

DEFINE IT. MEASURE IT. WHY TALENT FIT MATTERS AND HOW TO ACHIEVE IT.



James Bywater,
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Korn Ferry, answers
questions on Korn
Ferry Success Profiles
and looks at the
implications of profile
fit for organizational
performance.



KORN FERRY®

Talent that is a close fit with Korn Ferry Success Profiles is up to 13x more likely to be highly engaged in their jobs. At a time when we're facing unprecedented change, if you want your employees to be competent and to "thrive" in their role, then fit really matters.

What is a Korn Ferry Success Profile?

This approach defines "what good looks like" in terms of three core elements. Firstly, the accountabilities of a role – what's expected of the 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 best-in-class Korn Ferry Success Profiles. These are based on our combined empirical research, science, subject matter expertise, as well as data from our extensive work with clients. In summary, it is a data-driven

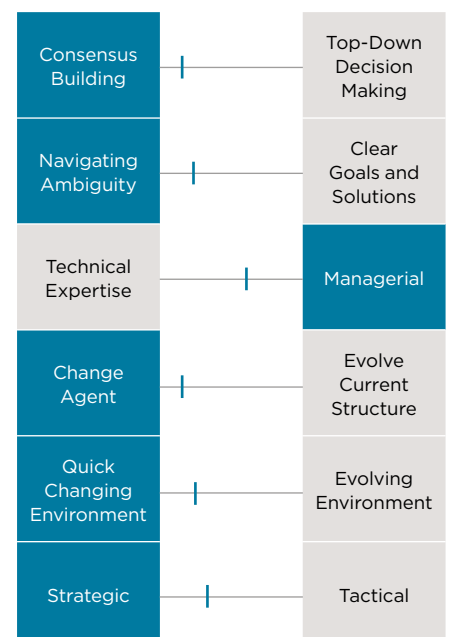
approach that combines everything we know about work, roles, people, behavior, performance and reward. This is a step change for some HR teams who are more familiar with a competency-based approach. Although competencies have taken HR a long way since they were first developed, we're seeing an increasing amount of evidence showing us that more is needed to really understand and measure success in modern organizations. Success Profiles provide this additional depth and refinement to ensure that employees are not only good at, but also engaged by, their work. This ensures that they are not only competent, but will also thrive.

How do Success Profiles work in practice?

Let's look at two different roles within an organization – an Organization Architect and an Organization Builder. These roles are leaders performing their work in two different ways.

When we look at the skills for the Architect, the profile looks similar to what's highlighted here in blue.

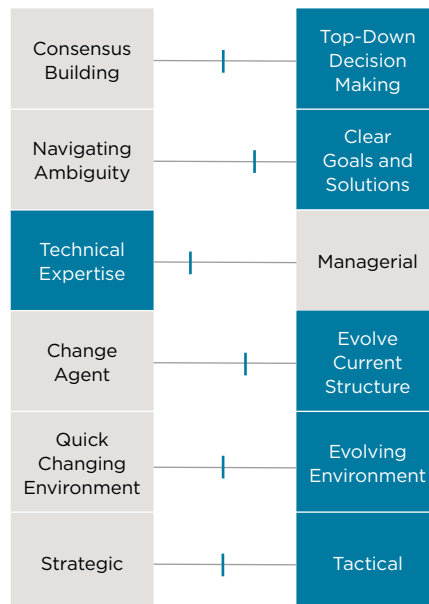
These skills tell us that the role needs a change agent who fosters stakeholder consensus in a fast-paced organization with volatile objectives. The role involves a mix of technical expertise and the ability to leverage others' skills, talents, and expertise. It has a strategic more than a tactical orientation, and involves less clarity and more ambiguity in goals and solutions.



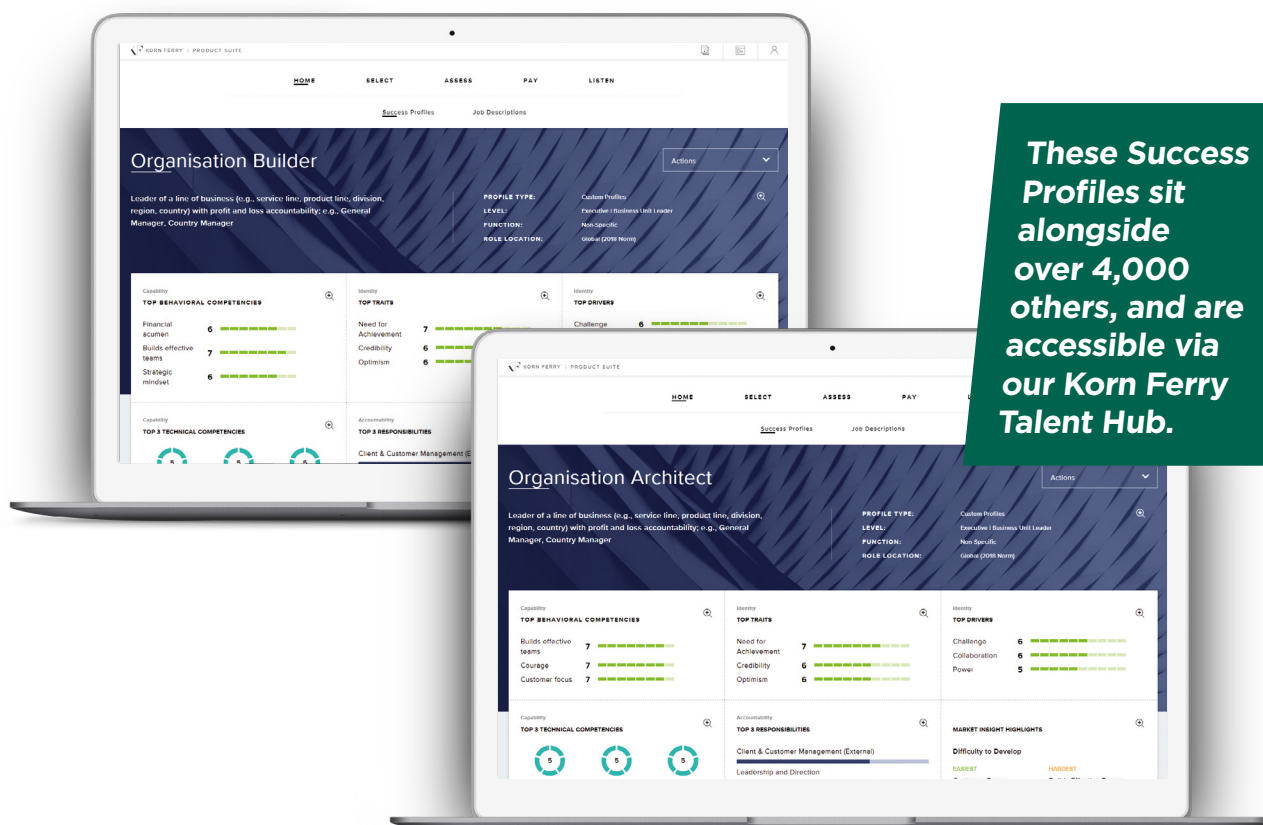
By contrast when we look at the skills for the Organization Builder, it's more like an archetypal leader performing their work in a transactional environment.

This role is more tactical than the Organization Architect; it requires more technical expertise and involves top-down authority more than consensus building in an environment with less ambiguity and more stable objectives. Clearly these roles place different demands on the job incumbent.

We've used our empirically developed algorithms to define different optimal Success Profiles for both the Organization Architect and Organization Builder roles.



An individual who is a good fit with the Architect profile would be decidedly comfortable with risk and ambiguity. They should be markedly adaptable, assertive, persistent, and achievement-driven; they won't emphasize a detail orientation. On the other hand, ideal Builders should have generally low tolerance for ambiguity and risk, and a greater inclination toward detail orientation and exactitude. Builders, like Architects, also should be persistent and achievement driven.



What's the longevity of a Success Profile?

Success Profiles are continually evolving as businesses, technologies and the wider competitive environment evolves. Ongoing Korn Ferry Institute research into challenges - such as

becoming more digital and working in environments of high uncertainty and change - allows us to constantly evolve our library of current profiles. We also know that new roles are

appearing at a rapid rate, and are correspondingly continually updating and adding new profiles, so you get to leverage the latest thinking on new and emerging roles.



What's the impact of getting the right fit to a Success Profile?

The effect is massive. Based on a recent study of 2,001 role incumbents, the extent to which they fit with their own jobs has a huge impact on their work engagement scores – making the difference between “I will” and “I might”. Individuals who fitted well into the Success Profile were far more likely to be highly engaged. They are significantly more likely to be excited, challenged and stimulated by their role.

High-fit compared to average-fit individuals were at least 3.5 times more likely to be highly engaged; compared to low-fit talent, high-fit individuals were nearly 13 times more likely to be highly engaged. This results in increased job performance and other desirable individual- and organizational-level outcomes. In essence – they are considerably more likely to “thrive” in these roles.

Engagement ratios for various levels of fit with Korn Ferry Success Profiles.

High
Success
Profile
fit are...



3.5x

more likely
to be highly
engaged than
average fit



13x

more likely
to be highly
engaged
than low fit

How does this make a difference?

If you want to accelerate performance, fit really does matter. Our research shows that companies with high levels of engagement and enablement have up to 4.5x more revenue growth than those with lower levels. We have also seen improvements in business metrics, with “good fit” CEOs driving higher earnings per share (EPS), stronger earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) and increased total shareholder return (TSR).

So whether you are using fit against Success Profiles for assessment, or using it to identify areas for

development, it gives you people at all levels who are aligned to your business strategy, feel emotionally invested in the culture, get a thrill out of the challenges that you give them and exert discretionary effort to succeed. This is becoming even more valuable in organizations experiencing high change where we see the greatest impact from individuals who are not only competent but also energized and engaged by their roles. In addition, when combined with robust pay and reward programs, and monitored using insightful workforce engagement programs, this approach gives organizations the ability to tackle important talent problems and succeed.

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



Sources: Korn Ferry Institute (2016), Executive Insights: Fit Matters; Korn Ferry (2015), Engaging Hearts and Minds; Korn Ferry Institute (2017), Leadership: What Does it Take to Remain Engaged as a Leader in a VUCA World?; Korn Ferry Institute (2017), Predicting Financial Gains

