

Validation of the DNLA tool and process of testing key personnel, talents and potentials

1. Implementers

ANDREJ RASPOR¹, DARKO LACMANOVIĆ² & FADIL MUŠINOVIĆ³

¹ Andrej Raspor, Fakulteta za komercialne in poslovne vede, Lava 7, 3000 Celje, Slovenija; e-mail: andrej.raspor@t-2.si

² Darko Lacmanović, University Mediterranean, Faculty of tourism, Josipa Broza bb, 81000 Podgorica, Montenegro; e-mail: darko.lacmanovic@unimeditieran.net

³ Fadil Mušinović, Fakulteta za uporabne družbene študije v Novi Gorici, Gregorčičeva ulica 19, 5000 Nova Gorica, Slovenija; e-mail: fadil.musinovic@siol.net

Abstract: Successful organizations must have a system to identify key personnel, successors, and talents. Proper monitoring and testing are the most effective way to recognize these individuals. For testing tools to be effective, they need to be periodically validated. We approached this by validating both the tool and the testing process itself.

The usefulness of this research is evident from multiple perspectives. Evaluators will receive feedback on the testing tool itself and will be able to provide valuable input to the license owner, who can further improve the generic reports. With the gathered insights, the organization can enhance the overall process, particularly in the stages of personnel recruitment and feedback collection from leaders.

Additionally, the validation process provides critical insights into the efficacy and accuracy of the testing tools, ensuring they remain relevant and reliable for future assessments. By refining these tools, organizations can better identify and develop their key personnel and successors, ensuring a robust talent pipeline. The continuous improvement of these processes will lead to more informed decision-making and a stronger alignment of talent management strategies with organizational goals.

In conclusion, regular validation and improvement of testing tools and processes are essential for maintaining an effective system for identifying and nurturing key personnel. This research has laid the groundwork for ongoing enhancements, contributing to the long-term success and competitiveness of the organization.

2. Introduction

Effective talent management practices, including learning and development, employee engagement, and succession planning, are essential for all industries, whether in manufacturing, services, or the public sector. The development of key personnel and successors is crucial for organizational success, as the right talents are needed to execute strategic goals, drive innovation, and ensure sustainable growth. However, many organizations face challenges in identifying, developing, and retaining talent. Only the best organizations address this challenge promptly and appropriately.

Numerous studies highlight the significant role of workforce development in promoting organizational success. Quinones (2016) emphasizes the importance of formal processes to identify and develop high-potential leaders, while Lis (2014) underscores the value of employee development for overall organizational success. Danilina et al. (2016) find a link between strategic human resource management and innovative development within organizations, indicating that employees with strong entrepreneurial and innovative skills contribute to new ideas and breakthroughs. Rutner (2019) expands this discussion to strategic leadership, suggesting that the development of key personnel, especially those with strategic responsibilities, is vital for organizational success. These studies collectively stress the importance of development at all organizational levels, from operational to managerial, and highlight the need to identify and nurture talent proactively.

Poor talent management can be costly, leading to high recruitment and retention expenses and missed opportunities for growth and innovation (Coulson-Thomas, 2013). However, a more affordable and effective approach to building high-performance organizations that benefits both individuals and the organization is possible (Coulson-Thomas, 2012). This is especially relevant in organizations where current talent management strategies often fail to attract, inspire, and retain top talent (Chethana and Noronha, 2023).

Various systems for developing key personnel and successors have been explored in literature. Aleksandrovich (2023) identifies six strategies for workforce development, emphasizing the importance of monitoring and tracking critical areas, particularly in the context of digitalization. Boychenko (2015) stresses the significance of a competency model for evaluating and developing personnel, which can enhance productivity and employee satisfaction. Khlaponin (2021) focuses on identifying key employees as a critical phase in risk management using human-machine tools and decision-support systems. These studies highlight the importance of innovative strategies, competency-based models, and risk management tools for developing key personnel and successors. Testing and assessment are essential components of an effective selection process, allowing for objective and reliable verification of candidates' competencies, knowledge, and personality traits for successful job performance.

This article presents the validation of a system and process for redesigning and establishing a comprehensive system for the development of key personnel and successors within an organization. The system encompasses a set of tools and processes designed to identify, develop, and retain talent within an organization. The findings provide insights into what evaluators should focus on during recruitment, testing, and feedback provision.

3. Research

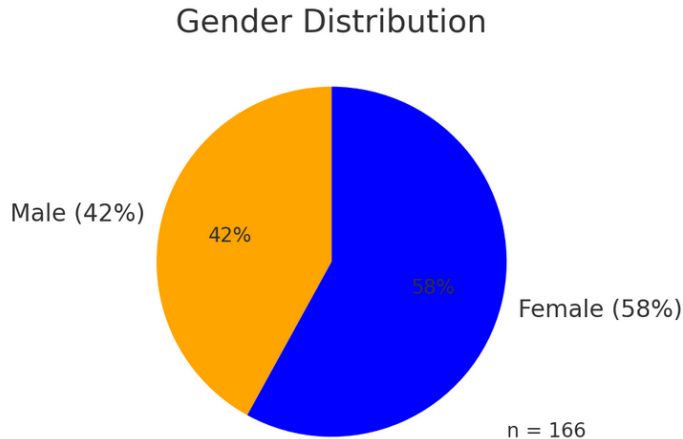
This chapter presents the research conducted within the selected organization. The procedure was as follows. The organization arranged with an external provider to conduct the testing. A call for applications was announced, allowing employees to apply. Additionally, feedback from direct supervisors was obtained, who could also nominate candidates. Managers were required to participate in the testing directly. Additional nominations were provided by the human resources development department, based on the annual development discussions database. A total of 370 candidates were tested.

4. Primary Data of the Research

1. Demographics

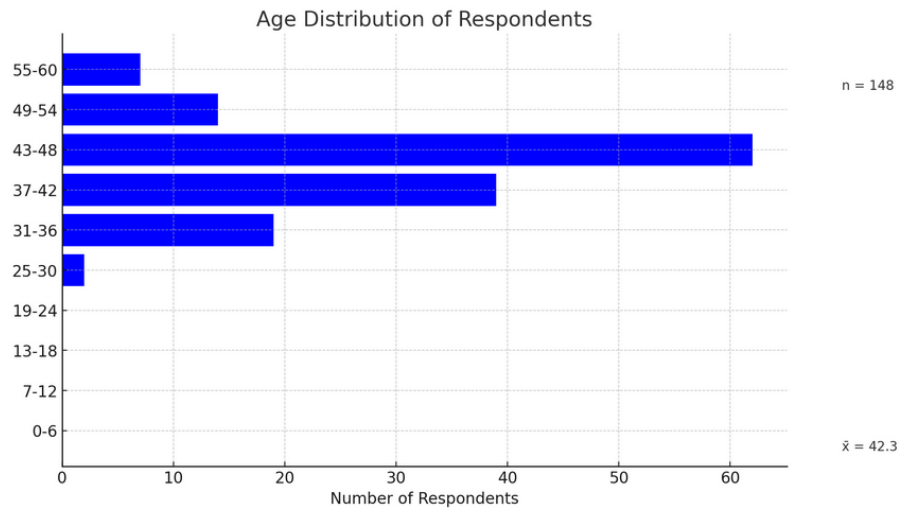
1.1 Gender

A total of 309 respondents completed the survey. However, 167 were deemed appropriate. Since not all provided demographic data, descriptions are based on obtained data. According to gender, 42% of the respondents were male and 58% were female.



1.1.2 Age

Most respondents are between 31 and 54 years old.



1.1.3 Testing

Most were tested as potential candidates.

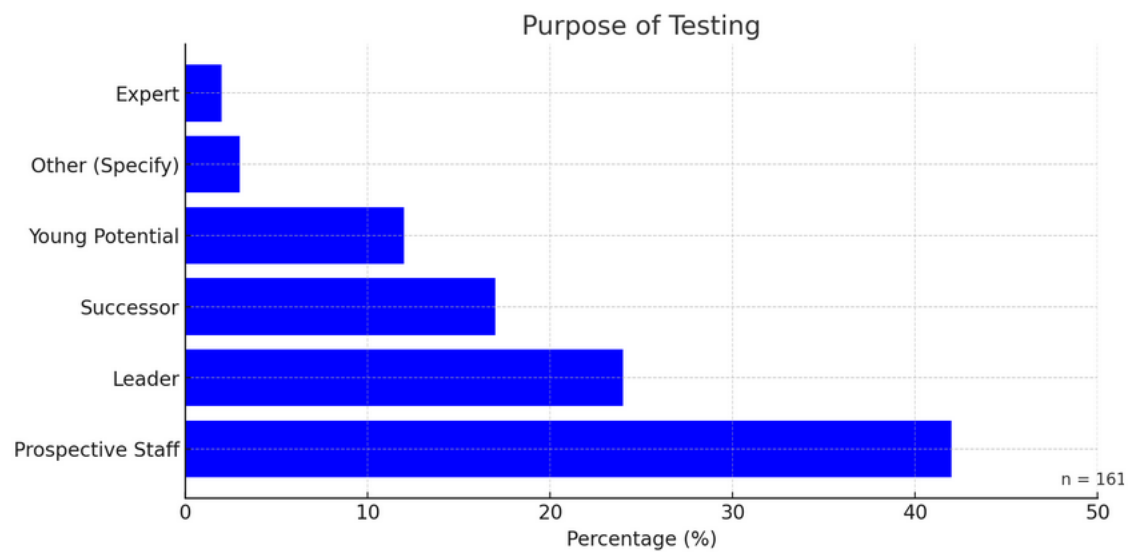


Figure 2: Purpose of Testing

1.1.4 Registration

Most registered by themselves.

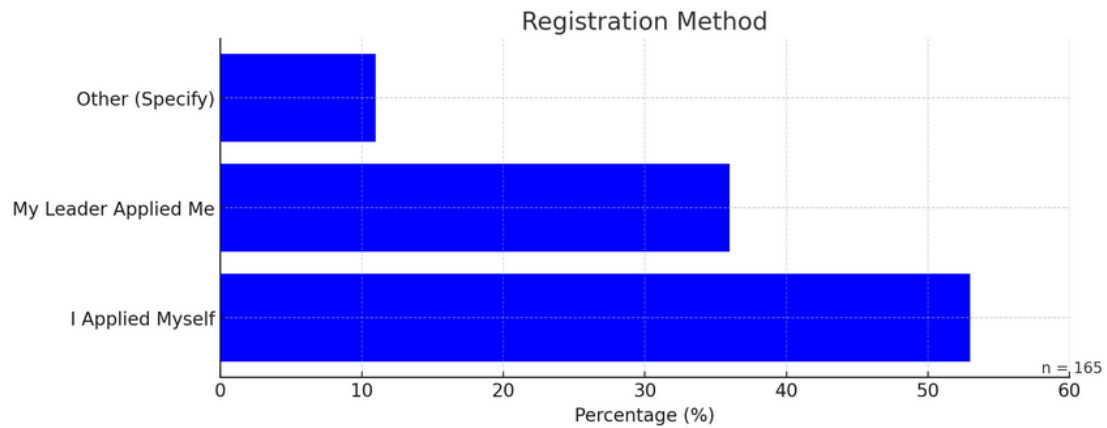


Figure 3: Registration

1.1.5 Year of Evaluation

The evaluation was conducted in 2023 and 2024. This is positive as most still remember what was assessed. Most were involved in the evaluation in 2024.

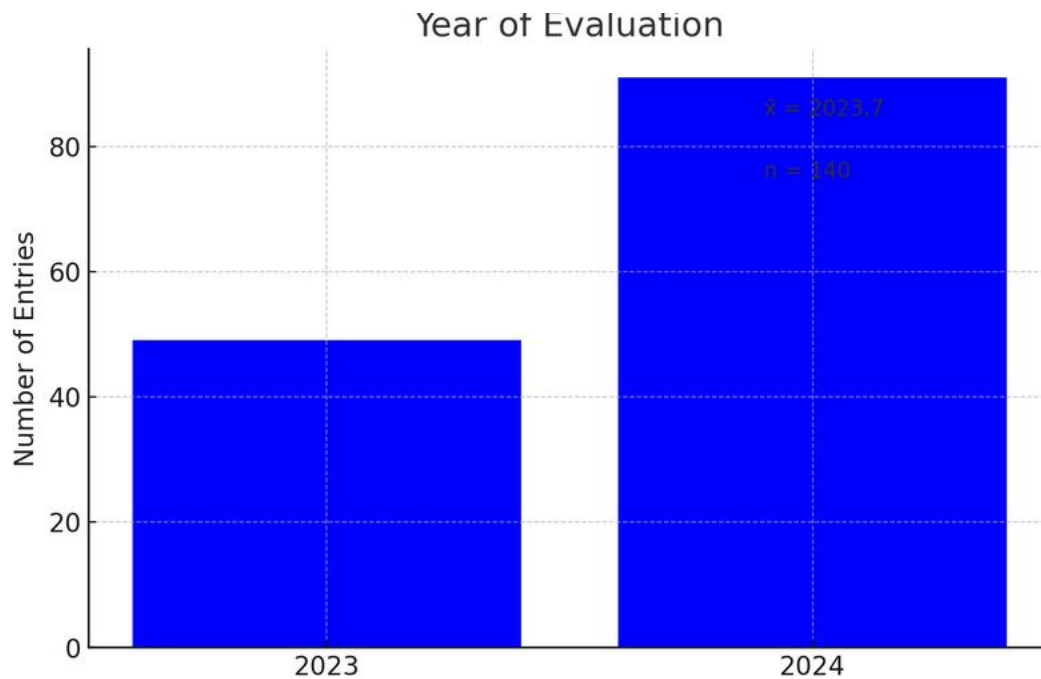


Figure 4: Year of Evaluation

2. Findings

2.1 Tool Validation

In this section, we assess the usefulness of the DNLA test for the user, in terms of usability, accuracy, identification of development areas, and usefulness for further work.

2.1.1 Usability of the DNLA Tool for the User

Users highly value the usability of DNLA, as it received high ratings.

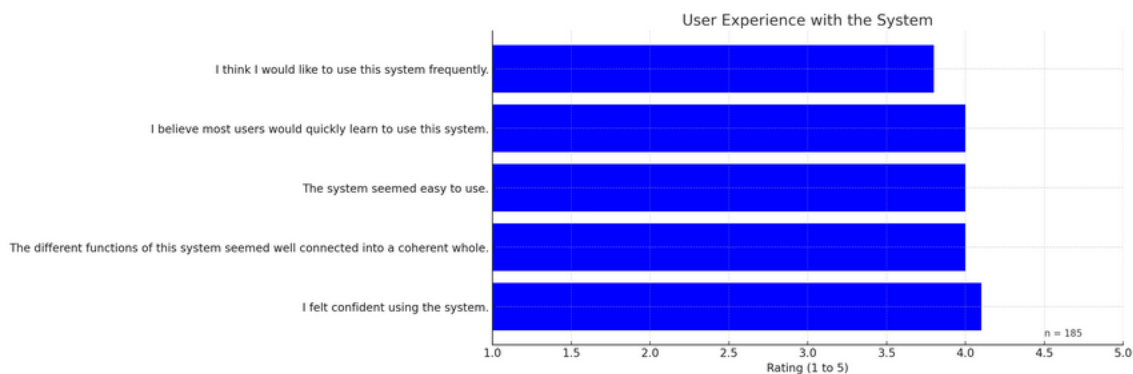


Figure 5: Usability of the DNLA Tool for the User (n = 185)

2.1.2 System Accuracy

Users believe the system is accurate.

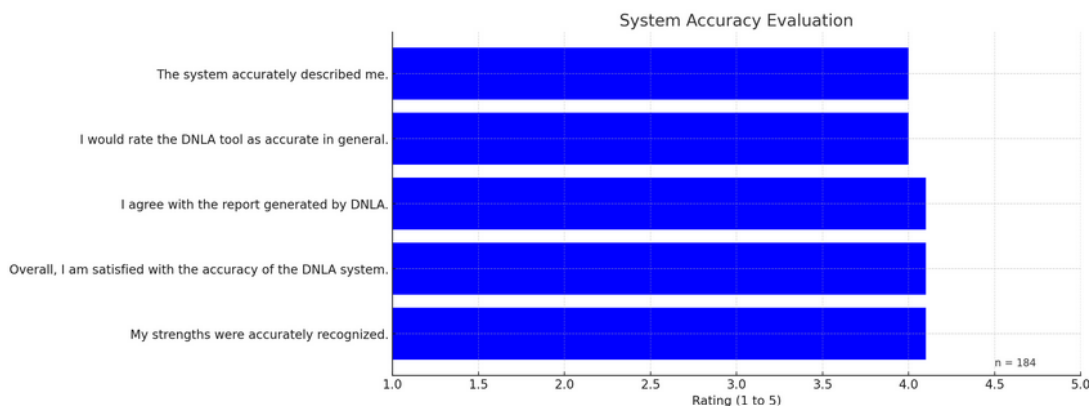


Figure 6: System Accuracy (n = 184)

2.1.3 Identification of Development Areas

Users rate that the system accurately identifies development areas.

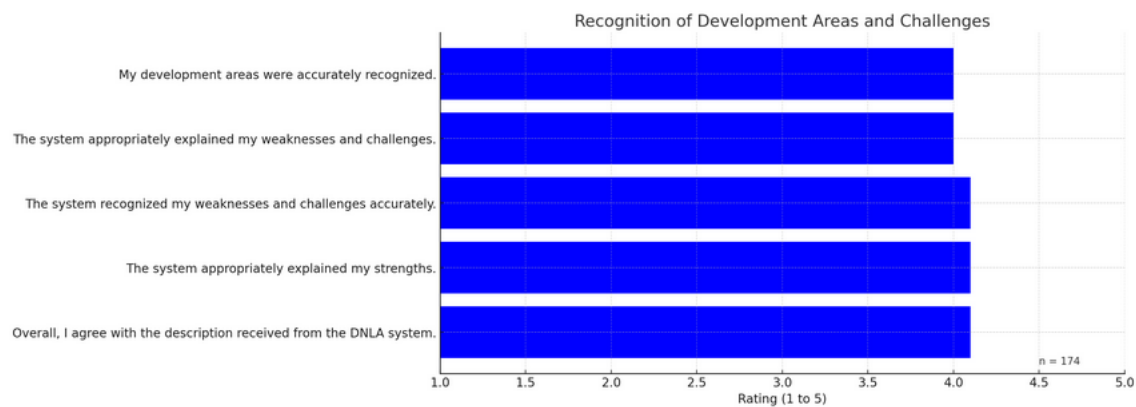


Figure 7: Identification of Development Areas (n = 174)

2.1.4 Usefulness for Further Work

Users rate it as useful for further work.

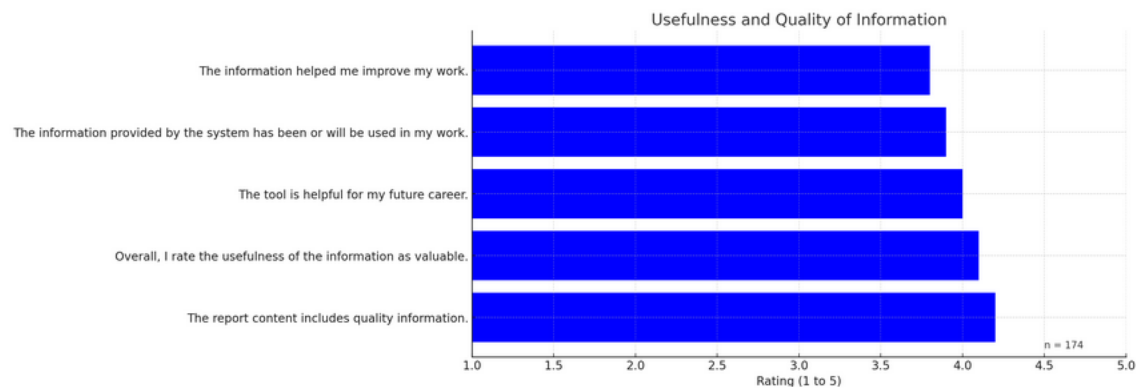


Figure 8: Usefulness for Further Work (n = 174)

2.2 Process Validation

In this section, we validate the process from the announcement procedure to the feedback provided by DNLA experts. We are interested in your experience with the feedback process in terms of quality and usability. The announcement procedure, interview, quality of feedback, and usability of feedback were evaluated.

2.2.1 Announcement Procedure

There were no specific comments on the announcement procedure.

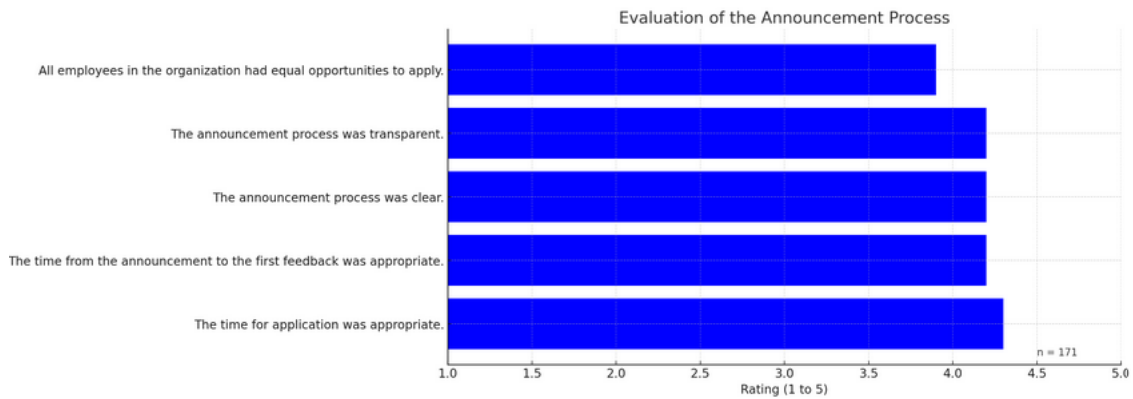


Figure 9: Announcement Procedure (n = 171)

2.2.2 Interview - DNLA feedback on results with an external consultant (Resultant - SLO)

The interview was rated highly.

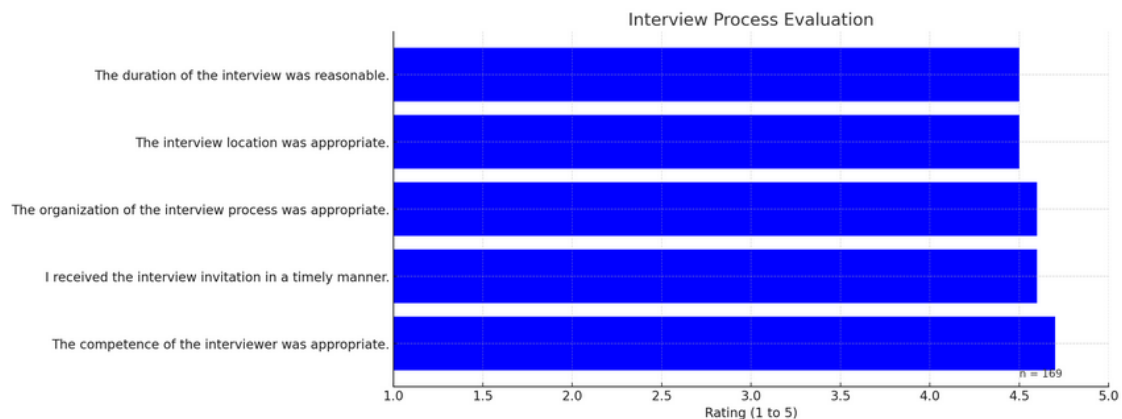


Figure 10: Interview (n = 169)

2.2.3 Quality of Feedback

The quality of feedback was rated highly.

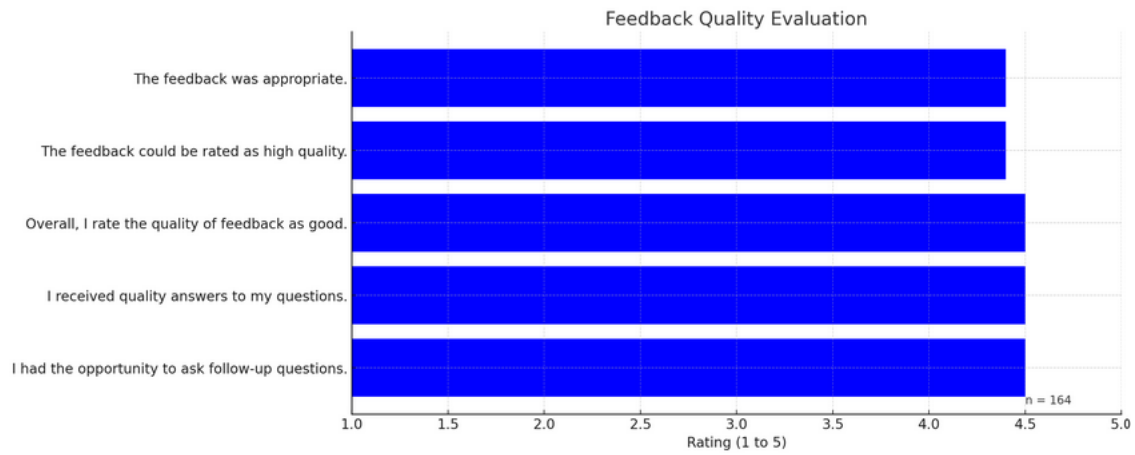


Figure 11: Quality of Feedback (n = 164)

2.2.4 Usability of Feedback

The feedback is deemed useful.

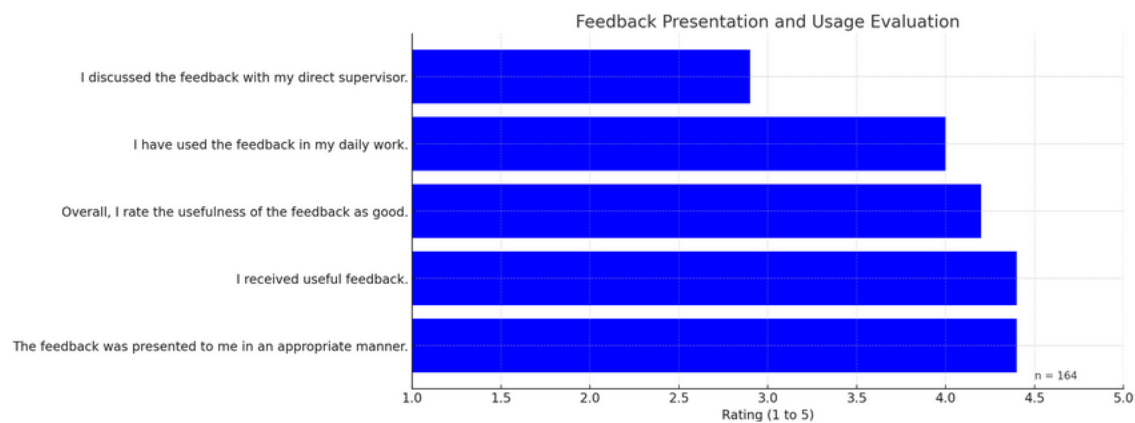


Figure 12: Usability of Feedback (n = 164)

5. Solution Analysis

Organizations face numerous challenges in validating tools for testing key personnel, talents, and potentials, both in terms of the tool and the process. Some of the most significant challenges regarding the tool include:

- **Selection of the appropriate tool:** There are many different testing tools available, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. It is important to choose a tool that meets the specific needs of the organization and is scientifically valid and reliable. It is essential to assess how employees understand the testing itself, the tool, and the results.
- **Interpretation of results:** Test results can be complex and difficult to interpret. It is important to have trained staff who can understand the results and apply them appropriately while conveying this information to employees.
- **Tool bias:** Some tools may be biased towards certain groups of people, which can affect the test results. It is important to choose a tool that has been developed and validated on a diverse sample population.

Attention must also be given to the process itself:

- **Defining testing objectives:** It is important to clearly define what the organization aims to achieve with the testing before choosing a tool or designing the process.
- **Employee involvement:** Employees need to be involved in the validation process to ensure the tool is used in an acceptable and beneficial way.
- **Empowering interviewers:** The organization must adequately train the staff who will explain the test results to the individuals who have undergone the testing process. This can be used for coaching, which is a goal-oriented, systematic, collaborative, and interactive process aimed at individual development.
- **Maintaining the tool and process:** The tool and process should be regularly updated to account for changes in the workplace and the organization.

In addition to these challenges, it is important to note that tool validation is not a one-time event. It is an ongoing process that must be repeated regularly to ensure the tool continues to provide accurate and reliable results.

6. Discussion

The research conducted involved a sample of 164 key personnel, talents, and potentials, focusing on both the tool and process for testing. More than half of the respondents (57.7%) were women, and 53.7% applied for the testing themselves. The most common role tested for was that of prospective personnel (41.8%). The majority of respondents (53.4%) did not gain any advancement or additional status from the testing. The survey was conducted by an independent research agency and the results are representative of the population tested for various roles.

A comprehensive system for the development of key personnel and successors is an essential tool for any organization aiming for future success. Such a system aids organizations in identifying, developing, and retaining talent, which is crucial for achieving strategic goals and fostering sustainable growth. Long-term success depends on succession planning, which is vital for

All rights reserved.

maintaining organizational success and sustainability and contributes to preserving a competitive advantage. This includes identifying and developing potential successors for key positions through systematic assessment and training. Effective succession planning is linked to talent management, supporting the maintenance and development of key human resources. It requires a systematic approach involving education, training, and motivation.

Best practices include focusing on development opportunities, recognizing key positions, ensuring transparency, and regularly measuring progress. Systematic succession planning benefits organizations by maintaining a stable workforce and retaining talent. It should be embedded in organizational strategies and operational policies. Family businesses often prioritize personal, relationship-focused approaches to developing successors, while non-family businesses prefer formalized, task-oriented methods. In family business succession, motivation, entrepreneurial intent, and positive emotions towards the business are significant factors.

Succession planning prepares organizations for future critical vacancies and aligns human capital needs with business objectives. In the digital age, the strategic importance of human resource management is even more pronounced. Process-oriented training and a coaching leadership style are crucial for developing innovative personnel, while employees' psychological well-being positively impacts organizational performance. Lifelong learning is a prerequisite for mutually successful career development for both individuals and the organization. Every successful organization needs a system for identifying key personnel, successors, and talents, which can be best recognized through appropriate monitoring and testing. To ensure the suitability of testing tools, periodic validation is necessary. This study validated both the tool and the testing process.

Implementing a comprehensive system for the development of key personnel and successors can be challenging but highly beneficial for organizations of all sizes. It is essential that the system has clear objectives and is tailored to the specific needs of the organization. The system should also be flexible enough to adapt to the growth and development of the organization.

7. Conclusion

The system for the development of key personnel and successors was successful in identifying, developing, and retaining talent within the organization. Employees reported feeling more motivated and engaged and having a clearer understanding of their career path.

The usefulness of the research is evident from multiple perspectives. The test administrators received feedback on the testing tool itself, which they can pass on to the license owner for further enhancement of the generic reports. With the collected findings, the organization can improve the process, particularly in the recruitment phase and in providing feedback from leaders. Additionally, the validation process provided important insights into the effectiveness and accuracy of the testing tools, ensuring that they remain relevant and reliable for future testing. By improving these tools, organizations can better identify and develop their key personnel and successors, ensuring a robust talent pool. Continuous improvement of these processes will lead to more informed decision-making and stronger alignment of talent management strategies with organizational goals.

In conclusion, regular validation and improvement of testing tools and processes are essential for maintaining an effective system for identifying and developing key personnel. This research has laid the foundation for further enhancements, contributing to the long-term success and competitiveness of the organization.

All rights reserved.