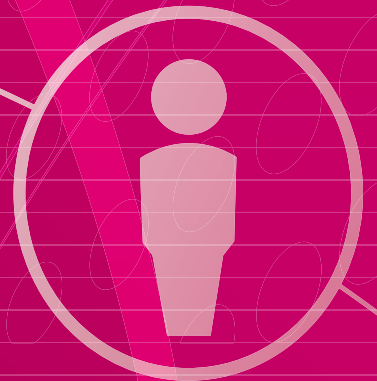


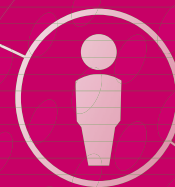


## PEOPLE PLANNING TOOLKIT

# Stage 2: Identifying your Critical People







## Who are your Critical People?

Your Critical People are the individuals without whom you would find it really difficult to deliver your services. These individuals may not necessarily function within your critical posts but they may demonstrate particular behaviours or positive characteristic traits that underpin the services you deliver and/or they may have very specific skills, knowledge or business experience that are of paramount importance to the overall Service.

### How do you identify your Critical People?

It is impossible to give detailed guidance on how to identify your Critical People as the factors that make them invaluable to your service will not be easily identifiable. For example, it won't be the fact that one of the employees you have identified as being critical to your service has an impressive list of qualifications that's important – it's the unique way this individual applies the knowledge they have learned through the qualification route in their day-to-day job.

So how do you identify these individuals? And, more importantly, how do you minimise the risk to your service of losing these individuals?

Very simply, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who are the 2 or 3 people that would cause maximum disruption to your Service area if they didn't turn up to work tomorrow and never came back?
- What is it about these people that make them valuable to the work of your Service area?

#### Hints and tips:

*It is tempting to rate posts according to grade: that is rating higher graded jobs as more critical to the Council's business needs than lower graded jobs. However, in order for this analysis to be meaningful, you should try to avoid this at all costs and rate posts objectively against the criteria set out above.*

Once you have identified these few employees, you will need to probe deeper to find out what it is that makes these employees stand out from the others. For example, you need to be thinking about the following sorts of issues:

What makes the employee critical to your Service?	How do we minimise the risk to the Service of losing these employees?
<b>Specialist skill set</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can these skills be taught to others in the team?</li> <li>• Are these skills available elsewhere in the Council?</li> <li>• Are these skills available from the external labour market?</li> <li>• Is there a compelling business need to "grow our own" employees with these particular skills?</li> </ul>
<b>Specific behaviours</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are these behaviours set out clearly in the relevant competency framework?</li> <li>• Is enough importance placed on these behaviours when recruiting into the Service?</li> <li>• Do job descriptions and person specifications for roles need to be re-written to include these behaviours?</li> <li>• Are the right tools used at the recruitment stage to assess these types of behaviours e.g. psychometric testing, assessment centres etc?</li> </ul>
<b>Council knowledge/key business experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are employees given the right exposure in their roles to develop this knowledge/experience?</li> <li>• Is enough importance given to previous experience during the recruitment process?</li> <li>• Are there specific projects or pieces of work that could be allocated to individuals to help them develop this knowledge/experience?</li> </ul>



## Key links to Council policies and practices

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Your Critical People are a valuable resource not only in delivering your services but in modelling valuable skills, knowledge and behaviours to others within your Service area. To maximise this value, the following links with Council policies and practices are of great importance. Being able to identify the skills, knowledge and behaviours that make individuals stand out from the rest of the team is key to being able to:

- Develop high quality job descriptions and person specifications that clearly identify what your requirements are as a potential employer
- Identify Learning & Development requirements for your employees
- Inform and help develop the Council's competency framework
- Identify work opportunities to help others develop these skills/behaviours or provide appropriate exposure within the working environment to obtain the requisite knowledge/experience
- Identify coaching and mentoring opportunities. Your Critical People could provide valuable coaching and mentoring to others within the team - this would provide them with a really good development opportunity and would also benefit your employees greatly

**For further information or practical support in identifying your Critical People, contact the People Development Team on 01443 424159 or 01443 424082.**



## Manager Checklist

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Action	Completed
1. Identify your Critical People	
2. Identify what makes these individuals critical to your Service area	
3. Identify ways of replicating these critical skills, knowledge or behaviours within your teams	