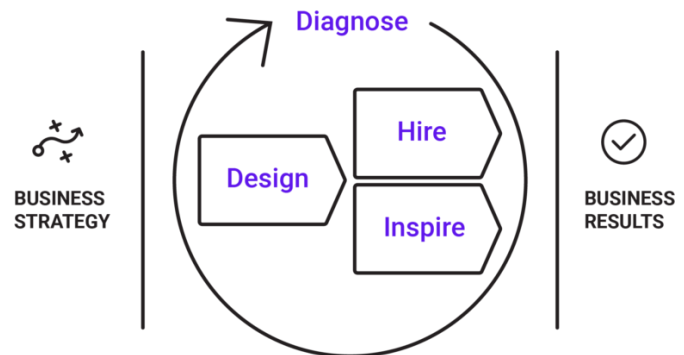


# Talent Optimization Maturity Model

The Talent Optimization Maturity Model is a diagnostic tool that measures how competent your business is at talent optimization, and it will isolate problem areas so you know where you need the most improvement.

As you work your way through, rate yourself on each aptitude by selecting the statement that best describes the current state of your organization. The lowest level (level 0) means minimal competence, while the highest level (level 3) means maximum competence.

You might find yourself struggling to choose between two statements. If a portion of the statement applies but not the rest you shouldn't select it. Go a level down instead. Don't get hung up on trying to get a certain minimum score—just be honest.



At its essence, the maturity model allows you to evaluate where your organization is and prioritizes areas that need improvement.

## An explanation of our four maturity levels

### Level 0 – Chaotic

You have no aptitude. Words that describe this level of competence are: chaotic, unstable, undisciplined, ad hoc, undocumented, and reactive.

### Level 1 – Basic

You have some aptitude. You have documented, defined standards and basic processes, and you see incremental improvement. But processes aren't systematically or repeatedly used.

### Level 2 – Proficient

You have good aptitude. You set clear objectives, make effective, data-driven decisions, and use metrics to measure your competence.

### Level 3 – Optimized

You have optimal aptitude—and see optimal performance marked by continuous improvement. You're innovative, agile, and autonomous with a strong competitive advantage. You take a holistic approach and follow embedded best practices.



# Take action on your results

After you complete the maturity model and rate yourself in each aptitude, you might be happy with your level of competence in several of the areas and want to improve just a few. That's fine—you don't need to move through the framework linearly. Focus on your problem areas.

If it seems a bit overwhelming, recognize that not everyone needs or wants to reach level three. For many organizations, being a level two is enough. Evaluate your internal resources, and set your target level from there. It's important that you take an honest look at your organization's current capabilities relative to your strategy.

## Get started

Begin rating yourself in each of the aptitudes starting with **Measure what matters** and ending with **Reinforce your culture**.

### Measure what matters

This includes deciding which data to collect about the people and jobs in your organization. It also includes identifying which tools to use and how frequently to measure.

- **Level 0:** We have no objective data regarding employee behavioral styles, employee engagement, experience, or job performance.
- **Level 1:** We collect basic data about employees and candidates such as their skills and their experiences working at our organization, but we collect this data inconsistently.
- **Level 2:** We have a systematic method of collecting data about jobs, candidates, and employees including behavioral styles, cognitive abilities, employee engagement, and job performance.
- **Level 3:** We have a method of continuously collecting business and people data. We do this both on a regular cadence and in response to issues that arise during our work.

### Analyze objectively

This includes having an established means of evaluating people data in business context, and analyzing data to determine magnitude, relevance, and breadth of issues.

- **Level 0:** When people problems affect our organization, we have no established means of examining data about people and situations to aid our troubleshooting efforts.
- **Level 1:** We're able to analyze basic available data about people and situations. We conduct this type of analysis reactively, and we do it differently each time.
- **Level 2:** We're able to analyze multiple types of data about our people and the business. We conduct analysis proactively and in response to problems, and our analytic approach is repeatable.
- **Level 3:** We're able to analyze our people data in the full context of our business. We use predictive analytics, and all team members have access to the analytic tools and data they need.

### **Prescribe improvement actions**

This includes identifying solutions to people problems, developing plans to take action, and overcoming organizational resistance to change.

- **Level 0:** We have a hard time surfacing people issues that are affecting our business. As a result, people problems fester in our organization.
- **Level 1:** When a people problem is significant enough, we get the right parties together to try and hash it out. The process is hit-or-miss, but we usually get to a good place.
- **Level 2:** We have a well-defined process for looking at business factors through a people lens. We systematically define better ways of doing things, and we typically follow through.
- **Level 3:** We use robust data and analytics to identify where we can work in a better way. Every team member can recommend improvements, and we track our progress against our goals.

### **Select your organization's structure**

This includes purposeful org design and building optimal team configurations. It also includes creating job titles, relationships, and dependencies, plus defining responsibilities and span of control.

- **Level 0:** We have no formal organizational chart or a copy and pasted version. Our structure was based on people issues, not job needs, and our organizational design principles are poorly understood.
- **Level 1:** Our organizational structure is documented and gives us clear visibility into future hiring needs. We have an established process for creating and evaluating business case for new positions.
- **Level 2:** Our organizational design accommodates a transition from current to future needs through scalability and capacity analytics. Role clarity exists and design principles are well understood.
- **Level 3:** We can flex our organizational design to meet unexpected opportunities with fluid teams. Our structure balances competing needs and its performance is tested and improved over time.

### **Evaluate your leadership team fit**

This includes defining leadership competencies as well as identifying, developing, and measuring leaders to execute business strategy now and in the future.

- **Level 0:** We lack an objective mechanism to measure leadership capabilities or gaps and/or we promote based on popularity, politics, or seniority. We have no formal leadership development program.
- **Level 1:** Leadership competencies are clearly defined and articulated, and we have a process for identifying and evaluating leaders with rudimentary leadership development programs in place.
- **Level 2:** Leadership assessment, development, and measurement is completed in the context of our organizational strategy. Career conversations and future needs analysis happen inconsistently.

- **Level 3:** We have leadership development programs in place, and leaders are able to tailor leadership styles. Senior leaders leverage the natural strengths of one another.

### **Understand senior team dynamics**

This includes architecting team dynamics based on business strategy. It also includes determining how senior leadership teams think, work, and align with strategic intent.

- **Level 0:** We have ineffective ways of working together and/or we lack respect for the different ways people think and work. When it comes to problems, we're reactive rather than proactive.
- **Level 1:** We have explicit understanding of what constitutes great teamwork but communicate and collaborate inconsistently. A process exists to review both positive and ineffective interactions.
- **Level 2:** Team members have the highest levels of self-awareness, and view conflict as a natural part of work. Teams have clear objectives, and performance outcomes are measured against them.
- **Level 3:** Team dynamics are evaluated and architected through the lens of the business strategy, and positive team performance factors are understood at all levels and seen as critical to success.

### **Establish your culture**

This includes establishing shared beliefs, values, and norms to guide workplace behaviors and achieve objectives. It also includes culture's ability to determine engagement.

- **Level 0:** Our culture is negatively impacting performance and engagement, there's an attitude that culture doesn't matter, and/or there are inconsistencies between what's said and what's done.
- **Level 1:** Our culture is clearly defined and communicated, and cultural fit is seen as an important contributor to individual and collective success. We evaluate behaviors relative to our culture.
- **Level 2:** Strategy is a lens through which we view our organizational culture. Cultural analytics are reviewed at the senior levels of the organization, but culture is still seen as an HR task.
- **Level 3:** Our culture maximizes employee engagement, and all members of the business are responsible for cultural alignment and preservation. Culture is transparent, discussed often, and reinforced.

### **Define and communicate job requirements**

This includes job creation and forecasting, examining roles in the context of the business, and gathering inputs from key stakeholders to define job requirements.

- **Level 0:** We have no formal process for determining new positions and analyzing job requirements. We use subjectivity rather than data when evaluating candidates and have an ad hoc interview plan.
- **Level 1:** We have a process for defining job requirements, and near-term business needs drive job creation. We have some use of pre-hire assessments and some interview team coordination.

- **Level 2:** Job forecasts anticipate hiring needs, and multiple stakeholders define job requirements. We collect metrics to determine hiring effectiveness and we have high interview team coordination.
- **Level 3:** Job creation is fluid, dynamic, and inline with changes in the business environment; job requirements are comprehensive. Our selection process is a positive experience for candidates.

### **Equip leaders to land top talent**

This includes empowering hiring managers to lead interview teams and positioning them as key to hiring and onboarding. It also includes measuring and improving performance.

- **Level 0:** Our hiring managers aren't trained to interview candidates or evaluate candidate data. Managers make decisions in a vacuum and new hires receive no structured onboarding.
- **Level 1:** The hiring manager's role within the selection process is defined. Hiring managers are trained and proactively coordinate with interview teams. We have a basic process for onboarding.
- **Level 2:** Hiring managers evaluate objective candidate data and provide structured interview questions to other interview team members. Our new hire onboarding process is well-structured.
- **Level 3:** Hiring managers adapt the hiring process based on a position's needs. Hiring manager and interview team performance is measured and improves. Onboarding is tailored to the candidate.

### **Predict new team dynamics**

This includes evaluating potential group dynamics to anticipate and mitigate issues as part of the selection process. It also includes introducing a new member or a new team.

- **Level 0:** We give no thought to individual and team dynamics during the hiring process, exclude key team members from the selection process, and/or add new hires to work teams abruptly.
- **Level 1:** Our team member evaluation method is documented, and future team members play an active role in the selection process. We have no objective measures of onboarding success.
- **Level 2:** Team members and new hires are both informed about each other in advance of the new hire's arrival. We use new hire satisfaction ratings to evaluate and improve onboarding and teaming.
- **Level 3:** Predictive models are used to anticipate changes in individual and group dynamics. Onboarding activities are tailored to the new hire, and teams are fluid as they adopt new hires.

### **Determine candidate cultural fit**

This includes communicating culture to candidates during the selection process and evaluating candidates based on fit. It also includes determining whether roles fit culture.

- **Level 0:** We don't consciously or formally address or communicate our culture to candidates during the selection process. Candidates receive vague responses to their questions about our culture.
- **Level 1:** We define our culture in subjective terms and communicate it to candidates during the hiring process so they can evaluate cultural fit. Interview team members can address any questions.
- **Level 2:** We measure our culture empirically, communicate it to candidates during the hiring process, and evaluate candidates based on cultural fit. Interview team members use a rubric to evaluate fit.
- **Level 3:** Our culture is flexible and can adapt to changes in the organizational and business environment. We have distinct, thriving sub-cultures, and we communicate that to candidates.

### **Create new jobs and career paths**

This includes creating jobs and career paths as the organization matures to execute strategy, as well as promoting employees into new roles. It also involves transparent communication.

- **Level 0:** We don't give proactive thought to future organizational needs and only evaluate jobs when a new hire is needed and in the context of budget, not strategy. Career paths are unclear.
- **Level 1:** Future job requirements are loosely understood and we have a process in place to identify promotable employees. We have a subjective means of evaluating our talent.
- **Level 2:** Future job requirements are objectively and transparently captured. There is transparency among the executive team and objective means of evaluating our talent.
- **Level 3:** Future business needs are understood and used to project promotable employees. Employees have an explicit job target and clear developmental plans to guide their growth.

### **Develop your leaders**

This includes developing leaders at every level to positively impact employee performance and engagement. It also includes identifying and evaluating leadership competencies and giving feedback within business context.

- **Level 0:** We have no formal understanding of leadership capabilities and no leadership development capability. Our leadership erodes employee trust and negatively impacts business results.
- **Level 1:** We've identified and evaluated generic leadership competencies and provide regular feedback but we're not fully developing people. Managers are self-aware but avoid difficult conversations.
- **Level 2:** We've identified and evaluated situational leadership competencies, see leaders at every level, and have developmental conversations. We solve challenges through adaptive leadership.
- **Level 3:** We have autonomous/experiential leadership development methods and demonstrable progression of leadership improvement. Leaders have holistic understanding of business needs.

### **Create high-performing teams**

This includes people working together—communicating, making decisions, and executing—to achieve success. It also includes measuring team performance, and awareness of working preferences.

- **Level 0:** Team dynamics and working relationships are poorly understood. Conflict and a lack of collaboration undermine performance, and people regularly refer problems to HR.
- **Level 1:** Employees are aware of their own working preferences and natural strengths. Methods of communication and collaboration are documented and we have a process for resolving conflict.
- **Level 2:** Employees are aware of their working preferences and strengths as well as preferences and strengths of their colleagues. Team performance is measured, evaluated, and transparent.
- **Level 3:** Teams are purposefully constructed based on business needs and disbanded in a fluid manner. Teams share best practices and successes across the organization.

### **Reinforce your culture**

This includes measuring and monitoring culture as well as aligning culture with broader business context for optimal performance. It also includes correcting any cultural violations.

- **Level 0:** We have no overarching cultural identity and/or significant cultural issues are affecting performance and engagement. We sometimes see cultural clashes between departments.
- **Level 1:** Our culture is formally defined and communicated to employees, although inconsistencies exist. There's a subcurrent of underlying trust issues, and some cultural violations go unaddressed.
- **Level 2:** Our culture is aligned with broader business context, well understood and defended at all levels, and objectively measured and monitored.
- **Level 3:** Organizational culture and local sub-cultures co-exist to maximize business outcomes. Our culture is flexible, can adapt to change, and is embedded in our decision-making processes.