



Business Challenges

Summary report for

Name: Example Manager

Date: 22 January 2004

Organisation: Business HR

Produced by:

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INTRODUCTION

The results summarised in this report are based on responses to Business Challenges, a self-report questionnaire. The results reflect the individual's perceptions of the breadth and depth of management **experience** and his/her views about their operating **effectiveness**.

The report does not provide a definitive statement of the individual's management effectiveness. Rather it is designed to identify the key themes which will help you to prepare and plan for a follow on discussion (eg coaching, career development planning, interview) to decide where to focus most attention.

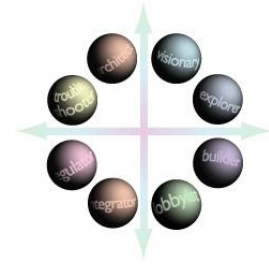
In using the findings in this report:

- remember that the results are based on self assessment. The accuracy of the data depends therefore on the individual's self-insight in recognising strengths and potential limitations. Be prepared to question and challenge this.
- focus on the key themes and the relative highs and lows profiled in the report. Don't over interpret the results by dwelling on specific scores. It will be the overall balance of results and the interaction across different themes which will be more informative, not individual scores.

1. OVERALL PROFILES

Business Challenges: Definitions

This provides a summary of experience and effectiveness across eight broad-based dimensions of business and organisational activity. Experience and effectiveness are profiled separately against these eight defined dimensions.



VISIONARY - planning next generation products and services to formulate an innovative business strategy; developing new business concepts which redefine the rules of business success; addressing the impact of emerging trends and developments in the market-place for the organisation's long-term strategic position

EXPLORER - investigating opportunities to break into new markets in pursuit of a diversification strategy; developing relationships with other key players in the industry to explore scope for alliances and joint ventures; identifying opportunities for the future growth and expansion of the business

BUILDER - translating business strategy into sales and marketing priorities; reviewing the customer service delivery process for areas of improvement; exploiting the organisation's customer-base through attention to sales and marketing activity

LOBBYIST - representing the organisation's interests across the wider business community to improve corporate image; planning a programme of corporate communication which gains greater influence and freedom of manoeuvre for the organisation; building relationships with key players throughout the industry to improve the company's standing in the market-place

INTEGRATOR - raising the overall skill level of the work-force through focusing resources on training, development, recognition and reward; raising levels of staff capability and motivation to improve organisational loyalty and pride; breaking down functional differences and resolving complex views to unite the efforts of different groups

REGULATOR - focusing attention on the efficiency and consistency of all internal processes; monitoring work flow for opportunities to standardise organisational activity; applying financial discipline and administrative control over organisational activity to gain improved levels of efficiency

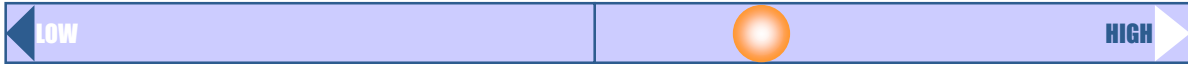
TROUBLE-SHOOTER - identifying and removing unproductive and inefficient business function; tackling those business activities which are no longer contributing to corporate performance; divesting unprofitable activities which are failing to support corporate priorities and objectives

ARCHITECT - redefining the organisation infrastructure to create new operating methods and practices; exploiting technological capability to create new organisational structures, systems and operating styles; conducting a re-appraisal of the organisational infrastructure in the context of improved technological capability

1. OVERALL PROFILES: Experience Profile

VISIONARY

planning next generation products and services to formulate an innovative business strategy



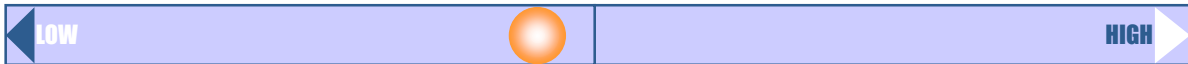
EXPLORER

investigating opportunities to break into new markets in pursuit of a diversification strategy; developing relationships with other key players in the industry to explore scope for alliances and joint ventures



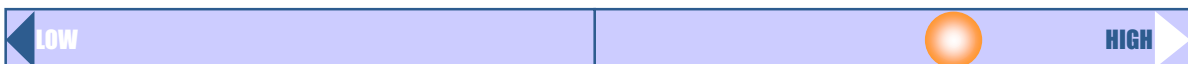
BUILDER

translating business strategy into sales and marketing priorities; reviewing the customer service delivery process for areas of improvement



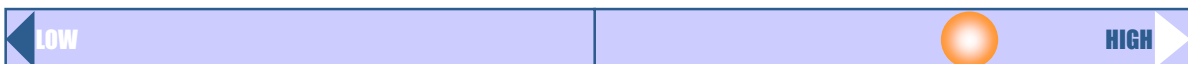
LOBBYIST

representing the organisation's interests across the wider business community to improve corporate image; planning a programme of corporate communication which gains greater influence and freedom of manoeuvre for the organisation



INTEGRATOR

raising the overall skill level of the work-force through focusing resources on training, development, recognition and reward; raising levels of staff capability and motivation to improve organisational loyalty and pride



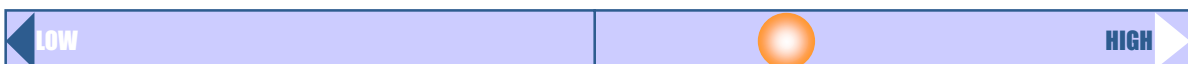
REGULATOR

focusing attention on the efficiency and consistency of all internal processes; applying financial discipline and administrative control over organisational activity to gain improved levels of efficiency



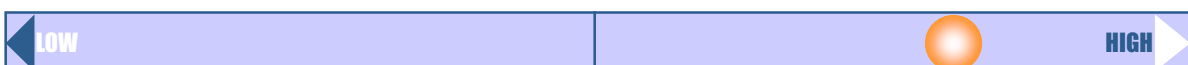
TROUBLE-SHOOTER

identifying and removing unproductive and inefficient business function; tackling those business activities which are no longer contributing to corporate performance

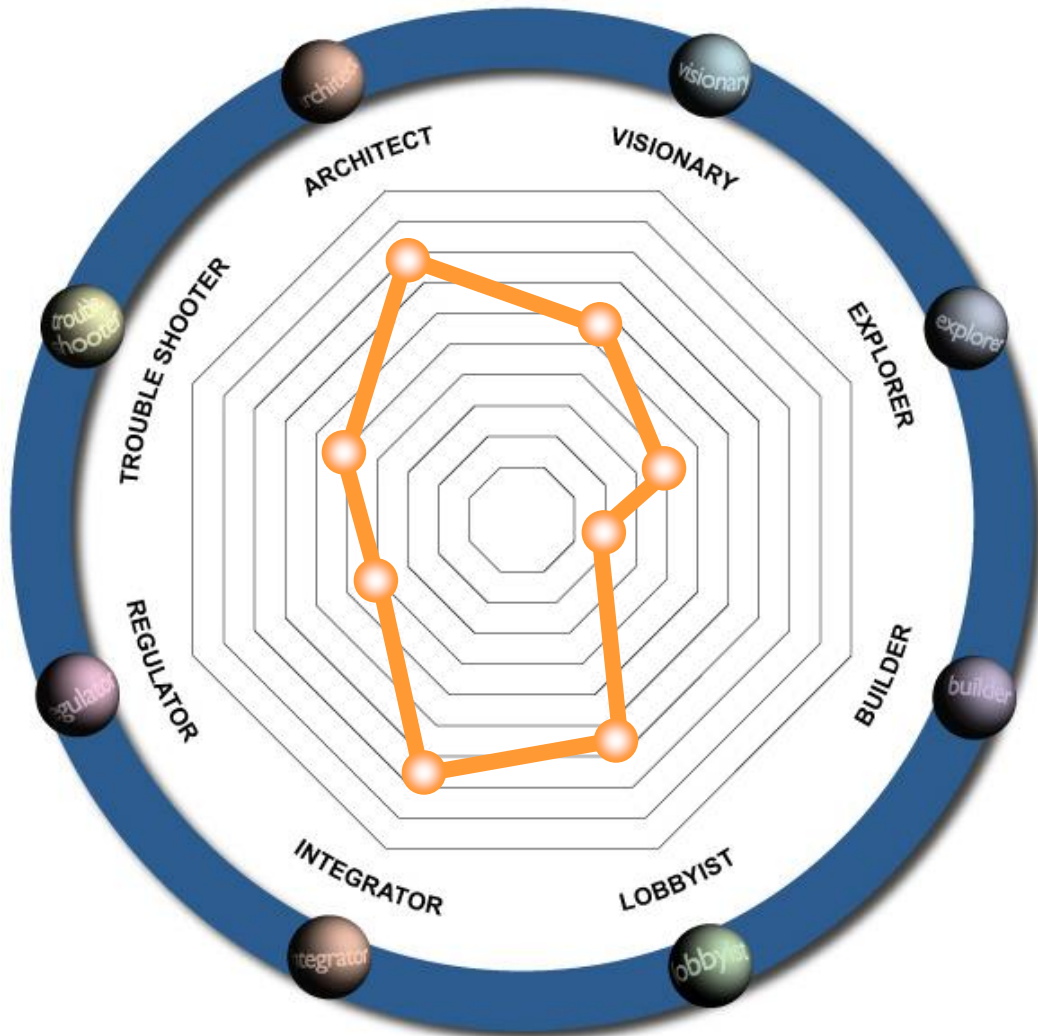


ARCHITECT

redefining the organisation infrastructure to create new operating methods and practices; exploiting technological capability to create new organisational structures, systems and operating styles



1. OVERALL PROFILES: Effectiveness Profile



- Look at the two profiles. What kind of pattern emerges?
- What is the **breadth and depth of experience**? Does the profile indicate extensive experience across a wide range of themes; or is it more focused in only a few areas?
- Is there a dominant **business approach** in which the individual is likely to be more and less effective in taking on specific challenges?
- What do the two profiles – experience and effectiveness “add up” to?

Effectiveness: Key Themes

Potential Constraints

- utilising financial criteria to determine the best option for future diversification and growth
- developing efficiency and consistency in all internal activities to support future business expansion
- applying financial control and administrative efficiency to improve the effectiveness of the customer service delivery process
- examining the costs and profitability of different products and services to identify future service and support priorities
- developing the sales, marketing and support functions to compete aggressively on customer service in building market-share
- committing resources to the sales and service infrastructure to ensure the organisation continues to develop into new markets

Opportunities for Progression

- implementing a programme of organisational change which communicates business priorities and objectives to staff
- developing organisational capability through improved team working and co-operation across new business processes
- managing complex relationships with partners, suppliers and other agencies in creating a new operational approach
- representing the organisation's interests in the external business environment during a period of major corporate change
- managing the relationships across different stake-holder groups - internal and external - and ensuring their views are understood and reconciled
- communicating a way forward which unites the efforts of different stake-holder groups critical to the company's long-term success



Business Challenges

Interview Protocol for

Name: Example Manager

Date: 22 January 2004

Organisation: Business HR

INTERVIEW PURPOSE

Individual evaluation against specific role requirements

Determining role requirements to establish its strategic emphasis: which activities will require most time and effort?

A GENERALIST BUSINESS ROLE

Review all areas of the profile to establish:

- does the individual have the breadth of experience, capability and flexibility of style to respond to a wide range of business demands?
- which strengths are currently in place?
- which limitations might constrain effectiveness to take on a broad range of challenges?

A HIGHLY FOCUSED ROLE

Clarify which business challenges are critical to the role:

- does the individual have a track record of outstanding achievement in relevant areas?
- display advanced capability?
- what risks might be associated with the individual operating within a focused role?

A broad ranging review to establish current effectiveness and/or future progression as part of a career planning or audit process.

IS THE FOCUS ON CURRENT EFFECTIVENESS?

- what are the major strengths which the individual can utilise in optimising their contribution?
- what are the potential limitations which are constraining effectiveness?
- how flexible will this individual be in responding to shifting organisational requirements?
- what are the individual's aspirations:
 - to operate more effectively within similar responsibilities?
 - move onto new areas of challenge?

OR FUTURE PROGRESSION?

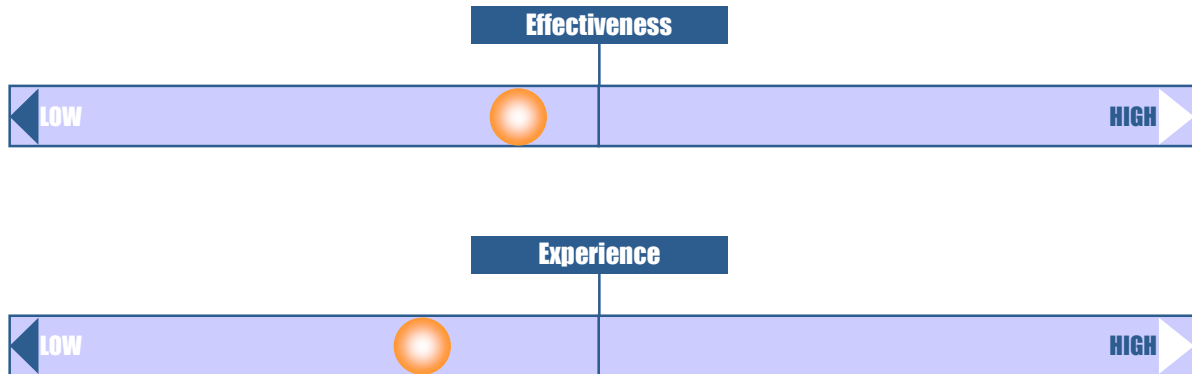
- what are the individual's career aspirations?
- how similar/different are these to his/her current role?
- how realistic are these aspirations from:
 - current experience base?
 - level of capability?
- what are the major opportunities and risks to his/her progression?
- what evidence is there of previous development commitment? Of well thought through priorities for future development?



12 Interview Prompts

2. INTERVIEW PROMPTS: Visionary

planning next generation products and services to formulate an innovative business strategy; developing new business concepts which redefine the rules of business success; addressing the impact of emerging trends and development in the market-place for the organisation's long-term strategic position



Experience

- is this reported **experience** supported by a track record of outstanding accomplishment? will the breadth and depth of experience provide sufficient credibility with his/her peer group?

Capability

- what evidence is there of advanced **capability** to take on relevant challenges in this area?

Operating Approach

- what indicators of risk might undermine his/her **operating approach**?

Visionary

Experience of formulating radical and imaginative products and service ideas to help redefine an organisation's strategic position

What evidence is there of achievement in:

- long-term strategic thinking which has fundamentally changed the direction of the business
- managing innovation within a research and development function
- coordinating creative processes within an organisation
- generating ideas for the design of new product and service concepts

Prompts:

- what personally did you do?
- what did you find most difficult?
- what problems did you have to tackle? how did you overcome them?
- what would you do differently next time?

Capability in proposing and facilitating innovative and radical business ideas

What evidence is there of capability in:

- identifying key trends and developments shaping the future market place
- formulating ideas about what might be possible in the longer term
- facilitating creativity and innovation within the work group
- managing highly creative and radical thinkers

Prompts:

- what are the key issues involved in ...?
- what did you have to do in order to ...?
- how would you describe your strengths and limitations in this area? why?
- how would your colleagues describe this? your boss? subordinates? colleagues?
- what specific professional/technical expertise do you have in this area?

Operating Approach

What risks might be associated with this profile?

Low:

- a short-term outlook which misses emerging trends determining the shape of the entire market place; a conservative approach which lacks an imaginative agenda for new product and service development

High:

- impractical and out of touch with commercial realities; a failure to focus on immediate business demands

Prompts:

- which aspects of this activity do you find most enjoyable? least enjoyable?
- what is it about these activities you find most rewarding? most frustrating?
- if your approach has ever been criticised, what has been the most common criticism?
- if your career was to ever become 'derailed', what might be the most likely reason?



Business Challenges

Development Planning for

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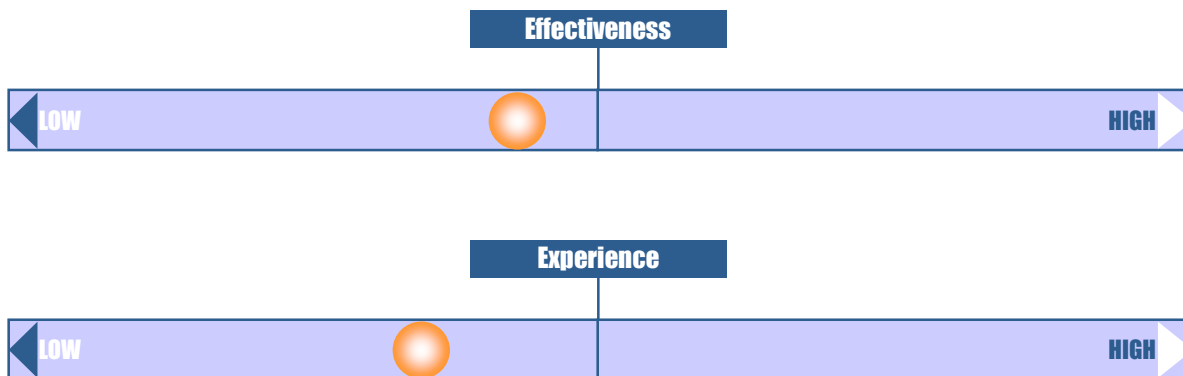
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Detailed Analysis

The breakdown of effectiveness and experience across the eight themes of Business Challenges, indicating the potential opportunities and risks

BUSINESS CHALLENGES: VISIONARY

planning next generation products and services to formulate an innovative business strategy; developing new business concepts which redefine the rules of business success; addressing the impact of emerging trends and developments in the market-place for the organisation's long-term strategic position



LOW

- ⓘ a conservative short-term thinker without an imaginative agenda for the future
- ⓘ a lack of foresight which focuses on immediate business priorities and loses sight of emerging trends and developments
- ⓘ a reliance on conventional industry wisdom which is overtaken by radical shifts in business thinking
- ⓘ a concern to play it safe by traditional business rules and lacks imagination in creating a vision of what is possible

AT BEST

- ⓘ combining an understanding of emerging consumer needs with technological possibilities to create a coherent vision for the organisation's long-term future
- ⓘ developing ideas about future products and their commercial benefits to command organisational attention
- ⓘ integrating the Research & Development process with strategic planning to speed up product innovation and implementation

RISKS OF DERAILMENT

- ➔ an impractical dreamer who has lost sight of commercial realities
- ➔ a willingness to embark on ambitious Research & Development programmes which have minimal commercial return
- ➔ a projection into the future which is dismissive of existing customers' practical expectations and concerns
- ➔ a long-term view of market-place possibilities which fails to attend to pressing operational demands

BUSINESS CHALLENGES: VISIONARY

Plotting your effectiveness against your experience, does this represent:

Hi Effectiveness - Hi Experience: Zone of Maximum Impact

These activities are the areas in which you enjoy deploying your previous experience and respond effectively to new challenges. They are likely to represent significant strengths in which personal fulfilment is gained from drawing on experience.

Hi Effectiveness - Lo Experience: Zone of Emerging Impact

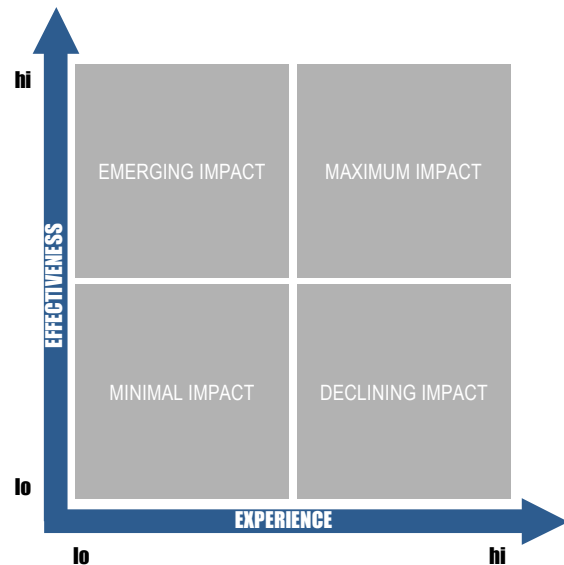
Although there is relatively less exposure to these business activities, they are perceived as areas of potential strength.

Lo Effectiveness - Hi Experience: Zone of Declining Impact

Although previous exposure to these business activities has provided experience, there is less effectiveness in tackling them. As such, these activities might indicate a need to refocus career priorities.

Lo Effectiveness - Lo Experience: Zone of Minimal Impact

Either there has been little opportunity to tackle these activities as part of your previous career and as such limited exposure has held back effectiveness. Alternatively they represent activities which you have avoided in your career, as they may expose potential limitations.



How prominent has this theme been in your career to date? How has it affected your leadership outlook, the issues you think are critical to business success, and those which are less important?

How important is this theme within your current role?

- a key priority which will determine success within your role?
- an area which you need to address
- not even on your "radar screen"?

How relevant is this theme to your future progression?

- an area you need to develop further to operate with greater credibility?
- an area which will become less significant in future?

Overall, what does the balance of effectiveness and experience indicate about your career opportunities, risks and future career options?



123 **Development Prompts**

Preliminary ideas to stimulate your
career development planning

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROMPTS

Strengths to build on

WHO COULD LEARN FROM?

- the Head of the HR/Personnel function who is responsible for the planning and implementation of personnel policy and practice
- a manager who has been successful in creating a new organisational culture to support a shift in business direction
- an individual with a reputation for breaking down political differences and overcoming inter-departmental rivalry
- an individual who has successfully mobilised and motivated staff around organisational goals and interests
- managers with genuine and successful experience of Business Process Re-engineering
- IT professionals with a known reputation for understanding what users require and delivering systems that improve effectiveness
- a manager who has led a major-scale organisational change programme requiring the introduction of new technology and innovative working practices

QUESTIONS TO ASK?

- are people really a major source of competitive advantage in our business? in which specific ways?
- what are the key drivers and levers in building a culture based on shared values and common goals?
- how are current and future plans constrained by the quality of people in the organisation?
- where have we talent in depth; especially talent that may be under exploited?
- how well executed are our plans to recruit, train and develop our people?
- if you were starting the organisation from scratch how would it be organised? What would you do? What wouldn't you do?
- how advanced is the organisation in its use of technology?
- what scope is there to integrate what we do with suppliers, customers or clients?

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROMPTS

Strengths to build on

ACTIVITIES WITHIN WORK AREA

- list out the various initiatives, programmes and events which the organisation has introduced to raise the capability of the work force. What worked? What didn't?
- how much support do you as managers give to people development? Which activities are well supported and pay dividends? Which are not?
- what do the results of any employee attitude surveys say about investment in and support to people in the business?
- how much exposure have you had to training and development events that support the development of management and leadership skills?

- identify the key end users of what your work area provides. Are all systems, IT and work-flow patterns organised with these groups in mind or has an internally focussed administration developed? Is work arranged to help those using your services, or to the convenience of your part of the organisation?
- review statistics that capture work volumes and efficiency. What do these indicate about speed, cost, resources required and reliability?
- use an organisation chart and record: who has authority to make major decisions, who has responsibility for implementing key decisions, who advises on decisions and who delivers the work?
- where are there overlaps and ambiguity? Do work processes as well as decision processes need to be re-examined?

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE IMMEDIATE WORK AREA

- talk to those responsible for Human Resources. What do they see as the main issues and opportunities? Compare this with line management views
- speak to recent recruits about their experience of training and development in organisations before joining you. How does their previous experience compare and contrast with the current organisation?
- examine the amount and style of involvement with training and development from the CEO and other leading managers. What does this say about how people are valued?

- contact the major Process Re-Engineering consultancies, IT and software providers and arrange site visits to see what can and has been done in major change to process work. Try to spend time experiencing what those carrying out the new process do to check the claims and effectiveness of the new systems
- convene a meeting of managers who rely on IT and systems to deliver products and services to customers and clients. Establish the key strengths of the current arrangements. Where are the key faults and problems? What can be done now, what needs more time to resolve?
- examine how your major competitors organise their main processes and the resources they use to deliver. How is this better or worse than your organisation's approach?

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROMPTS

Potential constraints to address

WHO COULD LEARN FROM?

- those involved in sales, post-sales support, marketing and customer service roles who have close contact with new customer groups
- someone in Marketing who is responsible for planning product launches and advertising
- customers and clients who are known to be especially demanding in their requirements
- suppliers to your company and competitors
- front-line staff who deal regularly with customer enquiries and complaints

QUESTIONS TO ASK?

- what is important to your customers? why? how well are you performing against their expectations?
- what trends have driven product and service development in the recent past? what will drive developments in the upcoming period?
- how are emerging customer/client segments being served and what opportunities does this present?
- which organisations consistently come top in sector-wide customer benchmarking research? why? what is it that customers rate and value so highly?

DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROMPTS

Potential constraints to address

ACTIVITIES WITHIN WORK AREA

- visit your operation as a customer or supplier with a specific purchasing or selling objective. What is the experience like? Which aspects are better/worse than your competitors?
- audit your department's activities, the systems and policies employed; how supportive are they of customer service, either directly or because they help others in the organisation to deliver service? What are the top three barriers to responsive customer support?
- ask a colleague from a department you interface with to draw up a top five hit list of issues that are helping/hinder effective delivery
- conduct a mini-survey with staff, asking what they think of the customer service delivery process

ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE IMMEDIATE WORK AREA

- contact external research groups and sector analysts; what do they see as the main customer issues emerging? which organisations stand to benefit most?
- attend a meeting with key sales groups, especially those connected to sectors of the market expanding most rapidly. Ask them for direct feedback; what is the organisation doing well to support sales growth and where does it need to make substantial improvements?
- scan the recruitment pages in the press and specialist journals. What companies, in particular potential competitors, are recruiting specialist sales and customer support staff? What sort of people are they looking for?
- spend time reviewing with Market Research the results of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Consider the main messages and key implications; what are the biggest issues and what will be the easiest solutions to quickly implement?