

Introduction

We live in a world so radically different today than at any point in history. We are the first generation in history that is dealing with intensity and speed of change.

We operate in a business environment where speed, accessibility and responsiveness are critical differentiators, leaders are looking towards their technology, their people, and the way the two interact, as a source of competitive advantage. However, executive boards' confidence in the leadership of IT is almost at an all time low and the emergence of the Chief Digital Officer is in danger of destabilising this confidence further.

- There is a genuine credibility gap that is widening between the board and IT
- Fewer CIOs than ever have a seat on the Exec board
- More than ever CIOs are under pressure to reduce costs, while not being able to reinvest savings in innovation projects
- Very few CIOs focus enough of their approach on value
- Those aspiring to the role of the CIO are not getting exposure to the leadership development relevant to lead business change

The Digital Board's leadership diagnostic tool is a unique way of assessing the leadership competence of senior IT professionals and developing a leadership culture within IT teams.

It's unique, because it is the only assessment tool to measure behaviours specifically relevant to IT leadership.

Based on new psychological research, interviews with thousands of IT professionals and years of experience in IT executive search, the instrument offers a three dimensional view of a leader's self-awareness, performance and potential across nine competencies and 81 related behavioural anchors.

What are the business pressures most organisations are facing?

- Delivering growth while sustaining margin
- Reducing complexity and improving speed to market
- Innovating their product set with dynamic pricing models based on customer demand
- Simplifying the business by delayering the organisation and creating greater accountability of leaders
- Delivering business results in a Digital context

How can effective IT leadership address these pressures?

- Provides the capability to exceed your customers' expectations in a digital world
- Improves operational and strategic agility
- Ensures that you have the business capabilities required to deliver value from IT
- Ensures that the business is extracting sufficient value from your current IT portfolio ensuring they are fully aware of the opportunities and threats that exist

How can The Digital Board ensure you have effective IT leadership?

- Help you define a culture of leadership to align to your business ambition
- Provide a framework for change, helping you define your desired leadership culture
- Identify the gaps in your leadership capability using a sophisticated diagnostic tool
- Provide targeted assessment and development designed specifically for information technology leaders helping improve individual and team capability

It's often said that leadership is the intervention that operates between the information you have and the action you need to take

It's widely recognised that the failure of IT projects is less about the technology but more down to poor governance, a lack of strategic alignment, or inadequate leadership.

It's a common misperception that IT is overly complex, expensive and rarely provides value. The paradox is that the Executive team (often the CFO) expects to bring down the cost of IT while expecting IT to continue to reduce the cost of the company doing business.

However, we know from experience that the problem does not lie anymore in the technology but the relationship (and lack of governance) that exists between the Exec and the IT function. It is also convenient at times to blame IT.

The truth is that business and IT leaders rarely understand each other's perspective. This is not all down to IT leaders not being "commercially savvy" From our research we believe there is a fundamental difference in the make up of business and IT leaders. This is probably no better highlighted in a study of MBTI profiles of CEOs/Executive Leaders and one of CIOs.

Of course, both parties want the right outcome but often fail to understand each other sufficiently well enough to achieve that. During demanding times when there is increased pressure to deliver business change this can become even more exaggerated. This essentially stacks up problems waiting to happen introducing an element of unnecessary risk.

While IT leaders are not singularly to blame for this, a tendency to rush into engagement and implementation can cloud their ability to challenge or understand the rationale for the change from a business perspective. Their challenge is to get stakeholders to define and agree the business outcomes they seek. But why does this so rarely happen?

That's why the Digital Board's Leadership Diagnostic Tool considers the emotional intelligence of IT leaders as well as characteristics such as personal impact and commercial discipline.

We consider the CIO's ability to connect with their internal customers and empathise with their objectives to be critical to successful project delivery.

It is this understanding that has led us to develop our evolutionary model of IT leadership.

SUMMARY

Investing more of the IT budget in improving the leadership capability of the team can have a far more profound (and enduring) effect on driving business performance improvement than simply investing more money in technology with a sub optimal leadership team.

How did we get here?

(the evolution of the IT leader)

In our experience, IT leaders can be placed on an evolutionary scale of leadership, ranging from the technical leader through to the executive.

Many will find a natural niche where their skills are best applied. Others will grow and develop into senior leadership roles with experience and will need support and development through that transition period.

And while there will always be a place for technically gifted people, this technical knowledge needs to be supplemented with greater attention to leadership and influence if the IT function is to meet the needs of the organisation.

The Digital Board's Leadership Diagnostic Tool identifies those people with the right leadership skills to seek out the best of 'what is' and ignite the collective imagination of 'what might be'.



Evolution 1: Technical Leader to Manager

Qualities:

- Strong technical capability. Logical and factual. High work ethic (lead from the front. Motivate technical people. Able to understand (if not simplify) complexity. High attention to detail. Task and project based approach.

Weaknesses:

- Can lack some of the emotional intelligence required to influence and lead. Don't always enrol people in their ideas or take people with them on change. Don't easily collaborate well with cross-functional or business peers. Lose people in the detail.

Development needs:

- Explore and learn more about human characteristics/what drives people to make decisions. Developing a greater sense of empathy. Learn more dynamic communication techniques. Broader appreciation of the big picture.

Evolution 2: Manager to Senior Manager

Qualities:

- Good communication skills. Engaging. Enrols people in change. Collaborative. Able to work across cross-functional teams and business units. Good ability to link business opportunity with technology solutions. Shows value.

Weaknesses:

- Can often possess a more conservative/reactive leadership style (waiting for permission to act). Can lack the courage to act at times/should be bolder. They lack a deeper understanding of the economic drivers of their business/industry to truly shape outcomes.

Development needs:

- Building their confidence and courage to lead. Fine tuning of their messaging. Taking a tougher stance with their business peers. Long range thinking. Greater ability to forecast business outcomes.

Evolution 3: Sr Manager to Executive Leader

Qualities:

- Visionary. Brave. Possesses the courage to act. Doesn't wait for permission (rather seeks forgiveness later). Highly emotionally intelligent. Strong levels of appreciative inquiry. Able to get under the skin of the request through skilful questioning. Business people love them!

Weaknesses:

- Level of technology appreciation can vary. Can often be more comfortable leading transformation activities than focusing on more operational activities. Technical team members can sometimes feel alienated by them or can reject their leadership style as naïve or lacking understanding/relevance to IT.

Development needs:

- They need to keep a watchful eye on the strong technical people in the team by recognising and rewarding their contribution. Develop their ability to be more detail oriented.

*% of CIOs interviewed by The Digital Board

Introducing a new and unique way of assessing IT leadership

Traditionally, organisations wanting to understand the leadership effectiveness of IT have depended on generic leadership assessment.

While these assessments can be immensely useful, they lack the context-specific analysis necessary to get a deeper understanding of how IT professionals will behave in your culture.

It's no surprise that organisations using traditional assessment and selection methods end up with the same results; talent gaps in a business critical function.

We felt there had to be a better way.

Bryan MacDonald, founder of The Digital Board (and author of the diagnostic tool) has met with over 500 senior executives and interviewed more than 5,000 Senior IT leaders which has led him to capture what businesses really want from their CIO and moreover what their CIO wants from his/her leadership team.

Leading	Being	Delivering
Impact and influence	Leading self (Emotional intelligence and appreciative inquiry)	Managing operational effectiveness
Champions innovation and leading change	Able to simplify and break down complexity	Driving results
Leading others	Comfortable with ambiguity	Governance and commercial discipline

What does the Digital Board Leadership Diagnostic Tool do?

The tool enables organisations to align their IT leadership teams under a single leadership framework made up of contextually relevant competencies. Each competence comprises a series of measurable, behavioural anchors that can be used to assess the level of leadership competency.

As well as an innovative assessment framework, the tool is also used to support HR decision making in areas such as succession planning and performance management.

Traditional performance versus potential models often lack sufficient insight for meaningful conversations. The 9 x 9 competency matrix we developed alongside our leadership diagnostic tool provides context to your decision-making.

The diagnostic process



The process in detail

PROCESS AGREEMENT

Clients will typically agree to focus on range of between 30-36 behaviours. With more than 130 sextillion possible combinations you can be sure of a set of behavioural measures that aligns with your organisation's culture and style.

- Together, we agree the level of competency (1-5) in which behaviour is expected at each level in the leadership team, to provide a benchmark for each individual.
- The client will then perform a subjective assessment of each individual against this continuum.

GROUP COMMUNICATION

Your IT leadership team comes to a group meeting in which we'll explain the assessment process and get unity and engagement in the exercise.



The process in detail

DISCOVERY SESSION

Each member of your IT leadership team will meet with one of our consultants in a Discovery Session. This will give us an in-depth understanding of each individual and how they see their role, the team as a whole together with their level of personal engagement.

SELF ASSESSMENT

The team individually completes a self-assessment survey to give us an insight into how each person sees his or her behaviours. Discrepancies between an individual's own perception and that of others can be a powerful way of influencing change.

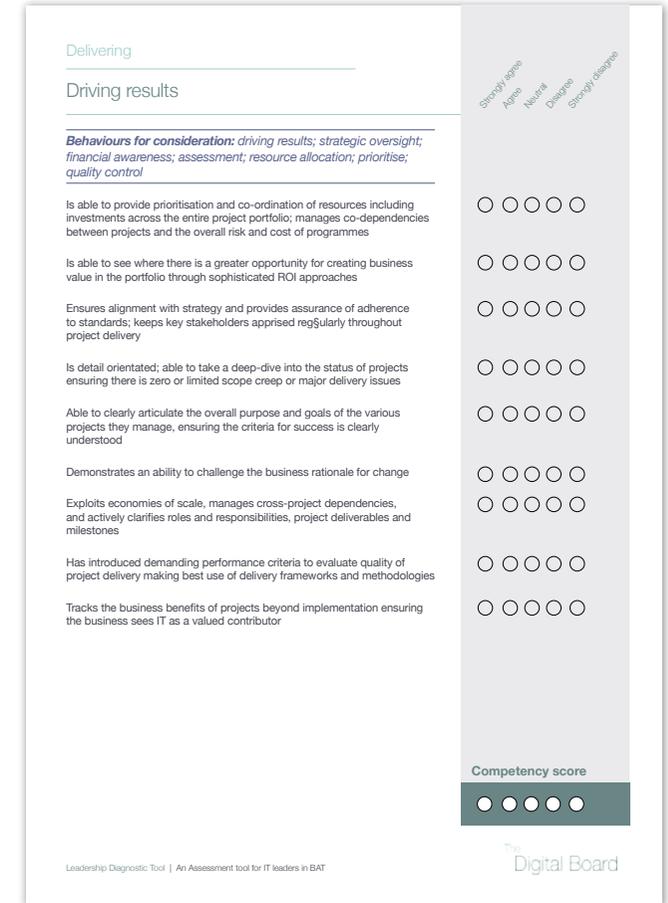
LINE MANAGER ASSESSMENT

Where necessary, the most senior IT leader will complete a survey for each person in his or her team. This also provides a useful benchmark.

ONE-TO-ONE ASSESSMENT

Our senior assessment specialists will conduct a one-to-one assessment interview with each team member. These in-depth, three-hour meetings enable us to get under the skin of each individual to develop a deep understanding of his or her leadership competence. Our experts will ask a series of carefully crafted, probing questions to gain a true insight into each individual against the key behavioural measures.

We distil our findings into a comprehensive report that brings together our analysis of each of the 36 key competencies, graphically compared with any other assessments and benchmarks established.



The process in detail

CLIENT FEEDBACK

You will receive detailed feedback about each individual and the team as a whole. We'll meet with you to take you through our conclusions, highlighting issues, competence gaps and unfulfilled potential.

We will present our findings to you, together with recommendations about who is ready for promotion, who should be part of the succession plan, who would benefit from development in which areas and who is not right for the organisation.

ONE-TO-ONE FEEDBACK

It's important your team get feedback on their assessment; whether it reveals areas for improvement, a cultural mismatch, or highlights untapped leadership potential.

We're adept at having sensitive conversations in an emotionally intelligent way, so people know what they need to do to meet the needs of the business. We meet with each individual to provide him or her with direct feedback and guidance in a considered and supportive way.

WIDER RECOMMENDATIONS

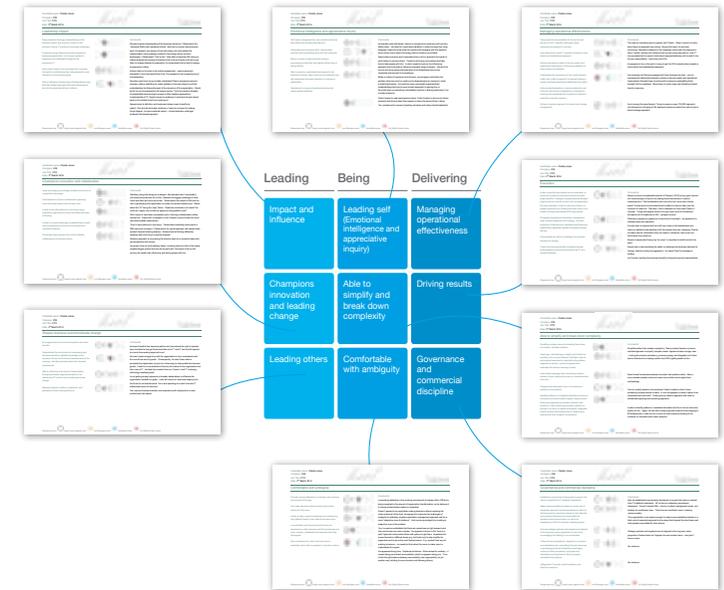
Finally, we can make wider recommendations about how your organisation can best use the data in a strategic context; addressing any leadership gaps, advising you on your succession strategies and providing objective insights and advice to support any restructures.

You may even choose to use the diagnostic tool at the next leadership level in your IT team. We can make this happen quickly and cost effectively.



Innovative and intuitive reports

Our findings are summarised in a graphical report to provide an at-a-glance comparison of the results. A colour coded summary of each behavioural anchor score means a candidate's perception can easily be compared with the views of their line manager, the expected performance level and our own assessment.



The visual summary is supported with explanatory notes from our assessor that place the scores into context and provide examples and observations. Each competency and behaviour anchor is measured using the same format in the report, providing a comprehensive insight into the individual.

Candidate name: **Charlie Jones**
Company: **ICB**
Job Title: **CTO**
Date: **3rd March 2014**

Leadership Impact

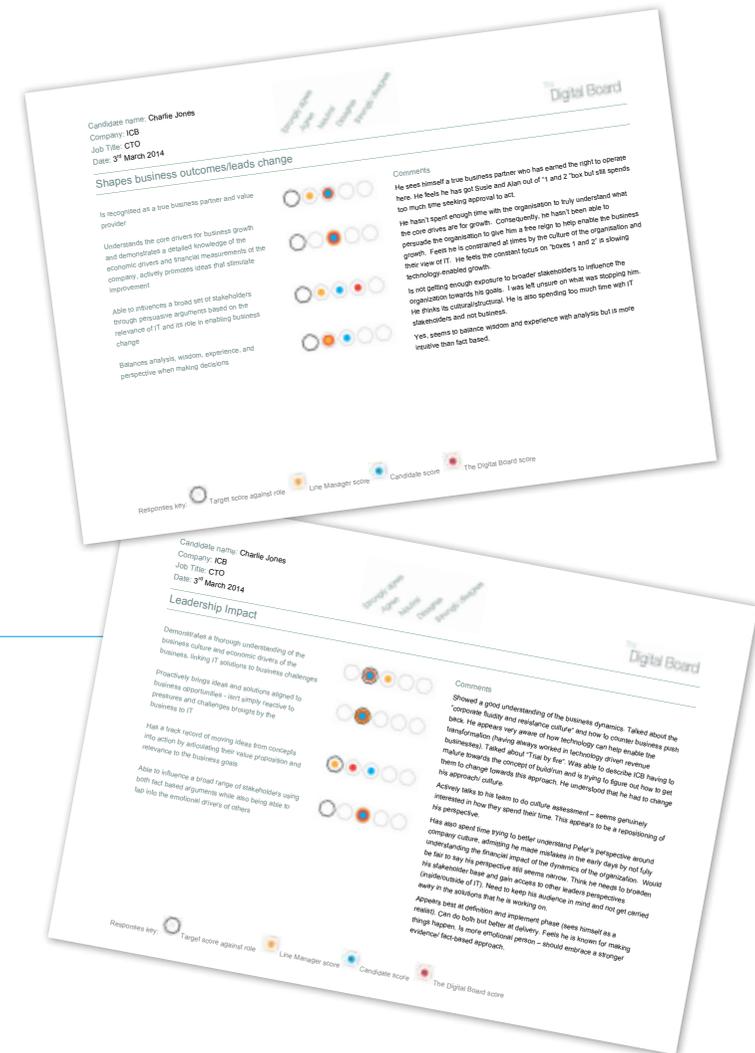
Competency	Target score against role	Line Manager score	Candidate score	The Digital Board score	Comments
Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the business culture and economic drivers of the business, linking IT solutions to business challenges	5	4	4	4	Shows a good understanding of the business dynamics. Talked about the "corporate fluffiness and resistance culture" and how to counter business push back. He appears very aware of how technology can help enable the transformation (having always worked in technology driven revenue businesses). Talked about "Trial by fire". Was able to describe ICB having to mature towards the concept of bullhorn and is trying to figure out how to get them to change towards this approach. He understood that he had to change his approach/culture.
Proactively brings ideas and solutions aligned to business opportunities - isn't simply reactive to pressures and challenges brought by the business to IT	5	4	4	4	Actively talks to his team to do culture assessment - seems genuinely interested in how they spend their time. This appears to be a repositioning of his perspective.
Has a track record of moving ideas from concepts into action by articulating their value proposition and relevance to the business goals	5	4	4	4	Has also spent time trying to better understand Peter's perspective around company culture, admitting he made mistakes in the early days by not fully understanding the financial impact of the dynamics of the organization. Would be fair to say his perspective still seems narrow. Think he needs to broaden his stakeholder base and gain access to other leaders perspectives (inside/outside of IT). Need to keep his audience in mind and not get carried away in the solutions that he is working on.
Able to influence a broad range of stakeholders using both fact based arguments while also being able to tap into the emotional drivers of others	5	4	4	4	Appears best at definition and implement phase (sees himself as a realist). Can do both but better at delivery. Feels he is known for making things happen. Is more emotional person - should embrace a stronger evidence fact-based approach.

Responses key: Target score against role | Line Manager score | Candidate score | The Digital Board score

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Conclusion

The Digital Board's Diagnostic Tool equips both business leaders and CIOs to understand and assess IT leadership competencies, empowering IT leaders to ensure their teams are fit to meet the evolving needs of the business.

The graphical nature of the summary reports make them highly engaging and ideal for structuring conversations with team members because any gaps are immediately obvious.

The heat map highlights where you have critical leadership gaps in the team and helps identify where and how to address these.

These reports can also be used for:

- Succession Planning
- Development Plans
- Restructuring
- Performance vs Potential Reviews



FIND OUT MORE

Get in touch using the details below and we'll be delighted to meet you and take you through the IT leadership diagnostic tool in more detail.

Call +44 (0) 207 221 0191 or +44 (0) 7932 766 860

Alternatively, you can email info@thedigital-board.com or visit www.thedigital-board.com