



Elevate
your people.

Building a Legacy: Succession Planning & Retaining High-Potential Talent



Margret Barzachka-Nikolova
Sr Director HR in Bulgaria,
Teva Pharmaceuticals

Introduction

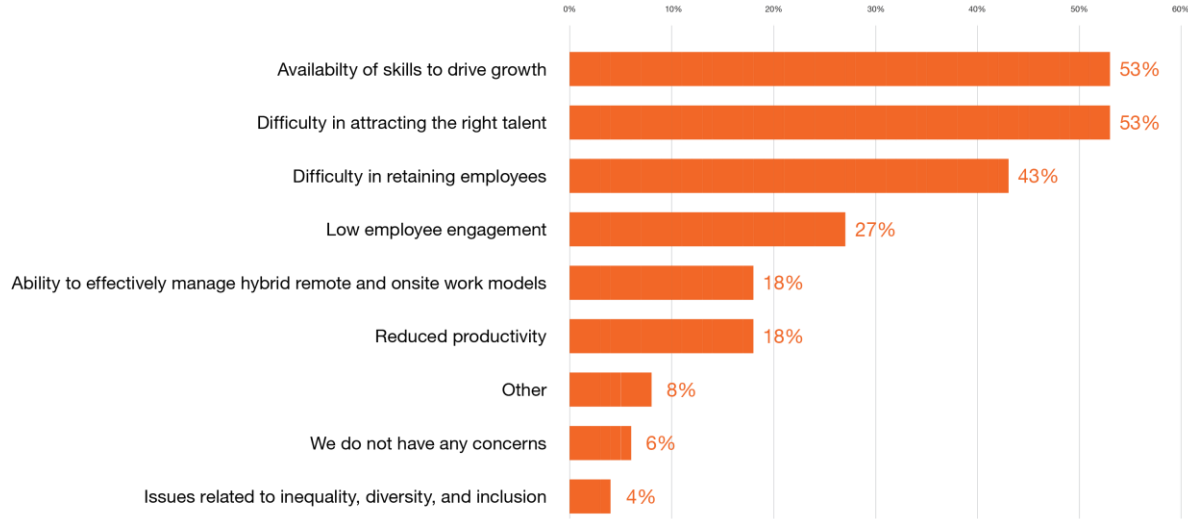
I am leading the HR team of Teva Pharmaceuticals in Bulgaria where Teva operates two manufacturing sites, a commercial organization serving the Bulgarian market, and a variety of global teams, supporting Teva across the world in a number of areas as Quality, Supply Chain, IT, Logistics, etc.

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. is a leading innovative biopharmaceutical company, enabled by a world-class generics business.

- **125 years in business**
- **37 000 employees**
- **57 markets**
- **48 manufacturing sites**
- **21 R&D sites**



What are your top people-related concerns at the moment within your organisation?



Workforce Planning and Succession Planning - two strategic HR processes which proactively address and manage workforce and talent related risks in organizations

Workforce Planning

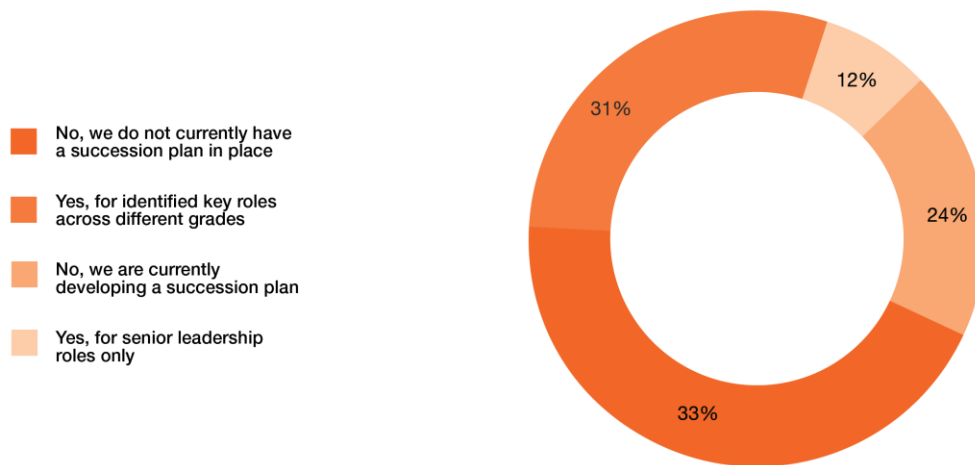
“Analysing your current workforce and determining your future workforce needs, you are identifying the gap between the workforce you have available now and your future needs. Then you can implement the right solutions so your organisation can achieve its strategic plans” (CIPD)

Workforce Planning is the broader process compared to Succession Planning which mainly focuses on leadership roles





Succession planning is the process of identifying the critical positions within one's organisation and devising action plans for individuals to be developed and assume those positions when required. Do you currently have an active formal succession plan in place?



Companies differ in the way how they organise succession planning and in the exact process they follow:

- ✓ very structured vs more informal approach
- ✓ ways of documenting and tracking progress
- ✓ sequence and regularity of meetings, discussions & reviews
- ✓ tools & templates used

In general, Succession Planning follows similar phases.



SUCCESSION PLANNING & RETAINING
HIGH-POTENTIAL TALENT

Defining Critical Positions

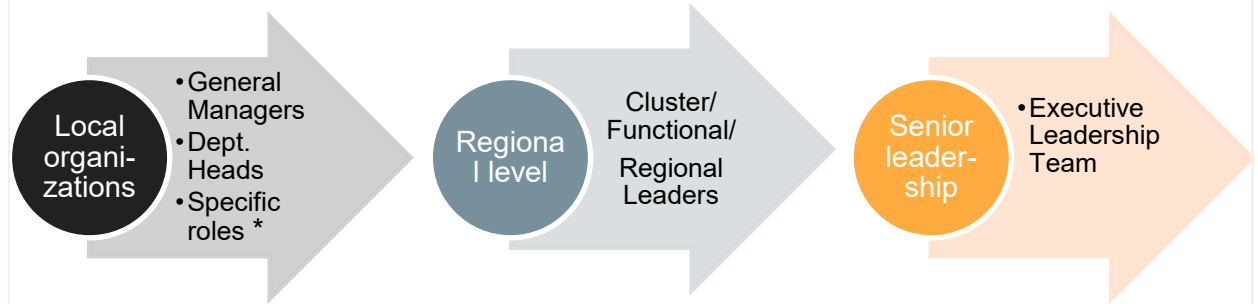


Elevate
your people.

Defining critical positions

Essential positions for business continuity and for organizations to reach their strategic goals and be prepared for the future

Large international companies run Succession Planning for global leadership roles but also on regional and country level:



** Roles requiring industry or company specific knowledge – pharma manufacturing for example*

Assessment of future leadership needs

What type of leaders each organisation needs today and in the future?

In defining the critical roles, we define clearly **the future leadership capabilities the organization will need** too. In this we keep in mind the external and internal environment:

- ✓ External - industry trends, labour market trends, specific business environment
- ✓ Internal - company strategy, company values and culture to which we aspire, leadership frameworks / competences / principles

SUCCESSION PLANNING & RETAINING
HIGH-POTENTIAL TALENT

Identifying Successors



Elevate
your people.

Identifying & nominating Successors



- ✓ Most organizations focus on developing and growing leaders **internally**
- ✓ *What is a good ratio between internal and external filling in leadership roles in your view?*
- ✓ *What about diversity?*



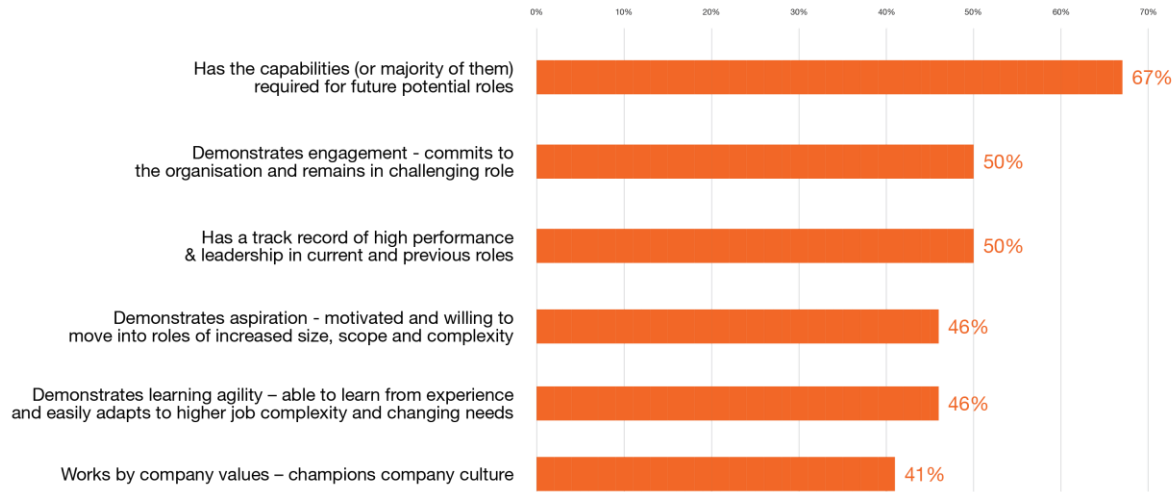
- ✓ One of the most important questions for every organisation - **what is our definition of high potential talents?**



- ✓ What are the **traits of a high-potential talent** to be a successor?
- ✓ **Technical** competence or **leadership** capabilities are more important?
- ✓ **Replacement** vs **Succession Planning**



How does your organisation define high potential talent? Please select 3 traits that are considered most important in your organisation.



Identifying & nominating Successors

Assessment of the individual high potential talents to be on the successors' list - where do we obtain the “evidence” from?

- ✓ Technical and generic competences framework
- ✓ Performance reviews
- ✓ Talent reviews in the organization
- ✓ Career dialogues with direct managers
- ✓ 360 degrees feedback
- ✓ Assessment centers
- ✓ Employee engagement surveys per teams / departments
- ✓ Business results of respective department
- ✓ *What else?*

SUCCESSION PLANNING & RETAINING
HIGH-POTENTIAL TALENT

Talent & Successors Pipeline Strength



HRIGNITE

Elevate
your people.

In creating the Succession Plan, we **look at the bigger picture, beyond the individual successors:**

Leadership TEAM portrait:

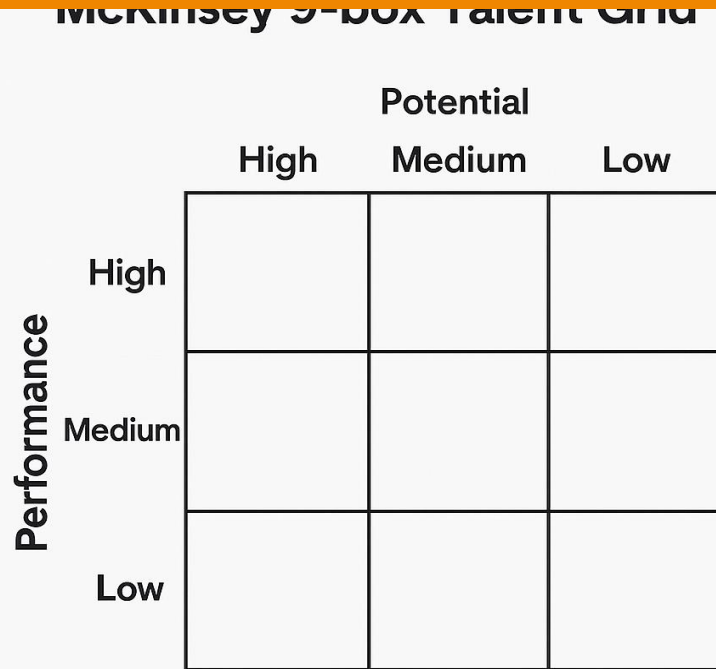
- ✓ retention risk or expected time of leaving current role
- ✓ years in the position
- ✓ career aspirations
- ✓ potential for future roles
- ✓ past 2-3 yrs performance
- ✓ diversity (age, seniority, gender)

We could visualise with **9-box grid**
(performance & potential)



McKinsey's 9-box Talent Grid Concept

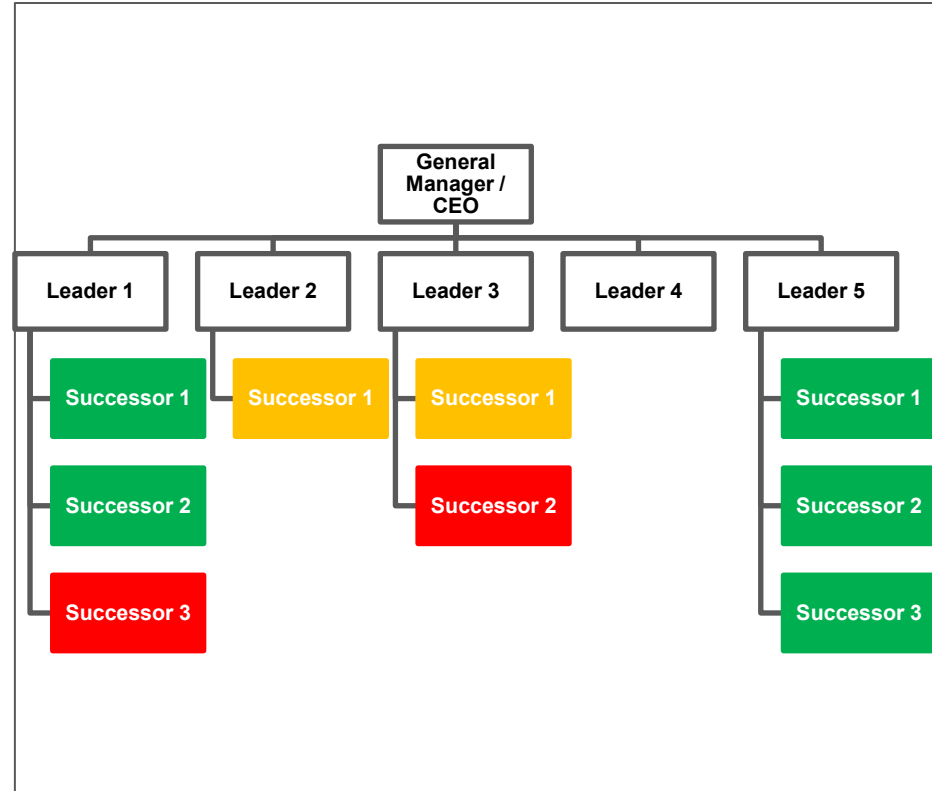
Talent &
Successors
Pipeline Strgenth



How strong is our succession bench?

We look at:

- ✓ Number of successors for one position
- ✓ Individual successors readiness: **ready now**, **mid-term (1-2 years)**, **long-term (3-5 years)**
- ✓ Number of critical roles with “ready now” successors and critical roles without successors
- ✓ *Suggestions for other indicators?*



SUCCESSION PLANNING & RETAINING
HIGH-POTENTIAL TALENT

Talent Development & Retention



Elevate
your people.

Talent Development & Retention

Many organizations have an inclusive definition of talent:

- ✓ all people in the company are referred to as “talents”
- ✓ training & learning programs are available to all managers
- ✓ leadership learning programs provided to all people managers at every level in the organization

However, **companies focus on identified successors to make sure they are on a growth path towards the critical next roles** ensuring business continuity - individualised and customized approach is key

Talent Development & Retention

- ✓ Many leaders and companies are not happy with the effectiveness of their succession plans
- ✓ Cartner Research *How Adaptive Succession Planning Prepares Leaders for Transformation*, published on 29 May 2025 states:

“Amid uncertainty and transformation, just one in five organizations effectively balance the supply of emerging leaders to meet current and future business demands”

Talent Development & Retention

Succession planning does not reach its goals when:

- ✓ it is **one-time exercise** and not a continuous evolving cycle
- ✓ **leaders don't own Succession Planning** and rely on HR to drive it and achieve results
- ✓ **Succession Planning is done in isolation** and is not integrated with the other strategic people-related processes in the organization

Talent Development & Retention

Benefits of Succession Planning:

- ✓ **Business continuity**, improved risk management
- ✓ **Positive impact on culture**, engagement, morale
- ✓ Helps **keep critical knowledge** in the organization
- ✓ **Reduces costs** – recruitment and onboarding is expensive
- ✓ **Improved talent retention** due to career clarity & visibility

Why talents leave?

- ✓ career opportunities don't come when needed and expected by the HiPo
- ✓ workload and work-life balance
- ✓ lack of clarity on career journey, misalignment b/n HiPo's expectations and company reality
- ✓ lack of attention and/or insufficient support from manager
- ✓ many external opportunities in today's business world with the "war for talents"
- ✓ compensation & benefits



Development & Retention



The role of the manager is key to:

- ✓ Be available
- ✓ Start the career dialogue
- ✓ Establish the process cadence
- ✓ **Provide clarity**



The role of the employee / talent

- ✓ Participate actively in the career dialogue
- ✓ **Own their own development**



HR department:

- ✓ Establishes a clear transparent process
- ✓ **Guides & advises**
- ✓ Ensures synchronized & aligned people-related programs

Talent Development & Retention

The **Career Dialogue** with a talent identified as a potential successor is an opportunity for the manager to understand the successor's aspirations and define career experiences to meet the future role, based on the required capabilities

An effective career dialogue -

- ✓ is open & continuous conversation on career aspirations, mobility preferences/limitations and interests
- ✓ includes clear setting of expectations on a career road map – future role, how to get there, what this requires, etc.
- ✓ is not a one-time event but on-going pulse-checks
- ✓ requires involvement from all parties

In Teva we believe that the development journey is a shared responsibility between the organisation, the individual employee and manager and that has a positive impact on all parties involved



Managers **share** with the employees the above partnership and have a conversation regarding the significant role employees have in **driving their own development**, and that they, as their direct managers, are committed to **supporting** them

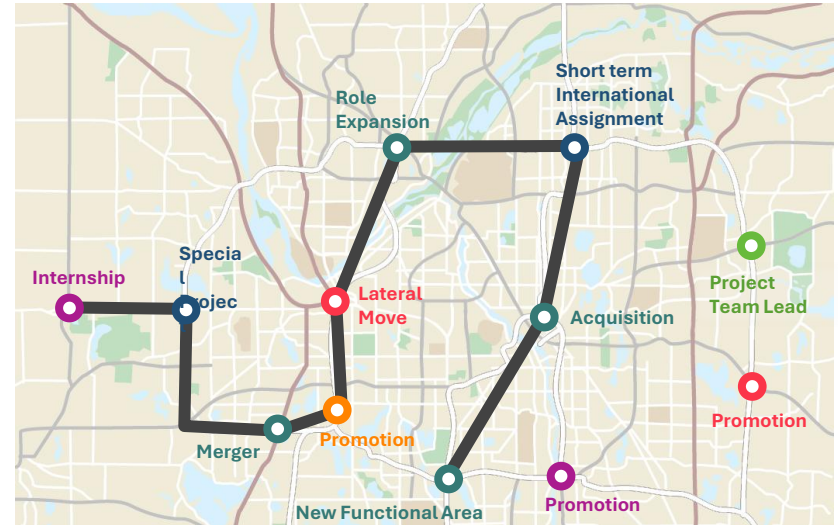
“

In the past, choosing a career was like buying a **one - way train ticket from Rome to Copenhagen** on a local train that made all the stops along the way...

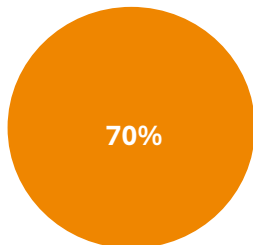
”

Edward E. Lawler III & James O'Toole, *The New American Workplace*

In today's volatile world, career growth should not be regarded as a linear progression. It is an ongoing process that enables employees to develop their strengths while learning new skills along the way.



Development with focus on experience - After agreeing on and selecting development goals, managers and employees discuss and suggest possible development activities to



Experience

On-the-job experiences &
Practice opportunities

- ❑ Cross-functional teamwork
- ❑ Special projects/ teams
- ❑ New tasks / stretch assignments
- ❑ Job change/ rotation
- ❑ Reflection Points



Exposure

Exposure to others, coaching,
networking (internal & external)
and feedback

- ❑ In house networking
- ❑ Mentoring and Coaching (by others)
- ❑ Shadowing
- ❑ Benchmarking and Outside in
- ❑ Communities of practice/social media



Education

Formal 'learning' (self-paced,
instructor led, blended)

- ❑ Professional literature (books, journals)
- ❑ Conferences/seminars
- ❑ Online courses

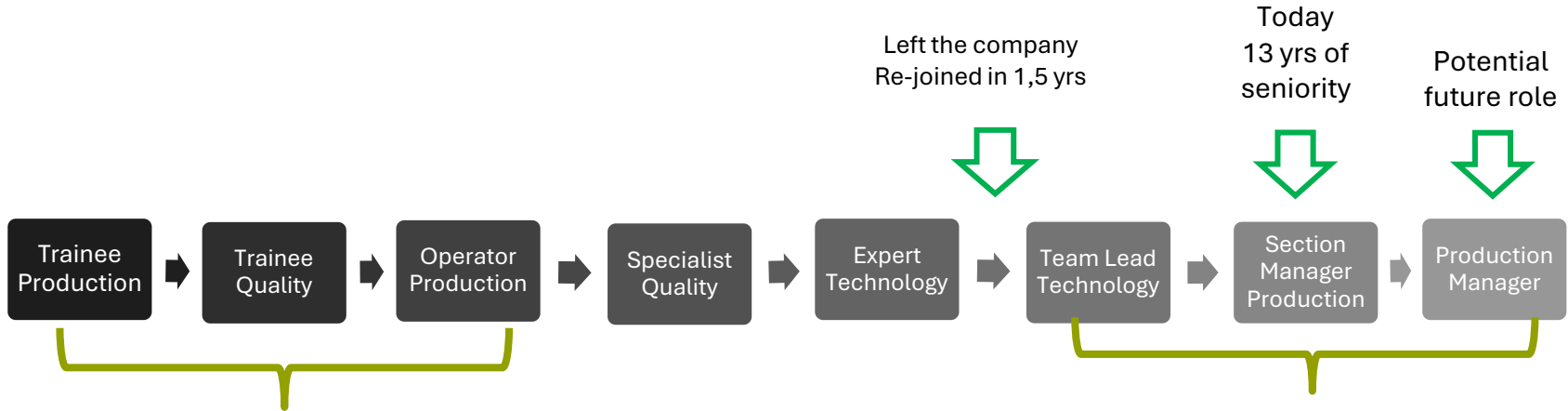
Individual Development Plan

Development goals	Actions / development activities (70:20:10)	Support needed	Timelines



- Include a range of activities that offer experience, exposure, and education
- Make the activities specific and concrete

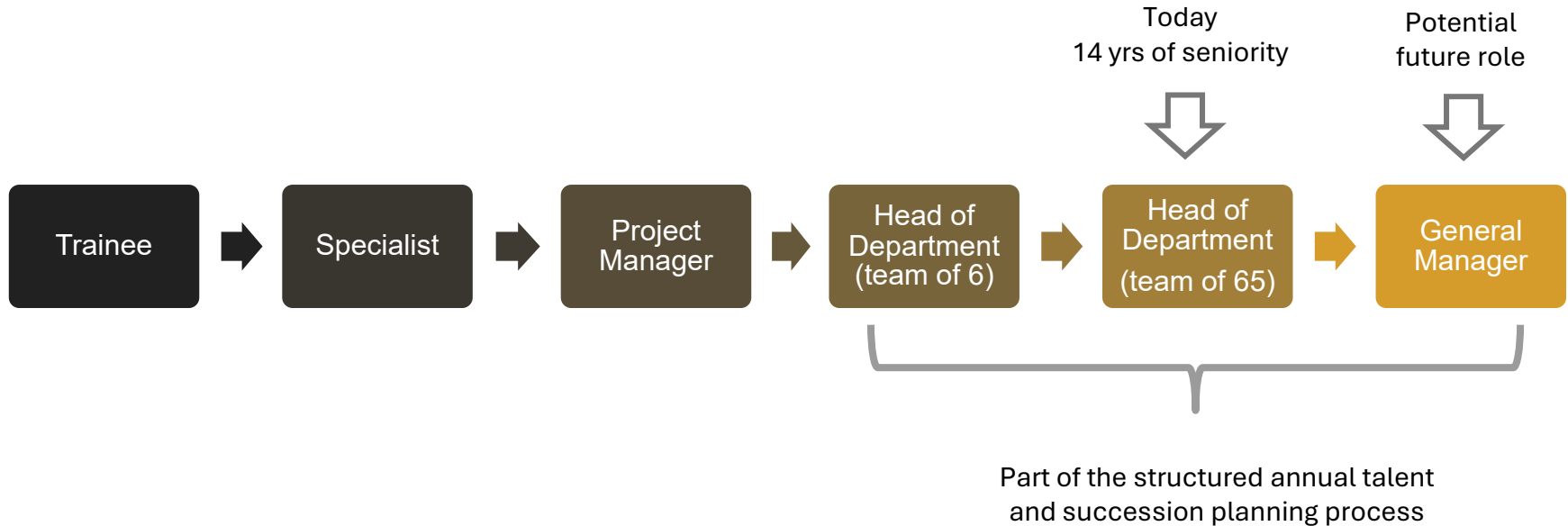
Example 1 of a career journey

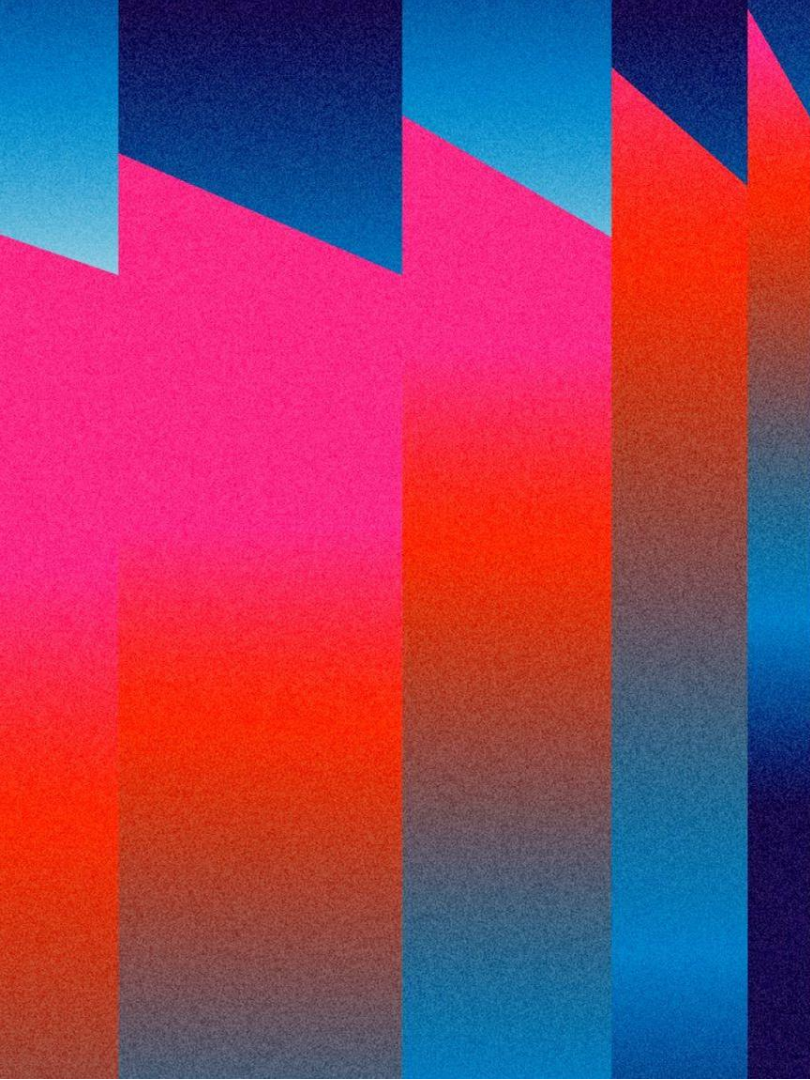


Sourcing candidates for entry roles and **building a pipeline of talents who are capable and flexible to fill in various roles** as a starting point for succession planning

Part of the structured annual talent and succession planning process

Example 2 of a career journey





“Modern succession planning looks quite different, with a broader vision, greater openness and diversity, and closer links to wider talent management practices. For example, progressive organisations who adopt an inclusive whole workforce approach to managing and developing talent will identify business critical roles at all levels within their organisation.”

CIPD

SUCCESSION PLANNING & RETAINING
HIGH-POTENTIAL TALENT

THANK YOU!



Elevate
your people.