

STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP MOT

Findings & 90-Day Roadmap

Test Ltd
Test 2 · CEO

01 / EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The business does not appear to have a direction problem.

The MOT identified a relatively clear strategic direction and a broadly positive cultural foundation. The more significant constraint is the organisation's **leadership and management capacity to consistently deliver against that direction**.

Senior leaders remain too involved in operational and judgement-based activity. Managers are generally able to run their areas when circumstances are routine, but confidence and capability reduce when decisions become complex, cross-functional or commercially sensitive.

This creates dependency on senior leaders and limits the organisation's ability to grow without adding further pressure.

The organisation appears to have grown faster than the leadership system beneath it.

THE SESSION VALIDATED CONCERNS AROUND

Leadership capacity

Management capability

Leadership behaviour

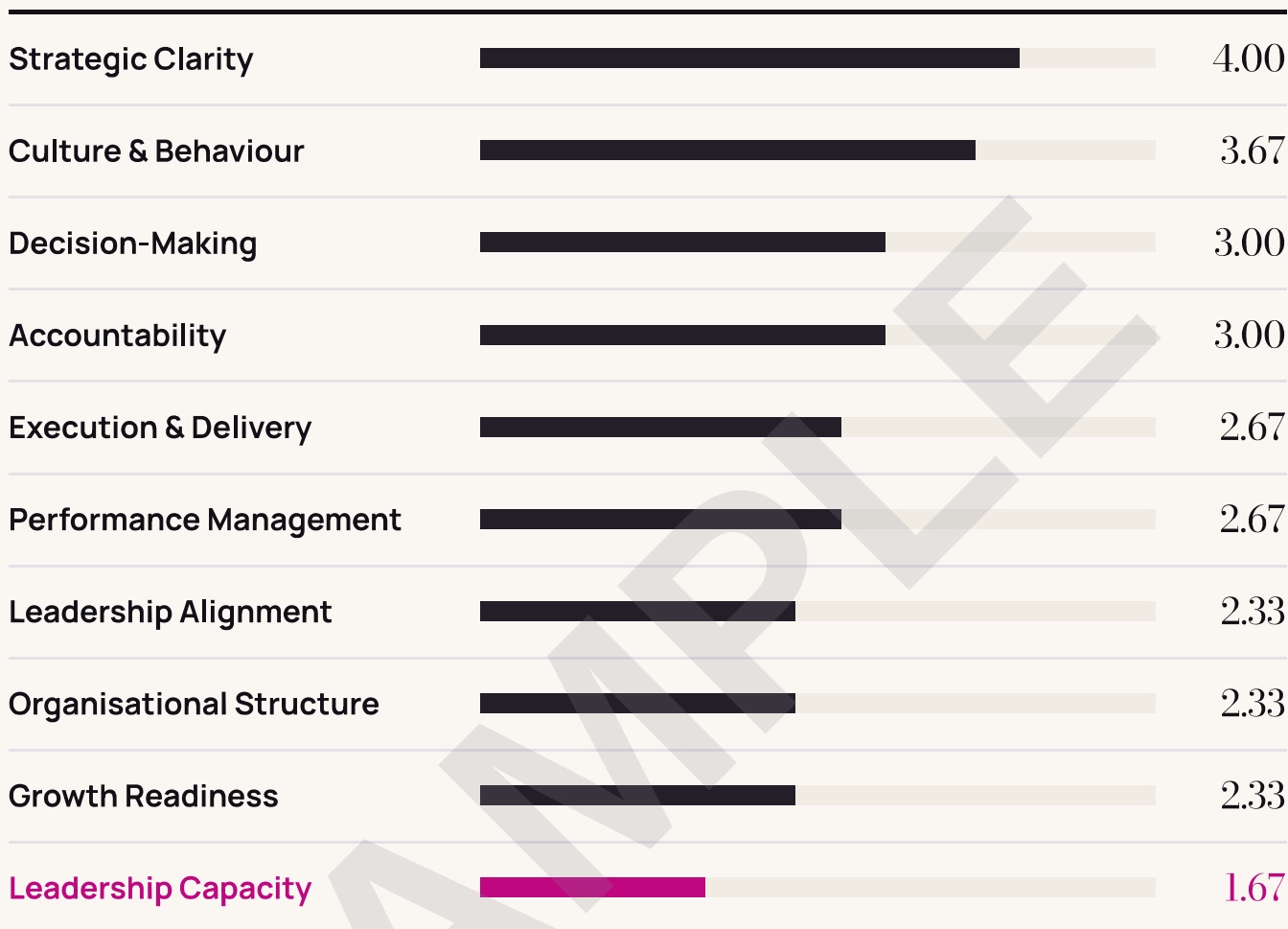
Key-person dependency

Accountability

Growth resilience

02 / THE ORIGINAL DIAGNOSTIC PROFILE

The ten-dimension score profile



MATURITY SCALE

1 Reactive 2 Developing 3 Established 4 Strategic 5 Growth Ready

The diagnostic showed a clear gap between strategic direction and the capacity of the organisation to deliver and grow through its current leadership structure.

03 / WHAT IS WORKING

Strategic Direction

The organisation has a relatively clear understanding of where it wants to go. Strategic Clarity was the strongest area of the diagnostic – an important strength to protect.

4.00 / 5

Cultural Foundation

The wider organisational culture appears broadly positive. The participant described the organisation as supportive, open and relatively low in internal politics.

Existing Management Foundation

The business does not need to rebuild its management team from scratch. There are capable managers and leaders already in place. The opportunity is to increase their confidence, judgement, accountability and ability to lead beyond their individual functions.

The organisation has a foundation to build from. The opportunity is to make the leadership system as strong as the strategy.

04 / FINDING ONE

Leadership capacity is the principal constraint.

1.67 Leadership Capacity – the weakest dimension of the diagnostic, out of 5

The facilitated discussion strongly validated this concern. Senior leaders are spending significant time on:

Operational escalations

Customer issues

People issues

Complex judgement calls

Commercial exceptions

Cross-functional problems

CEO WEEK TODAY

60%

operational or reactive activity

DESIRED POSITION

30–40%

or less

Senior leaders are spending too much time running today's business and not enough time building tomorrow's.

05 / WHY THIS MATTERS

Leadership time is one of the organisation's most constrained resources.

When senior leaders are repeatedly pulled into operational activity

Strategic work slows down

Managers become dependent on escalation

Leadership capability develops more slowly

Decisions concentrate at the top

Growth increases workload rather than organisational capability

Burnout risk increases

PARTICIPANT'S OWN CONCERN

“Single point of failure, burnout for leadership.”

If the business grows but the leadership model does not, what happens next?

06 / FINDING TWO

The organisation has significant key-person dependency.

The session validated the original Resilience Risk. Three particularly important dependencies were identified.

CEO

Major customer relationships · Strategic partnerships · Commercial decisions · Final escalation point for operational issues

Operations Director

Detailed operational knowledge · Historic customer arrangements · Key internal processes

Finance Director

Cashflow visibility · Supplier arrangements · Financial modelling · Historical financial decisions

The organisation would continue operating if one of these leaders was absent, but decision-making, customer response and internal confidence would deteriorate quickly.

The risk is not that the business immediately stops. The risk is that the organisation becomes slower, less confident and more dependent on everyone else working harder.

07 / FINDING THREE

Management capability has not developed at the same pace as organisational complexity.

The participant described the current management team as mixed. Several managers are strong operationally but less confident when required to:

Exercise judgement independently

Challenge peers

Lead across departmental boundaries

Balance competing organisational priorities

Handle difficult people issues

Make commercially sensitive decisions

Address underperformance

KEY PARTICIPANT REFLECTION

“We have probably taught people how to manage their function, but not really how to lead the business.”

This is not simply a skills gap. It is a leadership maturity gap.

08 / FINDING FOUR

Leadership alignment weakens when priorities compete.

The leadership team broadly understands the organisation's strategic goals. However, alignment becomes less consistent when departmental priorities conflict.

OPERATIONS

Service stability

SALES

Customer acquisition

FINANCE

Margin and cost control

MANAGERS

Protecting functional resource

The session identified no sufficiently consistent mechanism for resolving these competing priorities. Leadership meetings can also become reporting forums rather than decisive leadership forums.

Alignment around the strategy is stronger than alignment around the trade-offs required to deliver it.

09 / FINDING FIVE

Culture appears stronger than leadership behaviour.

The original diagnostic identified a **Leadership–Culture Gap**. The facilitated session validated this pattern. The wider culture was described positively. However, examples of inconsistent leadership behaviour included:

Leaders bypassing agreed processes

Different managers tolerating different standards

Poor behaviour from strong performers being challenged inconsistently

Leaders not always modelling the behaviours they ask of others

Pressure leading to reactive or abrupt communication

PARTICIPANT REFLECTION

“I don't think we have a culture problem, but leadership behaviour sometimes undermines the culture we are trying to create.”

Culture is not only what the organisation says. It is what leaders repeatedly tolerate, reward and model.

10 / FINDING SIX

Accountability is inconsistent.

The organisation does address underperformance, but not consistently or early enough.

MANAGERS MAY DELAY ACTION BECAUSE THEY

Want to give people another chance

Avoid difficult conversations

Are unsure when informal concern becomes formal performance management

Fear damaging relationships

Hope issues will resolve themselves

PRACTICES LACKING CONSISTENCY AROUND

Objectives

One-to-ones

Follow-up

Performance conversations

Consequence

Repeated missed commitments

PARTICIPANT REFLECTION

“We are probably kinder for too long and then suddenly get frustrated.”

Strong cultures still require clear standards and consequence.

11 / FINDING SEVEN

Decision-making is effective when decisions are routine. Dependency increases when decisions become uncomfortable.

Routine decisions are generally made at the appropriate level. Escalation increases around:

Financial risk

Customer exceptions

People decisions

Cross-functional priorities

Incomplete information

A SIGNIFICANT BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHT FROM THE SESSION

“I complain that everything comes to me, but I probably make it too easy for everything to come to me.”

Senior leaders may unintentionally reinforce escalation by solving issues quickly rather than returning responsibility to the appropriate level.

Are leaders solving problems, or building the capability of others to solve them?

12 / FINDING EIGHT

Growth could amplify existing weaknesses.

The business wants to continue growing. However, the session confirmed that significant additional demand would currently increase operational pressure. Likely pressure points include:

Customer service

Recruitment

Quality assurance

Operational escalation

Management bandwidth

Onboarding

Training

Senior decision capacity

15–20%

additional demand could probably be absorbed – but with increased pressure

30%+

growth could leave service performance materially exposed

The next stage of growth needs to be enabled by capacity, not funded by pressure.

13 / THE CENTRAL FINDING

STRATEGY

Clear direction

LEADERSHIP
SYSTEMCapacity · Capability · Authority · Accountability ·
Resilience

EXECUTION

Consistent delivery

SUSTAINABLE
GROWTH

A stronger business, not simply a bigger one

The organisation's principal opportunity is to strengthen the leadership system beneath the strategy.

Recruiting another senior leader may eventually be appropriate.

However, adding another leader before clarifying decision ownership, developing management capability and reducing dependency risks adding cost without solving the underlying problem.

14 / PRIORITY ONE

Clarify the Leadership Model

Define what leadership and management mean within the organisation.

ACTIONS

- 01 Define the role of the leadership team
- 02 Clarify leadership responsibilities
- 03 Agree decision ownership
- 04 Define escalation boundaries
- 05 Clarify expectations of managers versus leaders
- 06 Agree the behaviours expected from every senior person

INTENDED OUTCOME

Fewer unnecessary escalations and greater clarity around who owns what.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME

Days 1–30

15 / PRIORITY TWO

Build Management Capability

Develop managers beyond functional management.

PRIORITY CAPABILITY AREAS

01 Judgement and decision-making

02 Performance management

03 Commercial awareness

04 Accountability

05 Difficult conversations

06 Cross-functional leadership

07 Leadership behaviours

INTENDED OUTCOME

Managers operate with greater confidence, independence and organisational awareness.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME

Launch within 30 days.
Develop throughout the 90-day period.

16 / PRIORITY THREE

Reduce Key-Person Dependency

Map the organisation's most significant dependencies.

REVIEW

Critical knowledge

Supplier relationships

Core operational processes

Financial knowledge

Customer relationships

Decision authority

Commercial knowledge

FOR EACH DEPENDENCY

Identify owner → identify deputy → document →
transfer capability → test

INTENDED OUTCOME

The business can continue operating effectively during senior absence.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME

Days 1–60

17 / PRIORITY FOUR

Strengthen Accountability

Create a consistent management rhythm.

INTRODUCE

Clear objectives

Named owners

Defined deadlines

Regular management follow-up

Earlier performance conversations

Consistent consequences for repeated missed commitments

A commitment should mean the same thing wherever it is made in the organisation.

INTENDED OUTCOME

More consistent execution and fewer issues remaining unresolved.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME

Days 15–60

18 / PRIORITY FIVE

Protect Leadership Capacity

Identify recurring work that should no longer require senior leadership intervention. Categorise each recurring escalation as:

PROCESS

Can a clearer process solve this?

AUTHORITY

Does someone need clearer decision rights?

CAPABILITY

Does a manager need development?

INFORMATION

Is better management information required?

PERFORMANCE

Is the issue actually underperformance?

INTENDED OUTCOME

Reduce the volume of avoidable operational decisions reaching senior leaders.

SUGGESTED TIMEFRAME

Throughout the 90 days

19 / THE 90-DAY ROADMAP

CLARIFY

DAYS 1–30

Define leadership roles and expectations

Identify key-person dependencies

Establish baseline CEO operational time

Map current decision ownership

Define management capability gaps

Agree management accountability rhythm

BUILD

DAYS 31–60

Begin management development activity

Document critical processes and knowledge

Reduce avoidable escalation routes

Transfer selected decision authority

Introduce structured performance follow-up

Establish deputies for major dependencies

EMBED

DAYS 61–90

Review whether decisions are staying at the right level

Measure leadership time allocation

Identify remaining capability gaps

Test senior absence resilience

Review management confidence and performance

Decide whether additional senior recruitment is genuinely required

20 / HOW WE WILL KNOW IT IS WORKING

Measure the change.

LEADERSHIP TIME

Current estimate

~60%

operational / reactive

90-day ambition

 $\leq 40\%$

operational / reactive

Longer term

~30%

operational / reactive

DECISION OWNERSHIP

More recurring decisions resolved at management level without unnecessary senior escalation.

LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY

Clear ownership and follow-up of leadership commitments.

RESILIENCE

Named deputies and documented capability for critical leadership dependencies.

MANAGEMENT CONFIDENCE

Greater confidence handling judgement-based, people and cross-functional decisions.

21 / WHAT NOT TO DO

Do not simply recruit around the problem.

An additional senior leader may eventually be required. But recruiting before strengthening the existing leadership system risks:

Adding senior cost

Creating another escalation layer

Leaving existing capability gaps unresolved

Reinforcing dependency rather than reducing it

First design the leadership system. Then decide whether the system needs another leader.

22 / THE LONGER VIEW

The aim is not to make the CEO better at carrying the business.

The aim is to build a business that requires less carrying.

The organisation's next stage of development should focus on building leadership depth, decision confidence, accountability and organisational resilience.

IF SUCCESSFUL, GROWTH CREATES

More capability

Greater resilience

Better decisions

More leadership headroom

A stronger organisation

RATHER THAN SIMPLY

More volume

More pressure

More escalation

More dependency

23 / 90 DAYS FROM NOW

What needs to be true in 90 days for us to say the leadership system is genuinely stronger?

THE AGREED OUTCOME FROM THE SESSION

“I want fewer things landing on my desk, clearer expectations of the management team and more confidence that the business could operate without me being involved in everything.”

LESS DEPENDENCY

MORE MANAGEMENT
CONFIDENCECLEARER
ACCOUNTABILITYGREATER LEADERSHIP
HEADROOM

STRATEGY & LEADERSHIP MOT

Findings & 90-Day Roadmap

Greater clarity. Greater confidence. Better decisions about what happens next.