For organizations working in strong regulatory environments, the need to demonstrate compliant and risk-reducing talent practices is considered business as usual. However, in the current challenging business environment all organizations are now realizing that lax control of human resource programs generates risks they can ill-afford to take - limited responsiveness to marketplace changes, higher costs, inadequate talent pipelines, mis-aligned reward programs, and reduced employee engagement. As a result, people risks have moved up the priority list and HR leaders are under pressure to build future-proofed policies and frameworks that help the business achieve its objectives as well as protect employees and customers.

What can HR teams do to help eliminate excessive risk-taking by employees?

An obvious starting point is having jobs that are designed in a way that doesn’t force the jobholder to take unnecessary risk - in terms of specific goals and the structure of the workflow. In other words, it’s important to determine whether a job is ‘doable’. Having these foundational structures in place is key to then allowing you to put robust talent processes in place to assess individuals for role suitability and risk-taking behaviors before they are even hired. Korn Ferry Success Profiles help with both aspects.

How does job design aggravate or mitigate risk?

The graph below neatly illustrates that there can be problems with too much, as well as not enough, stretch in jobs. Using job evaluation, you can identify the degree of stretch and review this to see what the risks are.
When you move people into stretched jobs, are they provided with enough support? And are you stretching mission critical jobs, indicating potential for a significant risk to the organization?

Many people presume that organizational and job structures are the result of systematic and methodical planning, but in our experience, they evolve over time and are often shaped by personalities, politics and compromise. Our research shows that only 18% of organizations have proactive audit processes on maintaining current job evaluation appropriateness. The unintended consequences of this evolution are often overlaps and gaps in key accountabilities necessary to meet core objectives. Important decisions flounder and business processes bog down, resulting in confusion and exposure to risk.

We often see jobs change when they are designed around the unique capabilities of a star performer with high potential who is seeking increased challenges. For example, to expect an individual in a mid-sized organization to function as a vice president of corporate development setting new strategy, negotiating deals, and driving a growth agenda – while also managing a marketing department’s day-to-day operations, can lead to serious problems.

Although there is an apparent link between corporate development and marketing, the shapes of these jobs – and therefore the competencies necessary to achieve outstanding performance – are quite different, and the complexity of this role is substantial. Either the person will burn out, or one or both jobs will suffer. If unchanged, these jobs may be just too overwhelming or complex for the newly promoted incumbent.

Conversely, if the demands of the role are minor relative to the incumbent’s capabilities, there is a good chance that the individual will grow bored or demotivated, and then we see risk of a different type through derailing behaviors in the workplace.

What are Korn Ferry Success Profiles – and how do they reduce risk founded in job design?

At Korn Ferry we take a wide view of the recipe for success in a role. This approach defines “what good looks like” in terms of three core elements. Firstly, the accountabilities of a role; secondly, the associated capabilities – the hard and soft skills, and experiences, that are needed to perform these responsibilities; and thirdly the identity, or traits and drivers, that are characteristic of a person who will thrive in the role.

We have pulled together these three elements into a series of over 4,000 Korn Ferry Success Profiles. And because each Success Profile is backed by our Korn Ferry IP and research and includes a full Korn Ferry Hay Job Evaluation line, they provide robust off-the-shelf job design. We also understand that every organization is a little different, so we give the option of adjusting the Success Profile content, but still provide guard-rails to let you know if you’re introducing risk into your job design.

The anatomy of a Korn Ferry Success Profile

Korn Ferry Success Profiles are pre-coded with levelled skills, competencies, traits, drivers and have a full Korn Ferry Hay Job Evaluation line.

Accessed via the Korn Ferry Talent Hub, each Success Profile can be configured for your organization and dynamically updated within minutes. A job description, job evaluation, interview guide, key performance indicators and additional market insights including pay, engagement drivers and marketplace supply of talent are also included with each Success Profile.

**Responsibilities**
A typical profile has around 8 responsibilities. There are 250+ responsibilities within the Success Profile library.

**Education and experience**
A typical profile includes 7 education and 9 experience levels. These can be edited to suit your needs and/or relevant legalisation.

**Behavioral competencies**
A typical profile includes between 6 and 10 behavioral competencies. Within the Success Profile library, there are 38 competencies with 8 levels.

**Traits & drivers**
A typical profile includes between 6 and 8 traits and 6 drivers. These can be ranked accordingly to what is important for the role and/or company culture.

**Technical competencies:**
A typical profile has around 6 to 8 technical competencies. There are over 100 competencies and definitions within the Success Profile library.
How do Success Profiles reduce the risk of placing the wrong person into a role?

As well as gathering together job-focused data, our Success Profiles provide a research-validated profile of the person who would be most successful in the role. In fact, people who are a close fit with our Success Profiles are up to thirteen times more likely to be highly engaged in their roles. So if you want to reduce the risk of poor performance, Success Profiles are a valuable tool in making sure you’re hiring or promoting the correct person into the job. All Success Profiles come with a job description and interview guide to provide line managers with a specifically targeted set of questions based on key success criteria for the role – also contributing to a consistent approach across different candidates and interviewers. Our Korn Ferry Select assessments add a robust and objective measure of fit to Success Profile to overlay further precision to a hiring decision.

Can you predict behavioral risk?

Our robust data driven model of people and work also includes 11 derailers, or risk factors. The essence of this approach is that leaders face a unique and challenging set of circumstances in their roles. These include increased levels of freedom of action, combined with limited peer feedback and managerial supervision. These can conspire to create an environment in which the attributes that helped the individual to progress, and have been the source of positive feedback in the past, can morph into a propensity to behave in a way that may be problematic in stressful, ambiguous, or complex situations.

By highlighting these risk factors early, you can equip leaders with the awareness needed to expand their repertoire of behaviors and avoid defaulting to potentially problematic patterns when faced with challenging circumstances. It also allows organizations to monitor for their symptoms over time. It is known, for example, that derailment can affect the organization in several ways, including excessive risk taking, a criminal lack of financial probity and increasingly odd leadership behavior with a corresponding negative impact upon the organizational climate.

Sources: Korn Ferry (2017) Job Evaluation: Foundations and applications

Find out more about the Korn Ferry Talent Hub and the impact of Success Profiles. Visit kornferry.com

Korn Ferry’s predictive assessments measure risk factors that may derail the participant from success in a role.

Concern

| Avoidant: The extent to which a person avoids taking charge and working with others. |
| Closed: The propensity for being dogmatic or unable to adapt to different perspectives. |
| Defensive: The propensity to be sensitive and self-protective. |
| Egotistic: The tendency to seem arrogant and entitled. |
| Micro-managing: The lack of ability to trust others to do their work. |
| Opportunistic: The propensity to shift priorities quickly and unpredictably in the pursuit of power, influence, or easier circumstances |
| Restrained: The degree to which a person is fearful of change and shuns risk. |
| Social pleaser: The tendency to focus solely on the rewarding aspects of social interaction. |
| Solitary: The tendency to be overly self-reliant and autonomous. |
| Suspicious: The tendency to be overly sceptical, fearful or mistrustful |
| Volatile: The propensity to express emotions strongly and unpredictably without apparent concern for the impact on others. |