



ESI High Performance Profiling

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Executive Summary

In April 2006 ESITO commissioned the University of Waikato to research key industry skills issues within the electricity industry. The skills gap was reaching a critical point and a strategic way forward needed to be established. After extensive industry consultation, ESITO published a report entitled "*An Industry Skills Strategy for the New Zealand Electricity Supply Industry - Final Report December 2006*". The report highlighted the need to further investigate three 'major issues' identified by the research. These were as follows:

1. The future of skilled Contract and Project Managers positions;
2. The shortage of skilled Supervisors particularly in the field;
3. A lack of Industry pride.

Industry advised ESITO that they should facilitate the convening of Industry Steering Groups to consider the issues in a series of facilitated regional workshops. These workshops were held during July 2007 in Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch. Participants discussed, debated and identified actions around the three main issues.

Introduction

ESITO approached The People Group (TPG) to provide a methodology to create industry wide high performance profiles for Project Managers and Contract Managers in the Electricity Supply Industry (ESI) to address the first issue identified in the July 2007 steering groups, the future of skilled Contract and Project Manager positions.

In the 2007 ESITO steering group sessions participants spoke about the need for high performance profiles; a comparison of high and low performers in their organisation to determine the specific skills, experience, knowledge and competencies of high performance which would provide a selection tool for the ESI. Participants commented that many of their Project and Contract Managers were placed into these roles based more on technical experience than necessarily job fit.

TPG reviewed the methodologies and benefits of *Profile-Based Selection* which focuses on the characteristics of job incumbents and *Performance-Based Selection* which focuses on actual job behaviours and success without regard to the personal characteristics of current job incumbents. TPG proposed a combined approach of both methodologies to high performance profiling as the best alternative given the budget and time constraints.

This document provides a summary of the process conducted, and includes the documents used in collecting data from steering group members and a generic profile for Project and Contract Manager positions.

The Process

Determination of Generic Performance Dimensions and Appropriate Assessments

Internal job experts from a sample of Enterprises determined generic performance dimensions to fit their definition of successful performance for the Project Manager and Contract Manager roles. In conjunction with job descriptions and knowledge, the internal job experts revise the specific knowledge, skills, attributes and other characteristics (KSAOs) that are important for success in each of the roles, to fit their definition of success (see Appendix One). Once these performance dimensions have been identified and described, the internal job experts suggest the tests (personality and cognitive) they believe would measure the success-related performance dimensions (KSAOs).

Steering Group Meetings

TPG presented the collated results from all internal job experts to the Steering Group meetings conducted in Christchurch and Auckland (See Appendix Two).

Outcome of Steering Group Meetings:

- ❖ An understanding of the high performance profiling methodology adopted;
- ❖ A decision as to whether there are two distinct profiles for Project/Contract Managers. Both groups determined that there was so much cross over that one profile would be representative with customisation made at an Enterprise level where appropriate;
- ❖ Agreement on the components of high performance. A summary of the key attributes was collated to form an overall profile (see Appendix Three);
- ❖ Agreement on the way forward from options tabled and discussed. It was agreed that a Toolkit would be created that would allow internal job experts to validate the high level profile by testing it within their organisation (see Appendix Four).

Application of Findings

Although it was not possible to validate the profile, the findings in themselves provide a competency profile that will assist member organisations in the recruitment, selection and development of Project and Contract Managers.

To facilitate the use of the findings a toolkit was developed providing guidance and resources for incorporating the competency model into the recruitment, selection and development processes at member organisations.

The toolkit includes:

- ❖ Recruitment and Selection -
 - Interview forms and questions – tailored to the Project/Contract Manager profile;
 - Descriptions, identification of suppliers, and samples of suitable tests (psychometric and ability) to 'test' for the various competencies;
 - Reference checking guidance and forms.
- ❖ Development -
 - Guidance on having development conversations and putting together development plans;
 - Identification of suitable tests/assessments and tools to use to help define the development needs of current *and* potential Project and Contract Managers (link to succession planning);
 - Template development plans.

It recommended that Member Organisations seek to validate the high performance profile for Project and Contract Managers within their own organisation using the tools in Appendix Four.

Appendices

Appendix One: Generic Performance Dimensions – Form

Appendix Two: Summary of Generic Performance Dimensions

Appendix Three: Summary of Key Performance Dimensions Combined - Contract & Project Managers

Appendix Four: Toolkit for Validating the High Performance Profile

Appendix One: Generic Performance Dimensions – Form

As your company's nominated internal job expert, please use the relevant job description and your own knowledge to complete the respective tables below:

Project Manager

Skills	Description / Rationale	Relevant Test(s)
<i>List the skill(s) you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the skill(s) you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe would best evaluate these skills</i>
Competencies		
<i>List the competencies you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the competencies you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe would best evaluate these competencies</i>
Knowledge		
<i>List the knowledge you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the knowledge you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe would best demonstrate this knowledge</i>
Experience		
<i>List the experience you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the experience you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe (if any) would best verify this experience</i>

Contract Manager		
Skills	Description / Rationale	Relevant Test(s)
<i>List the skill(s) you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the skill(s) you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe would best evaluate these skills</i>
Competencies		
<i>List the competencies you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the competencies you believe are important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe would best evaluate these competencies</i>
Knowledge		
<i>List the knowledge you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the knowledge you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>List the test(s) you believe would best demonstrate this knowledge</i>
Experience		
<i>List the experience you believe is important for success in this role</i>	<i>Describe the experience you believe is important for success in this role</i>	

Appendix Two: Summary of Generic Performance Dimensions

Contract Manager

Skills	Competencies (Behaviours)	Knowledge	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer skills (basic or intermediate) • Communication • Supervision/Staff • Human Resource Management • Management/Interpersonal Skills • Financial Reporting, Accounting, Budgeting • NZC Computer • Relationship Management • Risk Management • Change management • Time Management/Planning • Contract Management - interpretation and setting out contracts • Transition Planning • Asset Maintenance Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Flexibility • Organised • Self Discipline/self management • Problem solving • Integrity • Cooperative • Acceptance of responsibility • Decisive • Interpersonal Savvy • Motivation • Customer Service/Focus • Assertiveness • Negotiation • Innovative/Creative • Generate buy in and commitment • Self managing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Law • Health and safety • Technical • Industry Qualification • Project Management Methodology • Contract Negotiation and Management • Maintenance Management • HV Industry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands on experience with Transmission Lines or Substations • Management of staff • Industry experience • Risk Analysis • Procurement • Contract and financial reporting • Electrical Industry experience • Contract Management • Planning and Scheduling • Negotiation • Tendering • Use of drawings • Team Dynamics

Project Manager

Skills	Competencies (Behaviours)	Knowledge	Experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer skills (word, processing, spreadsheets, work scheduling, project tools and software) • Communication • Human Resource Management • Budget Control • Financial reporting • Relationship Management • Risk Management • Change management • Time and Resource Management • Quality Management • Management/understanding • Data analysis • Research • Negotiation • Project Analysis • Project Management (planning and implementing projects) • Tendering • Sub contractor management • Planning and Scheduling • Reading drawings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Flexibility • Organised • Self directive/self managing/self motivated • Problem solving • Integrity • Cooperative • Acceptance of responsibility • Decisive • Interpersonal savvy • Motivator • Customer Focus • Communicative/Communication • Time Management/Planning • Creative • Self assessing • Professionalism • Quick technical learner • Ability to learn • Balances work and life • Foster team work • Persistent, tenacity • Holistic view • Empathy • Confident • Analytical • Able to deal with stress effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract law • Employment Law • Critical Path Planning • Resource Scheduling • Understanding of requirements of appropriate Acts, regulations etc • Industry Safety requirements • Health and Safety • Understanding of the Organisation and workflow • Project Management Theory • Electrical Industry positions • Civil and electrical knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands on industry experience • Management of staff • Engineering industry • Electrical transmission/substation industry • Quality and Risk Management • Procurement • Developing and Managing Budgets • Leadership • Project Management • Small project exposure • Benchmarking • Planning and Scheduling • Tendering • Use of drawings • Relationship Management

Appendix Three: Summary of Key Performance Dimensions Combined - Contract & Project Managers

Skills	Competencies (Behaviours)	Knowledge	Experience
<p>Communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good listener • Clear oral and written communication • Concise and timely <p>Resource/Project management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to establish and utilise project planning tools to control/manage budget, risk, time, resources to a successful outcome, transferable across small and large projects. <p>Relationship management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of key stakeholder relationships <p>Technology acumen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intermediate level understanding of Microsoft office Applications. • Understanding of Project Management Software (as determined at an Organisationally specific level) 	<p>Leadership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visionary • Empathic • Demonstrates integrity • Decisive • Self disciplined • Self confidence and awareness • Inspirational • Development focused • Honest/ethical • Able to adapt • Fosters teamwork <p>Organised/methodical Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured • Planned <p>Customer service focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in delivery • Outcome focused • Demonstrates Integrity • Provides clarity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of project management processes • Health, safety and environment practices and legislations • Compliance, knowledge of acts, regulations and codes • Contract law 	<p>Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality performance management and coaching, budget, people, resources. <p>Contracting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field based, hands on, practical application, ability to practically apply • Deliver outcomes • Project value realisation • Quality and Risk focus

Appendix Four: Toolkit for Validating the High Performance Profile

The Process for Validating the High Performance Profile

1. Through internal performance data identify a representative sample of High Performers currently in the role or performing the function of a Project/Contract Manager.
2. Using the *Interview Form* provided interview the identified High Performer to validate whether the Skills; Competences; Knowledge and Experience identified through the Steering Group process are the key aspects that have resulted in the perceived high performance of the individual.
3. Using internal assessment protocols assess the behavioural profile and Skills assessment of the identified High Performer using the *Assessment Summary* form.
4. Summarise your findings on the *Summary Sheet*.

Interview Form Template

Instructions for completing the Interviews

The interview template is a guide for conducting the High Performance interviews within your organisation.

Who should hold the interview?

Interviews should be conducted by the organisation's steering group representative and the identified High Performer's Manager. Involving the Manager in this interview will allow rating decisions to also be informed by actual results the employee has achieved in their role as either a Project or Contract Manager.

How long will the interview take?

Allow 1- 1.5 hours for the interview.

How do I explain to an employee why we need to interview them?

This is ideally conducted in a meeting with the person rather than by e-mail or letter. The conversation needs to cover how and why you have selected that person and that the information is for the High Performance Profile not as part of any other performance management process. They need to be happy and comfortable to complete the process on this basis.

What results need to be sent in?

The interview form needs to be filled out as indicated and should represent the combined rating decisions of the Employee's Manager and the Organisation's Steering group representative. Please send only one completed interview form per interviewee.

How do I rate the interviewees?

Section Three requires you to rate the interviewees. Please use the rating scale below for this purpose. In some sections you will need to also identify the average rating e.g. Communication Skills has four components which you will rate separately and then calculate the average of these four ratings.

- 1 *Does not demonstrate the skills/ competency/knowledge*
- 2 *Minimal demonstration of skills/ competency/knowledge*
- 3 *Good demonstration of skills/ competency/knowledge*
- 4 *Excellent demonstration of skills/ competency/knowledge*

Section One

Name

Current Position

Tenure

Interviewer

Date

*Rationale for identifying this employee as a high performer:***Section Two***Describe the current projects/contracts you are involved in:**Budget:**Scope:**Team involved:**Measurement of results:**Technology used and to what level:**Processes used:*

Section Three:

The following questions are designed to assist you in determining the employee's level of competence in each of the areas identified in the profile. Please assign a rating.

Skills

COMMUNICATION

1. Good listener

Interview Question: Describe an incident when you had to listen attentively in order to act quickly enough to meet a deadline.

Answer guide: Answer should show that the employee has good listening skills and that they are a dependable person who responds accurately to the central issues.

AND / OR

Interview Question: How do you deal with situations when others are finding it hard to communicate effectively with you?

Answer guide: The employee should have the ability to use their listening and interviewing skills to clarify issues and make points easier to understand. They should be able to influence the conversation in a way that allows other people to effectively communicate. In addition, they should not be impatient.

Notes:

Good Listener Rating: _____

2. Clear oral communication

Interview Question: Describe a time when you took extra effort to make sure the person with whom you were communicating with had really understood your point. How did you do this?

Interview Answer Guide: The employee's answer should show that they understand why clarification is an important part of communication.

AND / OR

Interview Question: Give me an example of when you had to present complex information in a simplified manner in order to explain it to someone.

Interview Answer Guide: Employee should be able to explain how they break up complex information to help co-workers easily understand the information.

Notes:

Oral Communication Rating: _____

3. *Clear written communication*

Interview Question: What processes do you use to clarify your written work and verify its accuracy? Have you developed a precise routine to confirm this accuracy?

Answer Guide: The employee should demonstrate precision by insuring accuracy in the text, by asking others to proofread it, or by re-reading to check clarity and implication.

AND / OR

Interview Question: Can you tell me about a recent writing assignment, what it entailed, and what steps you took to make sure the assignment was correct?

Answer Guide: Answer should indicate that the employee is willing to expand their written proficiency, willing to proofread, and take the time to make sure facts are accurate.

Notes:

Clear Written Communication Rating: _____

4. *Concise and Timely Communication*

Interview Question: Tell me about a time when communicating information in a concise and timely manner was important?

Answer Guide: Answer should indicate that the employee is conscious of communicating in a concise and timely manner, the employee should have several examples to draw on to support this. Consider also probing for examples of when the employee failed to communicate in a timely and concise manner – in which case the employee should be able to identify what they learned from the experience.

Notes:

Concise and Timely Communication Rating: _____

Overall Rating Communication: _____

(Average of the above ratings).

RESOURCE / PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Interview Question: Tell me about a recent project/contract you have managed where you believed you obtained the optimal result for the Organisation in terms of project planning/management of resources/ budgets and time.

Answer Guide: The answer should demonstrate their overall effectiveness in this area.

Notes:

Overall Rating Resource / Project Management: _____

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

Interview Question: Have you ever felt, during the course of your work, that the existing systems and solutions are not sufficient to meet the needs of key stakeholders properly and/or that they need to be changed? If so, tell me more.

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should show that they take initiatives; are capable of changing current systems for the better to improve how they manage key stakeholder relationships.

AND/OR

Interview Question: What process or method do you use to manage key stakeholder relationships? How have you adapted this system/process recently?

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should be able to identify their method for managing key stakeholder relationships. The employee should also be able to reflect on how they have refined this method.

AND/OR

Interview Question: What is the key to successful stakeholder management?

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should be able to quickly identify what they believe to be important factor/s to stakeholder management. The employee should be able to identify actual examples of how they have applied these factor/s.

Notes:

Overall Rating Relationship Management: _____

TECHNOLOGY ACUMEN

Interview Question: What competency level do you believe you are at the Microsoft Office Applications? E.g. Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced.

Interview Answer Guide: If possible verify this answer through testing AND/OR evidence in the workplace.

Interview Question: What competency level do you believe you are with using Project Management Software.

Interview Answer Guide: If possible verify this answer through testing AND/OR evidence in the workplace.

Notes:

Overall Rating Technology Acumen: _____

Competencies

LEADERSHIP

1. *Fostering Team Work*

Interview Question: How do you keep each member of the team involved and motivated, while keeping morale high? What steps do you need to take to achieve this?

Answer Guide: The employee should work hard to develop respect for each member of the team and try to make team members feel important. Mutual respect is vital to success.

Notes:

Fostering Team Work Rating: _____

2. *Able to Adapt and Self Awareness*

Interview Question: In what situations do you prefer to use your leadership skills? Can you give me some examples?

Answer Guide: The employee should have ideas about where their skills would work best (self awareness) and how they adapt to the situation. The employee should show how they create solutions to tricky and unexpected situations when extraordinary leadership skills are needed.

Notes:

Able to Adapt and Self Awareness Rating: _____

3. *Decision Making / Decisive*

Interview Question: Explain an occasion where you had to make a decision on your own? Were you happy with your decision making process?

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should show that they can think logically and wisely to arrive at a decision; that they have a balanced thinking process; and are not too gentle or too hasty in the decision making process.

AND/OR

Interview Question: What is your preferred decision making style? (Ask the employee to identify a time when they have had to act decisively).

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should be able to identify that they can be decisive when necessary as well as employing other decision making styles according to the situation.

Notes:

Decision Making / Decisive Rating: _____

Competencies

4. Inspirational

Interview Question: Tell me about a time when you and your whole team were demotivated for some reason. What did you do to raise spirits?

Answer Guide: The employee should express him/herself as a leader who can inspire and motivate their team. They should not give up easily, and should showcase the ability to empathise with other colleagues.

Notes:

Inspirational Rating: _____

5. Empathetic

Interview Question: Tell me about a time when a colleague or report strongly disagreed with your views, ideas, or way of working? How did you respond to this situation? What kind of relationship can you develop with such a person?

Answer Guide: The employee should be able to identify how they 'put themselves in the other person's shoes' in order to best understand their differing opinion.

Notes:

Empathetic Rating: _____

Overall Rating Leadership: _____

(Average of the above ratings).

ORGANISED METHODICAL APPROACH

Interview Question: When it is your responsibility to organise and plan a project what steps do you take?

Answer Guide: Answer should show preparation and focus when using organisational skills. The employee should be able to prepare narrowly focused project plans.

Interview Question: What steps do you take when the work of a colleague threatens the completion of a project?

Answer Guide: The employee should be able to accommodate and re-organise a schedule. They should be strong enough to sort out, with tact and success, any work deficiencies of a team member and communicate these with the co-worker.

Notes:

Overall Rating Organised/Methodical Approach: _____

CUSTOMER SERVICE FOCUS

Interview Question: How do you handle negative feedback from very angry clients? How do you respond to him/her?

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should be able to manage customer complaints without being dominated; he/she should not be over-whelmed by a disapproving customer.

Interview Question: Can you tell me about a time when you did some thing extra, which was not part of the routine activities assigned to you, but you did it for the benefit of the customer?

Interview Answer Guide: The employee should want to put in the extra effort to provide better and more complete service to customers.

Notes:

Overall Rating Organised/Methodical Approach: _____

Knowledge

1. *Knowledge of Contract Law OR Project Management Processes (as applicable)*

Interview Question: How would you rate your knowledge of Project Management processes OR Contract Law? In what areas do you need to improve?

Interview Answer Guide: If possible verify this answer through testing AND/OR evidence in the workplace.

Notes:

Knowledge of Contract Law OR Project Management processes Rating: _____

2. *Knowledge of Health, Safety and Environment Practices*

Interview Question: How would you rate your knowledge of Health, Safety and Environment Practices? In what areas do you need to improve?

Interview Answer Guide: If possible verify this answer through testing AND/OR evidence in the workplace.

Notes:

Knowledge of Health, Safety and Environment Practices Rating: _____

3. *Knowledge of relevant Acts, Regulations and Codes*

Interview Question: How would you rate your knowledge of relevant Acts, Regulations and Codes? In what areas do you need to improve?

Interview Answer Guide: If possible verify this answer through testing AND/OR evidence in the workplace.

Notes:

Knowledge of relevant Acts, Regulations and Codes Rating: _____

Overall Rating Knowledge: _____

(Average of the above ratings).

Experience

Please identify the employee's amount of experience in the following areas, **quantifying** the amount of experience and providing relevant **detail** and **examples**:

Management

1. *Quality Management*

2. *Management of employees (including Performance Management and Coaching)*

3. *Management of resources*

Contracting

1. *Field based, hands on practical application*

2. *Delivery of outcomes*

3. *Project value realisation*

4. *Quality and Risk focus*

Section Four

Review the combined profile with the employee, in their opinion what stands out as making them a high performer? Which of the four areas is the most important, or are they all of equal weight?

Skills**Competencies****Knowledge****Experience**

Assessment Summary

Using existing assessment protocols assess the employee against the Skills and Competencies that have been identified.

Skills	Assessment Tools Selected	Rationale
Communication Resource/project management Relationship management Technology acumen		
Competencies	Assessment Tools Selected	Rationale
Leadership Organised/methodical approach Customer service focus		

Interview Summary Sheet

<p>1 – Does not display competency 2 – Minimal display of competency 3 – Good display of competency 4 – Excellent display of competency</p>					
	Overall Rating				Comments
Skills					
Communication	1	2	3	4	
Resource/Project Management	1	2	3	4	
Relationship Management	1	2	3	4	
Technology Acumen	1	2	3	4	
Competencies					
Leadership	1	2	3	4	
Organised Methodical Approach	1	2	3	4	
Customer Service Focus	1	2	3	4	
Knowledge					
Overall Rating	1	2	3	4	
Experience					
Management	1	2	3	4	
Contracting	1	2	3	4	