
Talent Management Systems: Talent Review, Calibration and Pools Course

11 – 15 January 2027
Barcelona





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Programme Summary

Talent management systems, from talent review and calibration to talent pools, form the subject of this one-week training course for HR and line leaders at advanced level, culminating in a talent review cycle design for their organisation. Where hiring, appraisal, development and succession run separately, decisions about key people come late and inconsistently. The approach moves from talent strategy and critical roles to potential assessment, calibrated reviews, pools, deployment, retention and governance. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in talent management systems.

The Business Case

When talent decisions rest with individual managers, critical roles fall vacant without ready candidates and capable people leave unnoticed. An integrated system gives executives one view of talent risk and directs investment to the roles that matter most.

- Internal Fill Rate for Critical Roles: Rises as pools are built and readiness is tracked before vacancies arise.
- Regretted Turnover: Falls as risk of loss and impact of loss are assessed and acted on.
- Quality of Talent Decisions: Improves as calibration reduces individual rating bias.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Nine-Box Grid: Plotting performance against assessed potential structures the review and segmentation in Sessions 2 and 3.
- Talent Review Cycle: Preparation, calibration, agreed actions and follow-up set the annual rhythm designed in Session 3.
- Potential Assessment: Aspiration, ability and learning agility as dimensions of potential guide evidence gathering in Session 2.
- Retention Risk Matrix: Risk of loss set against impact of loss prioritises retention actions in Session 4.

Intended Participants

- Leaders who set the people strategy and decide where talent investment goes.
- Managers who chair or facilitate talent review and calibration meetings.
- Senior line leaders accountable for building bench strength in their function.
- Specialists who design talent processes and reporting.

The programme serves HR and talent functions in energy, financial services, government entities and healthcare organisations.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to construct a talent strategy that identifies critical roles and talent segments linked to business priorities.
2. Participants will be able to evaluate potential using defined criteria and evidence rather than impression.
3. Participants will be able to facilitate a calibrated talent review using the nine-box grid.
4. Participants will be able to design talent pools and development and deployment moves for priority segments.
5. Participants will be able to prioritise retention actions for key talent using risk and impact of loss.
6. Participants will be able to justify a talent governance model and metric set to an executive committee.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Talent Management Strategy and Critical Roles

Which roles and people matter most to the organisation's strategy?

- Linking Talent Strategy to Business Strategy
- Critical Role Identification and Role Criticality Criteria
- Talent Segmentation and Differentiated Investment
- Talent Philosophy: Exclusive Versus Inclusive Approaches
- Current-State Diagnosis of the Talent System

Day 2: Assessing Performance and Potential

How is potential defined, evidenced and separated from performance?

- Potential Dimensions: Aspiration, Ability and Learning Agility
- Evidence Sources: Assessments, Feedback and Track Record
- Nine-Box Grid Axes, Definitions and Rating Scales
- Common Rating Biases and Their Controls
- Talent Profiles and Pre-Review Data Packs

Day 3: Talent Review and Calibration Meetings

How do leaders reach fair, shared talent decisions?

- Talent Review Cycle: Preparation, Meeting, Actions and Follow-Up
- Calibration Meeting Design and Facilitation Roles
- Challenging Placements With Evidence
- Agreeing Actions for Each Nine-Box Segment
- Confidentiality and Communicating Outcomes to Employees



Day 4: Talent Pools, Deployment and Retention

What happens to talent once it has been identified?

- Talent Pools Versus Single Successors
- Development Moves, Stretch Assignments and Rotations
- Cross-Functional Mobility and Deployment Decisions
- Retention Risk Matrix: Risk of Loss and Impact of Loss
- Retention Conversations and Individual Retention Plans

Day 5: Applying the Talent Management System

Is the talent review cycle design governed, measured and ready to run?

- Talent Governance: Talent Councils, Roles and Decision Rights
- Talent Metrics: Internal Fill Rate, Pool Readiness and Regretted Turnover
- Linking Day 1 Critical Roles to Day 4 Pool Design
- Embedding Day 2 Potential Criteria in the Day 3 Review Agenda
- Talent Review Cycle Design Completion

Methodology

The programme relies on simulation and case analysis. Participants run a mock calibration meeting with fictional profiles, then apply each element of the system to their own organisation using cases from energy, banking and public service.

- Suggested activity: Rating role criticality for a set of senior and technical roles.
- Suggested activity: Running a calibration meeting on a business unit's nine-box grid.
- Suggested activity: Building retention plans for three high-risk, high-impact employees.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a talent review cycle design for their organisation. It sets out critical roles and segments, potential criteria, the review and calibration calendar, pool and deployment rules, retention triggers, governance roles and a metric dashboard. It is used to launch the next talent review.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the talent management systems programme suitable for senior line leaders as well as HR?

Yes. It is set at advanced level for HR and business leaders who make talent decisions, and assumes experience of performance appraisal and people management.



Which models does the talent management systems course rest on?

It rests on the nine-box grid, a structured talent review cycle, recognised dimensions of potential and a retention risk matrix.

How is the talent review cycle design from talent management systems training used at work?

You can use it to schedule and run the next talent review, brief executives on governance and track pool readiness through the year.

How does talent management systems training differ from a course on succession planning?

Succession planning names successors for leadership posts. Talent management systems cover the whole cycle of assessment, calibration, pools, deployment and retention.