Individual Invincibility Blueprint

Managerial Competency Assessment

A personalised assessment of your management capability, with a tailored development plan built entirely from your responses.

Prepared for: Mark Davies

Assessment date: 9 April 2026 **Report date:** 23 April 2026

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Front Matter

This assessment report has been prepared by Greg Kurnikov for the sole use of the named participant. It is based on the participant's self-reported responses to a structured behavioural questionnaire, interpreted through a proprietary competency assessment framework.

This report does not constitute a psychometric evaluation, a clinical assessment, or a formal employment appraisal. The findings and development recommendations are advisory in nature. They do not guarantee any particular outcome, result, or performance improvement.

The participant retains sole responsibility for their development decisions and for implementing or choosing not to implement any recommendations contained in this report.

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About This Assessment

This assessment measures your managerial competence across 20 areas, grouped into three categories: Character (the personal foundations of your management practice), Structure (the systems and architecture you have built), and Influence (how you lead, hold standards, and develop people). It does not measure your functional or domain expertise. A strong planning manager and a strong finance director need the same 20 management competencies; this assessment measures those competencies, not the domain knowledge beneath them.

The findings are drawn entirely from your own answers to a structured behavioural questionnaire, interpreted through a professional assessment framework. The assessment evaluates your practices and systems, not your personality. No finding in this report is a permanent label; every area identified is developable, and the development plan at the end of this report is designed to show you how.

The report opens with your overall competency profile, then assesses each competency individually. It then examines how your competencies combine across nine management responsibilities. The report closes with a phased development plan tailored to your specific gaps.

This report is direct. Where it identifies gaps, it frames them as practical problems with specific solutions, not as personal failings. This assessment is advisory and based on your self-reported responses. Full terms are set out in the engagement agreement.

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Executive Summary

You lead the planning and delivery function at Rivervale Utilities Services, with six direct reports supporting approximately 85 field engineers across a fast-paced, regulated operation. The findings below are read against the standard expected of a middle manager running a multi-team operation where consistency must hold across planning leads and dispatch leads who are experienced enough to operate independently, and against the specific challenge you named: raising that consistency without becoming the control point yourself.

The single most important finding in this assessment is that your personal analytical and diagnostic capability is consistently stronger than the systems you have built to carry that capability without your direct involvement.

Top 3 Strengths

Strength	Key Finding
Control	You monitor leading indicators on daily and weekly cycles to detect trajectory before it becomes a problem, and you triangulate across multiple independent information channels to catch what any single source would miss.
Emotional Management (Personal)	You have built a deliberate system for managing your own emotional state, including trigger mapping, real-time self-monitoring, and planned recovery between difficult conversations.
Decision Making	You separate what you know from what you do not know before acting, and your strongest decisions are structural redesigns that change how the system works rather than crisis responses.

Top 3 Development Priorities

Development Priority	Key Finding
Executive Planning	Your operational planning is disciplined, but your project planning does not yet apply the same rigour: assumptions go untested, processes go unmapped, and projects run longer than expected as a result.
Managing the Operating System	Your operating system runs in your absence, but the judgement standard varies because the calibration depends on your personal attention rather than on mechanisms your managers enforce themselves.
Self-Organisation	Your daily and weekly management rhythms are strong, but forward-looking and project work is the first casualty when operational pressure rises, and the time-protection system does not yet extend to longer-horizon work.

All nine management responsibilities are assessed as Ready. Your competency combination supports each responsibility at the expected standard, with no responsibility falling below full readiness.

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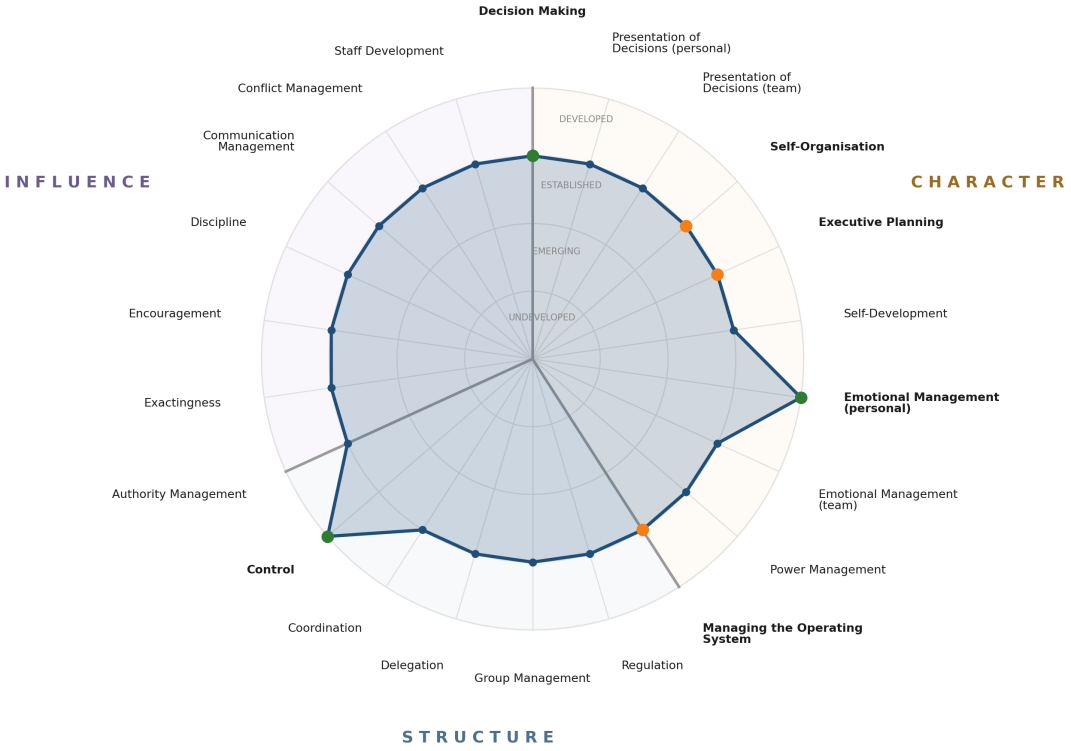
Competency Profile

Your profile across 20 competencies (22 axes with dual-dimension splits), organised in three blocks: Character, Structure, and Influence. The shaded polygon is your shape of strengths and development areas.



Your competency profile Top 3 strengths Top 3 development priorities

TOP STRENGTHS

Control	Developed
Emotional Management (personal)	Developed
Decision Making	Established

DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Executive Planning	Established
Managing the Operating System	Established
Self-Organisation	Established

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Assessment Themes

Your personal capability runs ahead of the systems that should carry it. Across multiple competencies, the same pattern appears: when you are present and attentive, standards hold, judgement calls are sound, and the function performs well. When your attention moves elsewhere, the quality becomes variable. The constraint is in how your standards are embedded, rather than in your team's capability. The close-out note standard, the escalation thresholds, and the cross-functional handoff disciplines all work, but they work because you follow up personally rather than because a self-sustaining mechanism holds them in place.

Operational discipline and project discipline have developed at different speeds. Your daily and weekly management rhythms are among the strongest features in this assessment. Your project planning has not kept pace. The mobile workflow rollout, the recurring handoff problem, and the pattern of longer-horizon work being the first casualty under pressure all point to the same cause: the planning discipline that governs your operational week has not been extended to work that creates or changes a system rather than running one.

Analytical depth sometimes substitutes for timely structural action. Your diagnostic ability is a genuine strength: you see problems clearly, trace them to root causes, and revise your diagnosis when the first fix does not hold. The gap is in the speed of the structural response. There is a recurring pattern across several competencies where the diagnosis is completed well before the coordinated fix is designed and installed. The stores manager who breached the standard three times, the evidence-based conversation you said should have been forced sooner, and the structured improvement case without a time-bound threshold all reflect the same tendency: thorough analysis, followed by intervention that arrives later than the analysis would have justified.

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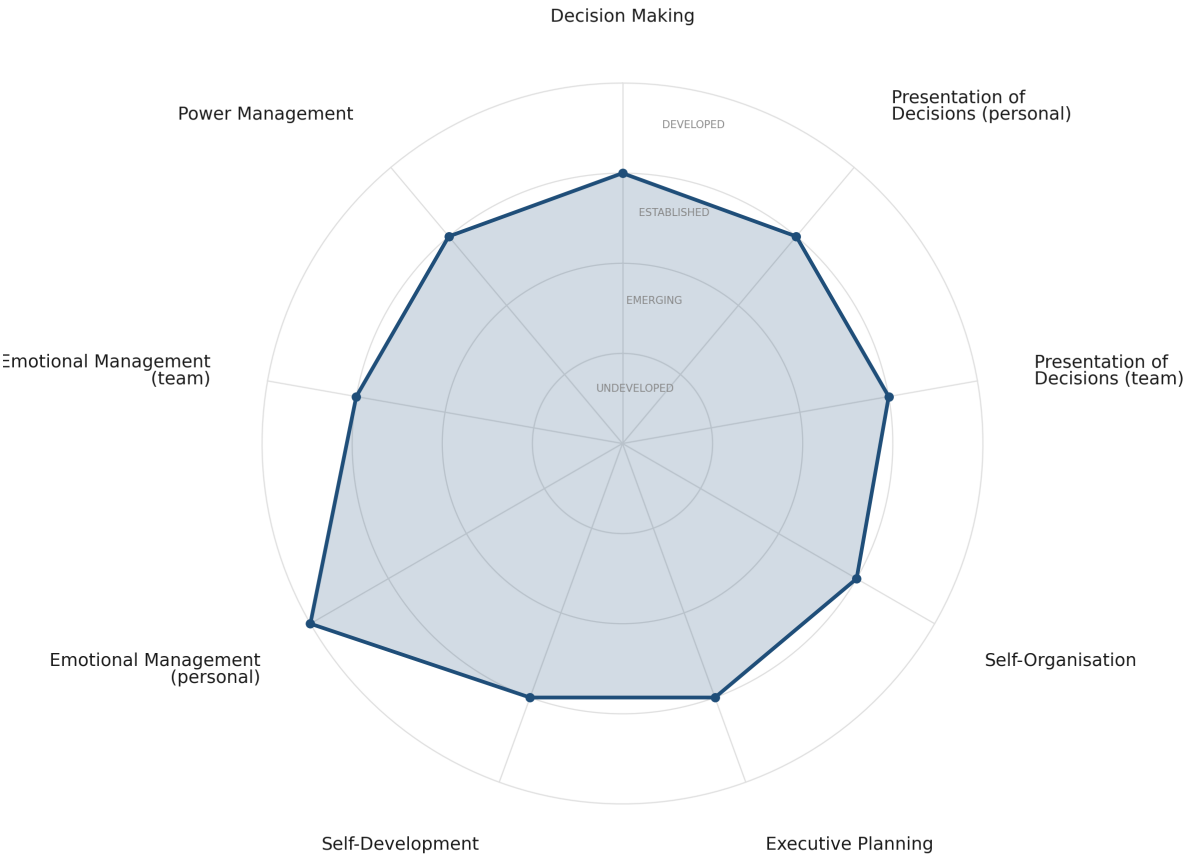
Detailed Assessment

> *The following sections assess each of your 20 competencies individually, grouped by Character, Structure, and Influence.*

Character: *The personal foundations of your management practice*



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1. Decision Making

Competency	Decision Making
Group	Character
Current position	Established
The strength to build on	Your strongest decisions are structural redesigns that change how the system works, and you separate what you know from what you do not know before you act.

Your strongest decision in the past year was not a call made under pressure. It was a structural redesign: separating reactive dispatch from planned scheduling so that the two workflows stopped competing for the same resources and attention. That choice tells me more about your decision quality than any crisis response would, because it shows you think about how the system works, not just what to do next.

Across your answers, a consistent pattern comes through. You separate what you know from what you do not know before you act. In the storm redeployment example, you moved on the basis of what was solid (missed time windows, stretched teams) while acknowledging what was still empty (total volume, client flexibility). You did not wait for perfect information, and you did not pretend you had it. That separation is a discipline most managers in comparable roles have not yet built. It means your decisions are grounded in honest assessment rather than either false confidence or unnecessary delay.

You also test your own decisions after the fact. You described the storm call as “slightly conservative but still the right move,” which shows you investigated the outcome to verify your reasoning held. You did the same with the stream separation, tracking specific indicators (backlog volatility, rework, client conversation quality) rather than relying on a feeling that things improved. For a manager running multiple workstreams, this habit of validating decisions through evidence rather than memory is a real asset.

Where the profile is still developing is in solution design for complex, recurring problems. You described a cross-functional handoff issue that has been “solved multiple times in theory” but keeps returning. Your diagnosis is sharp: you identified that the problem sits across a boundary between teams and that earlier fixes treated it as a compliance issue when it is actually a design problem. The interventions you tried were sequential and disconnected rather than designed as a coordinated system, and the result is that each fix reduced the frequency without eliminating the cause.

This is a common pattern at this stage. Your ability to identify what needs to change is ahead of your current practice in designing the coordinated fix. Closing that gap would mean fewer problems returning in different forms.

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2. Presentation of Decisions

Competency	Presentation of Decisions
Group	Character
Current position – personal	Established
Current position – team	Established
What your answers show	Your cascade architecture is your strongest asset here: you brief managers with reasoning, verify through skip-level checks, and give dissenters a role in making the decision work.

How a decision is presented determines whether people comply with it or commit to it. When you introduced the same-day planning cut-off, you showed the rework cost first, then presented the change, then built the exception route to address the obvious objection. Your team heard the problem before they heard the solution. That sequence is what makes the difference between a decision that is announced and one that is understood.

Where your practice is strongest is in the cascade. You described briefing your managers first, explaining both the decision and the reasoning, equipping them with anticipated questions, and then sending a written summary the same day. The most telling part of that description was the follow-up: you checked three days later through route-change samples and skip-level conversations, because you know that information degrades at every relay point and that the reasoning is the part most likely to be softened or dropped. Most managers at your level announce a decision and assume it has landed. You verify whether it has landed as intended. That verification habit is the difference between a decision that changes behaviour and one that changes only the language people use in meetings.

You applied the same discipline when managing a split decision in your management team. You held your own preference back, let each manager argue their case including the risks of their own option, then made the decision and gave the dissenting manager a proper role in making it work. That last step matters: a manager left to "comply reluctantly from the sidelines" will transmit their reluctance to their team, and the decision arrives weaker at each level.

When presenting upward, your approach works well because it is grounded in evidence. You brought rework numbers, fatigue risk, and cost data to a disagreement with your manager about overtime, and proposed a concrete alternative. You did not get your preferred outcome. The evidence, however, earned you a hearing and influenced the final decision. The developing area here is in the softer dimension: your upward presentations lead with analysis, which is effective, but you could sometimes create more space for the other person to arrive at the conclusion themselves, rather than presenting it directly. For a manager in your position, the analytical credibility is already established; the next step is using that credibility to shape decisions through questions as well as through evidence.

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3. Self-Organisation

Competency	Self-Organisation
Group	Character
Current position	Established
The gap to close	Your daily and weekly management rhythms are strong, but forward-looking and project work is the first casualty when pressure rises because it lacks the same structural protection.

"I try not to confuse staying busy with being the necessary person in the room." That sentence, from your answer about managing a pressured week, captures the distinction that separates strong self-organisation from productive busyness. You understand that the highest-value use of your time is managing, not doing, and you apply that understanding in practice.

Your weekly structure is well built. You have daily, weekly, and review rhythms that protect management activities even when operational noise increases. Your one-to-ones and the Tuesday management meeting are treated as infrastructure rather than optional extras. When pressure rises, you compress rather than cancel: shortened one-to-ones rather than skipped ones, rescheduled planning rather than abandoned planning. That instinct is sound, because every cancelled management activity teaches the team that management is the thing that bends first.

The skills and resilience matrix you built is the strongest single indicator here. You created it without a deadline, without being asked, and because you saw a risk that the existing team structure was more fragile than the organisation chart suggested. Completing important but non-urgent work without external pressure is one of the most reliable signals of genuine self-organisation, because it requires you to protect time against the constant pull of operational demand. Few managers in similar positions do this consistently.

Where your practice is less complete is the area you named yourself: longer-horizon and project work is the first casualty when pressure arrives. Your daily management cadence and one-to-ones survive disruption well, but the longer-horizon work, the planning sessions and improvement projects, gets pushed. You described a mobile workflow rollout where insufficient upfront investment in understanding the current state caused downstream problems. The connection between these two observations is direct: when the time for thorough preparation is the time that gets squeezed, the work that depends on that preparation arrives under-scoped.

You clearly know this matters. The practical question is whether you have built a mechanism that protects this time as firmly as you protect the Tuesday meeting. In this role, operational work will always get done. The work which prevents future operational crises is what loses out when protection is absent.

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4. Executive Planning

Competency	Executive Planning
Group	Character
Current position	Established
The gap to close	Your operational planning is disciplined, but your project planning does not yet apply the same rigour: processes go unmapped, assumptions go untested, and projects run longer than expected.

Your planning shows a split. When you plan your own management time, the discipline is strong: structured weeks, protected rhythms, deliberate choices about what gets your attention. When you plan at the operating system level, building the structures that govern how your function works, the results are equally strong. The stream separation, the skills matrix, the priority-setting mechanism, these are all well-planned structural investments.

The gap appears in project-level planning. You described a mobile workflow rollout that ran at least six weeks over and required more temporary support than budgeted. Your own diagnosis was precise: “the broken assumption was that the process was cleaner than it really was.” You were not replacing one tool; you were disturbing a chain of behaviours that had grown around upstream data quality problems. That diagnosis is correct, and it is more mature than the planning that produced the problem. The original plan assumed the main work would be training and a few process tweaks, which means the actual workflow was never mapped end to end before launch. If it had been, the upstream dependencies would likely have surfaced before they became downstream problems.

This is not an uncommon pattern. Managers who are good at operational planning sometimes underestimate project planning because the two disciplines feel similar but are not. Operational planning works within a known system. Project planning creates or changes a system, and that requires a different level of preparation: breaking the work into phases, mapping what depends on what, testing assumptions before committing resources, and building checkpoints where deviation can be detected early. Your operational planning includes all of these naturally. Your project planning does not yet apply them with the same rigour.

For a manager in your position, the planning gap sits between diagnosis and execution: the translation step from identifying what needs to change to designing the phased approach that will actually change it. Strengthening that translation would reduce the number of projects that take longer than expected and fixes that need to be applied more than once.

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5. Self-Development

Competency	Self-Development
Group	Character
Current position	Established
What stands out	You changed your operating model by recognising that solving problems for your managers was creating dependency, and you persisted through the uncomfortable period of requiring them to bring options instead.

The most significant change you described in your management approach was not a technique. It was a shift in operating model: you stopped solving problems for your managers and started requiring them to bring options. You diagnosed the pattern yourself, recognising that your helpfulness was creating dependency, and you persisted through the awkward period where conversations slowed down and your team had to adjust. That kind of change is harder than learning a new skill. It requires sitting with the uncomfortable truth that something you were good at was actually counterproductive.

Your self-assessment is unusually specific. When asked what your managers would say makes their job harder, you identified three precise behaviours: asking for more detail than they think is necessary, staying in a problem too long when unconvinced, and tightening expectations abruptly when you see drift. You then did something most managers do not do: you engaged with the feedback rather than explaining it away. You acknowledged the impact while identifying the underlying intention, and you described what you are actively changing. That combination of honesty, specificity, and active remediation is a genuine strength. It suggests you can look at your own management practice as a system to be improved, not as a fixed set of personal qualities.

You also extract principles from your own successes. Your best management decision (separating the workflow streams) produced not just an operational improvement but a transferable insight about when structural change is needed. You did the same with the recurring handoff problem: when the fix did not hold, you revised your diagnosis rather than repeating the same approach.

What is less developed sits in the system you have built for learning, rather than the willingness itself. Your weekly structure does not include protected time for development. The most important change you described happened in the past, and your answers do not describe what you are currently working on improving. For someone managing at this scale, self-development needs a rhythm, not just a willingness. Your track record shows you can change when you see the need. The question is whether you have built the conditions for seeing the need before it becomes obvious. A structured habit of reviewing your own practice, even briefly and regularly, would turn an occasional discipline into a continuous one.

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6. Emotional Management

Competency	Emotional Management
Group	Character
Current position – personal	Developed
Current position – team	Established
The key finding	You have built a systematic architecture for managing your own emotional state, including preparation, real-time detection, and recovery, and you read the emotional climate around you through behavioural signals most managers would miss.

Before a day with multiple difficult conversations, you prepare each one separately the evening before. That level of deliberate preparation for the emotional demands of management is unusual, and it points to one of the strongest areas in this assessment.

You have built a system for managing your emotional state, not just composure. You map each conversation in advance: the issue, the evidence, the point that must be said clearly, and the desired outcome. Between conversations, you deliberately reset: standing, noting what happened, taking a breath. You keep the first hour of your morning light so you are not already behind when the harder work starts. You even know where the system is vulnerable: "the last conversation is usually where standards drop." That awareness of your own depletion pattern, and the fact that you plan around it, is a level of emotional self-management that most managers carrying similar responsibilities have not reached.

The clearest evidence came from your description of a bad day. Mid-morning you caught yourself: "I was carrying three conversations at once and had started answering too quickly rather than listening properly. I could feel my tone getting clipped." You detected the emotional shift while it was happening, not afterwards. You intervened: delegated the operational task, took ten minutes to reset priorities on paper, then resumed. Most importantly, you debriefed with the lead afterwards because you noticed your rushed tone had made them "more hesitant than helpful." That final step, recognising that your emotional state had affected someone else's behaviour and taking corrective action on the relationship, is the most mature indicator here.

Your ability to read the emotional climate around you is also strong. You noticed a planning cell becoming unusually defensive before anyone raised a concern, spotted it through both behavioural observation and data, and traced the cause to a specific operational problem: a planner vacancy creating resource strain. The response combined an operational fix with a behavioural standard change, addressing the concealment pattern rather than just the resourcing issue.

Where the practice is less visible is in managing the emotional dimension of larger-scale changes. You anticipated that experienced planners would resist a new process, and the change succeeded, but your answers focused more on the structural and procedural dimensions of the transition than on how you managed the emotional climate during the "noisy first two weeks." For a manager leading change across a department, the ability to hold the emotional space through a transition period, absorbing some of the discomfort without either suppressing it or retreating, is worth developing further.

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7. Power Management

Competency	Power Management
Group	Character
Current position	Established
The pattern in your answers	You draw on multiple sources of influence and can account for the cost of each transaction, but a pattern of giving extra chances before intervening on non-compliance means the signals you send are partly reactive.

Influence without authority is one of the harder middle-management tests, and your lateral approach passed it convincingly. When you needed the data and systems team to bring forward a fix, you quantified the daily rework, showed the impact on client reporting credibility, and offered one of your analysts to help validate the fix quickly. They moved it up. You can also articulate what it cost you: a delay on a dashboard change you wanted, and some of the relationship capital you had built. That combination of multiple influence tools, a clear offer of reciprocal value, and an honest accounting of the price is sophisticated lateral influence for a manager at your level.

You draw on several sources of influence consistently. Across your answers, you use expertise (the data on rework cost, the numbers on fatigue risk), legitimacy (the agreed standards you enforce), and earned respect (the consistency that built your team's trust). You do not default to positional authority or to charm. When a stores manager continued bypassing a new standard despite an agreed process, you compiled evidence, spoke to this person directly, involved your own manager, and then changed the reporting system to make the violation visible. Multiple levers, applied in sequence, with a structural fix at the end. That approach works because it does not depend on any single source of influence failing or succeeding.

You also apply the same scrutiny to yourself. When asked what your managers would say makes their job harder, you gave specific, honest answers without defensiveness. A manager who exempts themselves from the standards they hold others to loses credibility quickly, and your answers suggest you are aware of that.

Two areas to watch. First, there is a slight pattern of giving people one or two extra chances before intervening on non-compliance. You described a stores manager who breached the standard twice before you raised it formally, then a third time before the escalation. You prefer to build your evidence base before acting, which is reasonable, but at the departmental level, each unaddressed breach sends a signal to everyone who notices it. The cost of waiting extends beyond the individual case to the message the delay sends about whether the standard is real.

Second, some of the standards you have set depend on your personal attention to remain effective. This connects to a broader theme explored elsewhere in this assessment.

The personal management qualities described above shape how you think and decide. The next group of competencies examines what you have built around those qualities: the systems, rhythms, and mechanisms through which your management operates at departmental scale. Your operating system, delegation practice, and control architecture all carry the same evidence-based, structurally minded approach visible in your personal competencies, but they also reveal where the distance between personal capability and systemic reach has not fully closed.

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> *The Character competencies above show someone whose analytical and self-management capabilities are well developed and applied with consistent discipline. The Structure competencies that follow ask the architectural question: whether the operating system, regulatory mechanisms, and coordination patterns you have built carry that personal capability through to outcomes that hold without your direct attention. What follows shows where the personal capability pulls ahead of the structures it relies on.*

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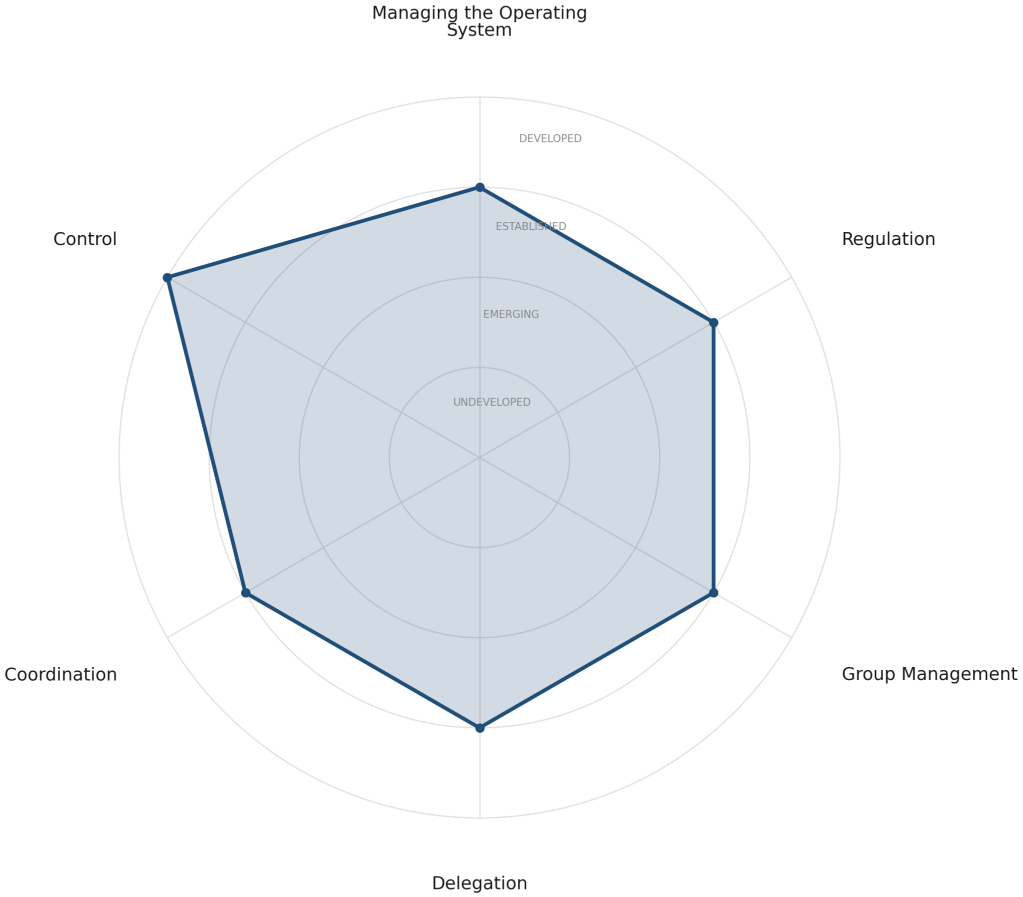
Structure: *The systems and architecture you have built*



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8. Managing the Operating System

Competency	Managing the Operating System
Group	Structure
Current position	Established
Where this sits today	The daily system runs in your absence, but the judgement standard varies because calibration still depends on your personal follow-up rather than on mechanisms your managers enforce themselves.

“The work runs without me. The judgement standard is the part that still varies.” That is your own assessment, and it is precise. You have built a functioning operating system for daily operations: the control call runs, the exception board is live, routes get dispatched, client commitments are tracked. These routines continue when you are away. That is a genuine achievement for a function of your complexity.

The standards that govern the system are concrete and behavioural. You defined them in practical terms: safe and compliant decisions, clean handoffs, accurate notes, no hidden surprises, early escalation. For your managers, you added an analytical requirement: explaining the story underneath the numbers, not just reporting the numbers. These are testable standards. Someone could observe your function for a day and tell you whether they were being met. That is a better foundation than most departments have.

The gap is at the layer above routine. When you are present, judgement calls are consistent because you set the calibration in real time. When you are not, one manager sits on issues too long while another escalates too quickly. Complex cross-functional decisions slow down. The processes run, but they run with variable quality.

This is the specific challenge for a manager at your level. Building the daily system is the first step, and you have done that well. The next step is embedding the judgement standards deeply enough that they reproduce through your managers’ own decision-making. You described how your standards are “reinforced through daily control, examples, debriefs and what I do not let slide.” The mechanism works, and it depends on your personal attention: “what I do not let slide” is inherently tied to your presence. The difference between a strong management practice and a self-sustaining operating system is whether the standards hold when the person who set them is not watching. Your system is close to that point but not yet there. The close-out note standard you described is a useful test case: the rule exists, everyone knows it, but compliance is inconsistent because enforcement depends on sustained personal attention rather than on a mechanism the team enforces among themselves.

9. Regulation

Competency	Regulation
Group	Structure
Current position	Established
The working picture	You know how to install a new standard and make it real through follow-up, but sustaining consistency on standards already in place is where the practice is less complete.

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You know how to install a new standard. When you introduced the route-change freeze, you did it in the right order: showed the problem with real data, built a simple mechanism (one visible board, named exception reasons, daily review), enforced it personally from day one, cascaded through your managers, and challenged weak exception reasons until the rule was no longer theoretical. Your own observation captures it well: “Adoption came from follow-up more than from the announcement.” That is exactly right, and most managers learn it the hard way.

It became real when people saw that it would be used to make decisions, not just referenced after things went wrong. That transition from announcement to embedded practice is the hardest part of installing any new standard, and you managed it deliberately.

Where the picture is less complete is in sustaining full consistency on standards that have been in place for some time. You described the end-of-day close-out note standard: the rule is clear, everyone knows what a good note looks like, and the business consequence of poor notes is understood. But compliance is inconsistent. Some notes are thorough; others are “just enough to get the job off the screen.” You have tried varied approaches: clearer examples, sample reviews, direct feedback, and linking note quality to rework rather than treating it as administrative hygiene. That last move was the most effective, because it connected the regulation to a consequence people care about.

The gap is in the last step: building a mechanism that makes the standard self-enforcing, so that compliance does not depend on your sustained personal follow-up. For a manager at your level, the ability to enforce a regulation is well established. The real test is whether the regulation holds when your attention moves to something else. One route forward is to shift enforcement ownership more explicitly to your subordinate managers, making their own compliance with the follow-up cycle part of their management standard, rather than treating it as something you monitor personally.

10. Group Management

Competency	Group Management
Group	Structure
Current position	Established
The signal in your practice	Your management meeting functions as a decision-making mechanism rather than a status update, and you manage the dynamics within the room, not just the agenda on the page.

What turns a management meeting into a decision-making mechanism rather than a status update? In your case, it is a fixed agenda, documented outcomes, and visible accountability between sessions. You require each manager to bring “the real story from their area rather than a surface update,” and decisions are either made in the room or assigned with a deadline and an owner. Actions go into Planner, not into private notebooks, so everyone can see what was agreed and who is responsible.

That architecture prevents the most common meeting failure: gathering, discussing, and dispersing without decisions. You have built the conditions that make it nearly impossible for this to happen.

Where the practice is strongest is in how you manage the dynamics within the meeting. When two managers disagree, you set out the problem, the measures that matter, and the constraints before inviting views. You ask each manager to argue their case including the risks of their own preferred option, which forces honest

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assessment rather than pure advocacy. You hold your own preference until both have spoken and you have tested the assumptions. After deciding, you explain the reasoning and give the dissenting manager a specific role in making the decision work.

Each of those steps matters. Holding your view back prevents your managers from trying to guess the "right answer" rather than thinking for themselves. Requiring them to name the risks of their own preferred option raises the quality of the debate. Giving the dissenter a role in implementation prevents the silent resistance that builds when someone feels overruled and ignored. For a manager at your level, this is a well-developed group management practice.

You also showed awareness of a subtler dynamic: the manager who says nothing. Rather than assuming silence means agreement, you bring them in by asking what they are seeing in execution. That reframe gives the quieter person a contribution route that fits their position, rather than forcing them to compete in a debate they are uncomfortable entering. At this level, the ability to read and manage the room, not just chair the agenda, is what distinguishes effective group management from competent meeting administration.

11. Delegation

Competency	Delegation
Group	Structure
Current position	Established
What the evidence suggests	You calibrate how you delegate based on who receives the task, you learned that calibration through failure in both directions, and you use delegation as a development tool rather than just a task-transfer mechanism.

You adjust how you delegate based on who you are delegating to, and you can explain why. For your stronger planning lead, you give context, the objective, and a deadline, then leave the method open: "I can say, 'I need a recommendation on this by Thursday and these are the boundaries,' and leave room." For a dispatch lead who is still building capability, you add more structure: scope, milestones, what "done" looks like, and an interim checkpoint where they summarise their understanding of the deliverable.

That calibration is deliberate, and it was learned through failure. You described over-briefing the stronger lead and slowing them down, and under-briefing the developing lead and getting effort that did not answer the question. Those are the two classic delegation errors, and the fact that you named them both, described the consequences, and changed your approach is the strongest evidence that this competency has been actively developed.

When you delegated a weekend cover redesign, the mechanics were precise. You set the problem, the non-negotiables, and the deadline, then deliberately withheld the method because you wanted the lead to work through the trade-offs independently. You verified their understanding by asking them to play back the task and the decisions they owned. You built in a midpoint review. When the midpoint revealed that the lead was optimising for one criterion where you needed three, you corrected the criteria without overriding the method. Each of those steps has a purpose, and together they form a delegation practice that builds capability in the person receiving the task while maintaining quality control on the output.

For a middle manager, the standard test for delegation is whether it functions as a development tool, not just a task-transfer mechanism. Your answers show that it does. You are using progressively expanding responsibility to

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build your managers' decision-making capacity, and you track the results through your one-to-one and management meeting rhythms. The developing area, noted elsewhere in this assessment, is in distributing authority for the more complex cross-functional calls. Your delegation practice is strong for the tasks and decisions within your team's span. The next frontier is extending it to the judgement-intensive work that currently comes back to you.

12. Coordination

Competency	Coordination
Group	Structure
Current position	Established
The pattern in your answers	Your internal coordination runs on a layered architecture that prevents overload, but the cross-functional boundaries are where handoff assumptions and information gaps still cause friction.

Coordination falls apart when everything happens in the same meeting or through ad hoc messages. Yours runs on multiple layers. The daily control call synchronises the operational picture. The ranked exception board makes priorities visible and specific, so teams can see what matters most today without waiting for instructions. When priorities change mid-day, you expect managers to state what drops or pauses rather than simply adding the new item to an already full list. That displacement discipline is a practical answer to one of the most common coordination failures: treating every new priority as additive until the system overloads.

In the weekly management meeting, you handle broader coordination, distinct from the daily operational rhythm. Your monthly one-to-ones close the loop on individual delegation and development. Between these, short control calls and working sessions handle live issues. This layered architecture means different types of coordination happen at the right frequency and in the right forum, rather than everything being crammed into a single meeting or a constant stream of ad hoc messages.

A one-to-one you described with a dispatch lead was a good example of how these layers work in practice. They brought their items, you pushed harder on a judgement question than they would have pushed alone, and you agreed specific, testable commitments reviewed at the next check-in. That is coordination, delegation follow-up, and development happening simultaneously in a single structured conversation. For a manager overseeing several direct reports, that kind of efficiency matters.

The area where coordination is less fully resolved is at the cross-functional boundary. You described a handoff between planning and the streetworks permit team where both sides assumed the other had checked the status. The cause was not carelessness but unclear specification at the interface: what exactly transfers, what gets verified, and who is responsible for the gap between teams. You have improved this with checklists and named owners, and you are honest that the pattern has not been fully eliminated. Within your own function, coordination is well established. The developing area is in designing the cross-functional interfaces tightly enough that assumptions at the boundary become impossible, rather than just unlikely.

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13. Control

Competency	Control
Group	Structure
Current position	Developed
The strength to build on	You monitor leading indicators to detect trajectory before it becomes a problem, you triangulate across multiple independent information channels, and you treat your own control misses as data about the system rather than excuses to dismiss.

Your approach to control starts with watching what is about to happen, rather than checking what already did. The leading indicators you track on daily and weekly cycles are designed to detect trajectory, not just outcome. You described monitoring job completion rates against plan, vehicle utilisation patterns, and the ratio of reactive to planned work, and you review these at a frequency that allows you to see drift before it becomes a problem. That forward-looking orientation is the difference between control that catches failures and control that prevents them.

When a control signal does fire, your investigation method is structured and proportionate. You described a situation where reported productivity numbers looked stable, but you noticed that the mix of work had shifted towards simpler jobs. Rather than accepting the headline figure, you pulled the underlying data, cross-referenced it with the planning schedule, and discovered that vacancy-driven capacity erosion was being masked by easier job selection. The investigation moved through hypothesis, evidence gathering, and conclusion before you acted. And when you acted, the response was calibrated to the finding: you addressed the resourcing gap rather than the numbers.

What strengthens this further is your honesty about what your controls missed. You acknowledged that the stable headline numbers had kept you comfortable for longer than they should have. That kind of self-correction is itself a control mechanism. A manager who treats a miss as data about the control system, not just about the operational problem, is actively improving the reliability of their own management.

You also integrate control into other management practices rather than treating it as a separate activity. Your delegation includes built-in checkpoints. Your one-to-ones review commitments against what was agreed. Your daily calls provide a regular verification point. This means control is distributed across your management rhythm rather than concentrated in periodic audits, which makes it harder for problems to survive undetected between formal review points.

Your use of multiple information channels adds another layer. You combine formal data, direct observation, artefact sampling, and conversational signals. You described noticing a change in the quality of language in written updates from one team, which prompted a deeper look that revealed a concealment pattern. That kind of cross-referencing across sources is characteristic of a manager whose control is embedded in how they pay attention, not just in what they formally measure.

For a manager overseeing this breadth of operation, the standard for control is maintaining accurate operational awareness across multiple workstreams without micromanaging. Your practice meets that standard. The control methods are varied, the investigation approach is disciplined, and the response is proportionate. This is one of the strongest areas in this assessment.

Your management infrastructure provides a reliable platform. The daily and weekly rhythms run, delegation is calibrated, controls are varied and proportionate. The final group of competencies examines how you use that

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platform to shape the people around you: how authority is built and maintained, how standards are enforced, how people are developed, and how conflict is handled. Your answers in this area show the same structural instinct visible throughout the assessment, applied now to the more complex terrain of human behaviour, motivation, and accountability.

> *Your structural competencies show solid foundations: the operating system functions, the regulatory cycle works, the project disciplines are forming. The Influence competencies that follow examine how authority, communication, and people management compound or constrain that structure: whether your interaction with the team accelerates the cycle from diagnosis to embedded change, or whether the lag between analysis and timely action reaches the relational side of the role too.*

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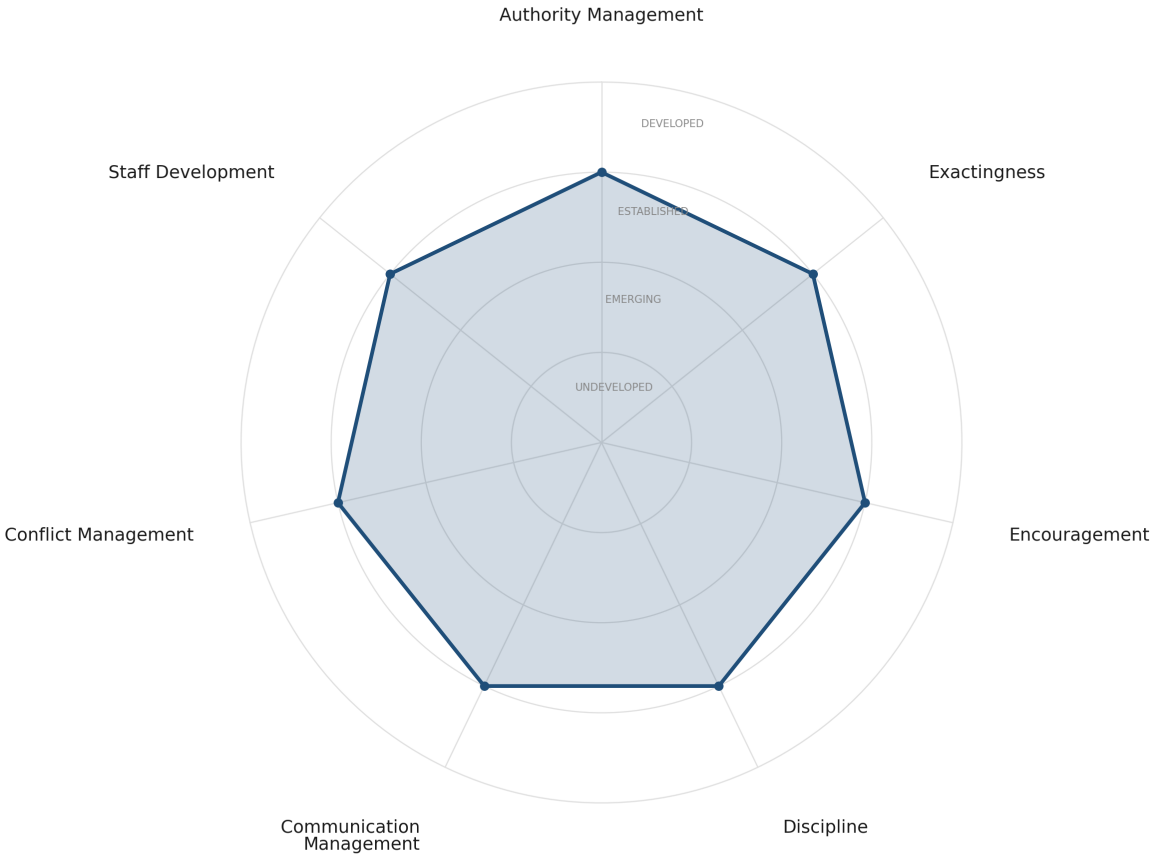
Influence: *How you lead, hold standards, and develop people*



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14. Authority Management

Competency	Authority Management
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
What your answers show	You built authority through behavioural consistency rather than assertiveness, and your willingness to correct your own mistakes publicly reinforces the standard you hold others to.

Authority earned through consistency looks different from authority claimed through position. You described a period of testing in your first three months where managers agreed in meetings and then waited to see whether you would hold the line. That testing phase is normal and expected. What matters is how you responded to it, and the answer is instructive: you built authority through behavioural consistency rather than through assertiveness or force of personality.

You backed managers who acted within the agreed standard. You did not disappear when a decision became inconvenient. You explained your reasoning rather than simply directing. Over time, the relationship shifted from polite compliance to open challenge followed by clean implementation. That shift, from testing to directness, is the signature of earned authority. Your team now challenges you because they trust that you will engage with the substance of their challenge, and they implement because they trust that decisions, once made, will hold.

The way you handled a visible mistake tested this authority in the sharpest way possible. You announced a productivity target that turned out to be too aggressive for one contract because you had not stress-tested the resource assumptions. Rather than quietly adjusting the slide deck, you corrected the figure in the next team meeting, explained what you had missed, and showed the revised reasoning. That transparency cost you some credibility in the short term, as you acknowledged, but it reinforced the authority model you had been building. A manager who holds to the same standard of honesty that they expect from their team teaches the team that the standard is real.

Another strong indicator is your capacity to support a decision you disagreed with. After presenting a data-backed alternative to your own manager on an overtime decision and receiving a hybrid outcome, you supported the final decision visibly to your team rather than signalling reluctant compliance. That discipline protects organisational authority at both levels and is one of the more demanding middle-management requirements.

Where this competency could develop further is in the interpersonal dimension of authority. Your model is built on consistency, competence, and follow-through, and these are strong foundations. What is less visible is the investment in personal connection: learning what matters to people individually, sharing your own experiences of similar challenges, or using personal knowledge as a relationship tool alongside operational reliability. At more senior levels, where the distance between you and the teams grows, the relationship dimension of authority becomes increasingly important as a complement to the consistency dimension you have already established.

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15. Exactingness

Competency	Exactingness
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
The key finding	You test the validity of a rule before enforcing it, apply a multi-dimensional quality standard, and recognise that tolerating non-compliance in one person teaches the entire department that standards are optional.

When you described how you would handle a productive manager with poor process compliance, the first thing you did was question the process itself. Before enforcing the rule, you would test whether the rule still serves its purpose, because a manager who bypasses a genuinely poor process may be exposing a problem rather than creating one. That instinct to test validity before enforcement separates exactingness from rigidity.

Once you established that the process matters, the response was clear and direct. Strong output does not buy permission to create hidden risk. That framing captures a principle that many managers at your level struggle with: tolerating non-compliance in someone who delivers results teaches the entire department that standards are optional when you perform well. You recognise this as a signal to the wider team, not just a conversation with one person.

How you handle substandard work follows the same logic. When a weekly review pack arrived with the numbers but none of the interpretation, you returned it and asked for the analysis underneath the data, not just the spreadsheet. You are specific about what is missing when you send work back: logic, clarity, ownership, risk thinking, or basic quality. That multi-dimensional quality standard means your team knows that “technically complete” is not the same as “ready to rely on.”

The way you handle time pressure is telling. When a deadline is too tight to send work back for rework, you rework it with the person present rather than fixing it alone afterwards. That approach costs you time in the short term, but it ensures the standard is still addressed even when the schedule is against you. A manager who quietly fixes poor work after hours trains the team to submit early drafts and let the manager polish them.

Your exactingness operates at three levels simultaneously: the validity of the standard, the quality of the output, and the signal your response sends to the team. That combination is what makes this one of your stronger competencies. The developing edge is in how far this extends under sustained pressure. Standards that are maintained in normal conditions but relaxed under prolonged strain are conditional standards. Your answers suggest you hold the line, but sustained pressure has not been tested in the examples you provided.

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16. Encouragement

Competency	Encouragement
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
What stands out	Your encouragement operates on two levels simultaneously: specific verbal recognition that teaches the team what behaviour is valued, and structural role redesign that builds capability over time.

Your encouragement works on two levels, and the combination is what makes it effective. The verbal dimension is precise and deliberate. When a planner surfaced a route risk early instead of trying to absorb it quietly, you praised the specific behaviour in the team huddle and followed up with a direct message so the recognition did not feel like a throwaway line in a group setting. You recalled the near-exact words: you said the problem had been brought early enough that you still had options, and that it saved the team from a miss later in the day. That specificity is what separates professional encouragement from generic approval.

What is more revealing is what happened next. Two other managers later referenced the same example when discussing escalation timing with their own teams. You noticed this cascade effect and tracked it. That tells us the praise was not just a personal gesture but a signal to the whole department about what behaviour is valued. When you praise one person publicly and specifically, you are teaching the entire team. You appear to understand that, and you use it deliberately.

The structural dimension of your encouragement is equally strong. With one of your dispatch leads, the investment was not verbal recognition but a redesign of the role around decision ownership rather than escalation comfort. You gave this person real ownership, not just additional tasks. You stopped answering every question immediately and required them to bring options. You debriefed their judgement calls regularly rather than only correcting outcomes. A year later, the observable result is faster, cleaner decisions and earlier risk escalation rather than waiting for certainty.

Your honest assessment of this development is itself a form of professional maturity. You credited the individual's own effort and the role of experience rather than claiming the improvement as entirely your doing. That honest attribution, paradoxically, makes your described contribution more credible: the speed of growth came from the structural conditions you created.

At your level, encouragement that operates on both dimensions simultaneously, verbal recognition that tells the team what behaviour is valued and structural conditions that build capability, is a strong indicator. The one area worth noting is whether the verbal dimension is applied as consistently to the people who need it most. Your examples of verbal praise are focused on strong performers. The developing managers may benefit equally from specific recognition of progress, even when the progress is incremental.

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17. Discipline

Competency	Discipline
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
The signal in your practice	You prepare disciplinary conversations with verified facts before entering the room, draw a precise distinction between intent and act, and consistently think about what your response teaches everyone else.

Your disciplinary conversation with a dispatch lead who reassigned work outside allocation rules shows what this competency looks like when it is fully operational. You prepared by checking the facts, the timeline, and the specific rule that had been breached before the conversation, not on the basis of hearsay or initial reaction. You laid out the issue, asked for their account, and let them present their framing before you responded. When the reassignment was described as pragmatic judgement, you drew a precise distinction: making private exceptions to operating rules is not judgement, it is choosing to bypass governance. That sentence separates intent, which you acknowledged, from act, which you held accountable, without attacking the person.

Preparation matters as much as the language. A disciplinary conversation that relies on impression rather than verified fact is vulnerable to reframe. Yours was not, because the material was assembled before you entered the room. The dispatch lead accepted the outcome, although uncomfortable, and that acceptance is evidence that the conversation was experienced as fair even when it was unwelcome.

Precursor signals receive equally considered attention. When asked about a long-serving team member showing early behavioural decline, your first instinct was to deal with it early and privately, and to diagnose before acting. If the change has a legitimate cause, you would work out support alongside boundaries rather than treating it purely as a conduct issue. If it does not, you would be clear about the effect on the team and monitor closely. You explicitly rejected the drift towards informal exceptions that tenure can create. Your reasoning was that others will read the tolerated behaviour as the real standard, and that is the stronger argument for early action.

What connects these examples is signal awareness. You consistently think about what your response to one person teaches everyone else. Tolerating non-compliance in a productive manager, overlooking a long-standing team member's decline, or failing to address a governance bypass all send the same message: the stated standard is not the actual standard. Your discipline practice is designed to close that gap. For a manager at your level, where you are setting the tone for several teams simultaneously, that systemic awareness is a genuine asset.

The area where visibility is thinner is in formal follow-up after the initial conversation. Your preparation and execution are well described, but the mechanisms for tracking whether the correction holds, the documented review points, agreed timelines, and consequences for recurrence, are less prominent in your answers. These may well exist in your practice, but they did not feature in the examples you chose to describe.

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18. Communication Management

Competency	Communication Management
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
The strength to build on	You have built a multi-channel detection system that catches what any single information source would miss, and you treat concealment as a separate violation from the operational problem it conceals.

If a department relies on a single channel for information, it will be blind to everything that channel misses. You have avoided this. You described a deliberate system for staying informed, built from several independent sources: data patterns compared against the spoken narrative, sitting in on control calls, occasional skip-level conversations, time spent with teams while they are working rather than only in review meetings, and sampling completed work to check whether "on track" matches the actual artefacts. Each of these channels serves a different diagnostic purpose. Data catches quantitative drift. Direct observation catches what data misses. Skip-level conversations bypass relay distortion. Artefact sampling provides an independent verification layer.

Where this architecture shows its value most clearly is when it catches something that any single channel would miss. You described discovering that engineers were using an informal code to park awkward close-outs. This did not surface in normal updates because the headline numbers still looked stable. It took the combination of data anomalies, direct conversations, and a sample review to triangulate what was actually happening. That discovery came from a functioning detection system, not from luck.

A second discovery reinforced the same pattern. One of your planning leads carried a capacity shortfall for almost a week, hoping that annual leave changes would solve it before anyone noticed. You spotted it because the aged backlog data was worsening while the update language remained oddly calm and unspecific. The mismatch between the data signal and the language signal triggered your investigation. Monitoring communication quality and tone, not just content, is a sophisticated form of information management that most managers in comparable roles do not describe.

How you handled the concealment itself was equally important. You dealt with the immediate operational problem first, then held a separate conversation about the concealment. Your framing was clear: the bigger breach was not the difficult problem itself but deciding to protect appearances by sitting on it. You then agreed a clearer trigger for when uncertainty must be escalated, even when the manager still feels responsible for solving it. That distinction between the problem and the concealment, and the norm-building that followed, is what turns an incident response into a systemic improvement.

The developing area is whether this system for staying informed scales as you move further from the operational detail. Your current channels depend on proximity: time spent with the teams, language monitoring, artefact sampling. At more senior levels, where you are further removed from the working teams, the detection mechanisms may need to be more systematically delegated or designed into your management structure rather than run personally.

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19. Conflict Management

Competency	Conflict Management
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
What the evidence suggests	You diagnose the structure before the people, which means your resolutions address root causes rather than mediate surfaces, but the timing of your structural interventions could be faster.

Most managers faced with two direct reports in dispute will try to mediate between their positions. You took a different approach. When your planning lead and dispatch lead were blaming each other over the weekend backlog, you took one real weekend and walked them both through the actual handoff sequence, changes, and decisions, replacing general accusations with specific data. The temperature dropped immediately, because both managers could see that the problem was partly mutual and partly structural. Neither was entirely wrong. The resolution was equally practical: a tighter handoff point and a single exception log. That is a mechanism, not a conversation, and it addresses the root cause rather than the relationship.

An instinct to diagnose the structure before the people is the strongest feature of this competency. For a manager at your level, where you are responsible for the interfaces between several operational teams, this instinct matters. Conflict between managers in adjacent functions is often structural before it is personal. The planning-dispatch interface is a natural friction point, and the real question is whether the interface is designed tightly enough that assumptions at the boundary become impossible. Your intervention moved the conversation from who was at fault to what was broken in the handoff, and the fix reflected that diagnosis.

Your own honest assessment adds to this picture. You said you should have forced that evidence-based conversation sooner. The intervention approach was right; the timing was the real error. Recognising that you waited too long, rather than defending the delay, is the kind of self-correction that improves future response speed.

Managing conflict upward is a different challenge, and you handle it with the same analytical discipline. When you disagreed with your manager about using sustained overtime to clear a backlog, you brought the data: repeat rework rates, fatigue risk, and projected cost. You had a concrete alternative ready, not just an objection. You got a hybrid outcome rather than your preferred answer. What happened next is the critical part: you supported the final decision visibly to your team rather than signalling reluctant compliance. That discipline protects both your authority with your team and your manager's authority over the department.

As you identified yourself, what is still developing is the speed of structural intervention. The analytical quality is strong. The question is whether you consistently act on the structural diagnosis early enough to prevent the conflict from embedding, particularly at cross-functional boundaries where the friction is persistent rather than episodic.

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20. Staff Development

Competency	Staff Development
Group	Influence
Current position	Established
The working picture	You develop four people who need four different things using four different approaches, and you use delegation as a development tool rather than a task-transfer mechanism, but the threshold for reassessing your investment in the weakest case lacks a deadline.

Adaptive development, where the approach varies with the person and the situation, is what this competency requires at your level. You described four distinct cases, each handled differently, and the variety is itself evidence of that adaptiveness.

One of your direct reports is technically excellent but developing in areas that require more interpersonal assertion: setting expectations with the people they work with, saying no early enough, and running developmental conversations. Those are three precise areas, not a generic assessment. Your development approach matches the diagnosis: you gave this person cross-functional meetings to expand their exposure, asked them to lead one part of the weekly meeting to practise presenting judgement rather than just numbers, and debriefed how they handled each. The progress is slower than their technical growth, which is a realistic calibration. The observable change is that they now enter difficult conversations earlier instead of retreating into analysis.

A second development case represents a different kind of investment. The gap was not skill but confidence and decision ownership. You redesigned the role around making decisions rather than escalating them. You stopped answering every question immediately and required this person to bring options. You debriefed their judgement regularly, focusing on the process rather than just the outcome. A year later, the result is visible: faster, cleaner decisions and earlier risk escalation.

A third case is the retention challenge. This person is ambitious, close to being ready for a bigger role, and you cannot currently offer one. Your response is a dual strategy: retention through the development they are actually asking for, cross-functional improvement work and client-facing visibility rather than a title change, alongside a contingency plan built on documented processes and cross-trained cover. Your perspective that retaining good people sometimes means helping them grow even if that ultimately takes them elsewhere is a mature and non-possessive position on talent management.

The fourth case is the most complex. This person avoids the people-accountability part of the role too often. You have them in a structured improvement phase with clear expectations and examples, and you have defined a threshold for action: repeated evidence that the gap is not moving despite support, or a stronger bench that would allow a change without shifting the burden elsewhere. You are honest that both fairness and bench strength are constraints on faster action.

Where this competency could develop further is in the threshold itself. The conditions for reassessing the investment are defined but not time-bound. Without an explicit deadline for when the structured improvement phase must show measurable results, the two constraints you named, wanting to be fair and lacking a successor, could function as compound delay mechanisms that extend the status quo beyond its useful life.

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> *Three patterns run through every group of competencies: personal capability running ahead of the systems that should carry it, operational discipline outpacing project discipline, and analytical depth that sometimes substitutes for timely structural action. The Management Readiness section that follows shows how these patterns combine across the nine responsibilities of the role, and where the cumulative effect on the function's ability to perform reliably without your personal follow-up is most visible.*

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Management Readiness

The nine responsibilities below represent the core functions of a middle manager running a multi-team operation. Each responsibility draws on a specific combination of competencies, and the readiness assessment shows how those competencies interact in practice. This is not a pass/fail judgement. It is a practical map of where your combined competencies support your management effectiveness and where specific interactions create strength or risk. All nine of your responsibilities are assessed as ready, which reflects the consistency of your competency profile.

Management Readiness Dashboard

#	Responsibility	Readiness	Primary Factor	One-Line Summary
1	Setting the Direction	**Ready**	Decision Making + Executive Planning	Strong diagnostic capability supports direction-setting; the planning that translates direction into phased execution is the constraint.
2	Task Allocation	**Ready**	Delegation + Decision Making	Calibrated delegation with well-scoped decisions; cross-functional handoff planning is the developing edge.
3	Organising Work Interaction	**Ready**	Coordination + Communication Management + Group Management	Layered coordination architecture with multi-channel information quality; cross-functional boundaries are the developing area.
4	Ensuring Task Completion	**Ready**	Control + Coordination	Strongest responsibility combination; leading-indicator control with distributed verification points.
5	Building Motivation	**Ready**	Authority Management + Encouragement	Consistency-based authority with dual-dimension encouragement; interpersonal warmth is the developing edge.
6	Shaping Interpersonal Relationships	**Ready**	Communication Management + Conflict Management	Multi-channel detection with structural conflict resolution; timeliness of structural fixes is the developing area.
7	Developing Employee Skills	**Ready**	Staff Development + Encouragement	Adaptive development across four distinct cases; time-bound thresholds for underperformance investment are the gap.
8	Assessing Interim and Final Results	**Ready**	Control + Decision Making	Strong detection-to-diagnosis-to-action sequence with self-correcting assessment methods.
9	Optimising Work Processes	**Ready**	Executive Planning + Decision Making	Strong diagnostic quality; project planning discipline is the constraining factor for sustained process improvement.

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1. Setting the Direction

Readiness: Ready

What does it mean to set a direction if the plan behind it cannot absorb the complexity of the change? Your decision quality provides a strong foundation: you identify what needs to change, separate solid information from empty, and investigate root causes rather than fighting symptoms repeatedly. When the workflow streams were competing for the same resources, you saw a design problem, chose a structural redesign, and tracked the results through specific indicators. That kind of decision, made without crisis pressure and grounded in evidence, is exactly what direction-setting at the departmental level requires.

Supporting competencies reinforce this well. Your operating system provides the structural platform on which direction is implemented. The way you cascade decisions ensures they are understood by the people who must execute them, with reasoning that travels alongside the instruction. Your lateral influence secures cooperation from teams outside your reporting line when direction requires cross-functional change.

The constraint sits in the planning that translates direction into phased execution. Your operational planning is disciplined, with daily and weekly rhythms that keep the department on track. Your project planning does not yet apply the same rigour. The mobile workflow rollout ran over because the underlying process was never mapped end-to-end before launch; assumptions about process cleanliness were not tested before resources were committed. For a middle manager setting departmental direction, the translation step from identifying what needs to change to designing the phased approach that will change it reliably is the gap. You can set the direction effectively; the risk is that the plans supporting that direction may underestimate what the change involves.

2. Task Allocation

Readiness: Ready

Because your delegation practice is calibrated to the individual, tasks land differently depending on who receives them, and that calibration is deliberate. For your stronger planning lead, you give context, the objective, and a deadline, then leave the method open. For a dispatch lead who is building capability, you add structure: scope, milestones, a definition of “done”, and an interim checkpoint where they play back their understanding. You learned this calibration through failure, having over-briefed the stronger lead and under-briefed the developing one, and changed your approach in response to both.

Your decision quality means the tasks you allocate are well chosen and properly scoped. The way you cascade decisions ensures the reasoning travels with the task. Your managers receive both the task and the context needed to execute with judgement rather than compliance.

Where these competencies interact most productively is in using delegation as a development tool. You are progressively expanding your managers’ decision-making capacity and tracking the results through your regular management rhythms. The weekend cover redesign is a clear example: you set the problem, the non-negotiables, and the deadline, then deliberately withheld the method so the lead would work through the trade-offs independently. When the midpoint review revealed that the lead was optimising for one criterion where you needed three, you corrected the criteria without overriding the method.

The developing area relates to how well complex, multi-phase allocations are supported by the planning behind them. At cross-functional boundaries, where dependencies between teams are less fully specified, the delegation itself is sound but the planning that structures the handoff may not always decompose the work to the level of detail needed for clean transfer.

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3. Organising Work Interaction

Readiness: Ready

The daily control call synchronises the operational picture. The ranked exception board makes priorities visible and specific. The weekly management meeting handles strategic coordination. The monthly one-to-ones close the loop on individual delegation and development. This layered architecture means different types of interaction happen at the right frequency and in the right forum, and your practice of requiring managers to state what drops when a new priority arrives, prevents the system from overloading silently.

Your communication management provides the information quality that keeps this architecture honest. You are not relying on what people choose to report. You combine data patterns against the spoken narrative, sit in on control calls, hold skip-level conversations, and sample completed work to check whether "on track" matches the artefacts. When one of your planning leads concealed a capacity shortfall for almost a week, it was the mismatch between worsening aged backlog data and oddly calm update language that triggered your investigation. That kind of cross-channel detection is what prevents coordination from becoming a ritual that runs without catching problems.

Your group management turns the management meeting into a decision-making mechanism. When two managers disagree, you set out the problem and the constraints, require each to argue including the risks of their own option, and give the dissenting manager a role in implementation. Your conflict management supports this by diagnosing whether tensions are structural or personal and addressing the cause rather than mediating the surface.

Across these competencies, what is still developing is at the cross-functional boundary. Internal interaction is well built. The handoff between your function and adjacent teams is where coordination gaps, communication blind spots, and unresolved structural frictions converge.

4. Ensuring Task Completion

Readiness: Ready

Among all nine responsibilities, this is where your competency combination is strongest. Your control practice is operating at the full standard expected for a middle manager: leading indicators are monitored on daily and weekly cycles, designed to detect trajectory before it becomes a problem. You track job completion rates against plan, vehicle utilisation patterns, and the ratio of reactive to planned work. When a control signal fires, your investigation is structured and proportionate: hypothesis, evidence gathering, conclusion, then a response calibrated to the finding.

Coordination provides the structured touchpoints through which control signals flow. The daily calls and weekly meetings create regular verification points, and your one-to-ones review commitments against what was agreed. This means control is distributed across your management rhythm rather than concentrated in periodic audits, which makes it harder for problems to survive undetected.

Supporting competencies complete the picture. Your exactingness means that when standards are not met, the shortfall is addressed: you return work with specific feedback on what is missing, you test rules for continued relevance before enforcing them, and you rework with the person present when time pressure prevents sending work back. Your discipline provides the accountability: fact-based preparation, the distinction between bypassing a process and making a judgement error, and an awareness that every response teaches the wider team what the

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real standard is. The combination means tasks are tracked to completion and completed to standard, with both the output and the method assessed.

The one nuance is that both your control and your exactingness currently depend partly on your personal attention. The system works well when you are present and active. The self-sustaining mechanisms that would maintain the same standard in your absence are still developing.

5. Building Motivation

Readiness: Ready

When a planner surfaced a route risk early rather than absorbing it quietly, you praised the specific behaviour in the team huddle and followed up with a direct message so the recognition did not feel like a throwaway line. Two other managers later referenced the same example when discussing escalation timing with their own teams. That cascade, from your specific recognition through to your managers' own conversations, is how motivation works at the departmental level: you are teaching the entire department what behaviour is valued.

Authority gives this recognition credibility. Your team moved from polite compliance to open challenge followed by clean implementation because they saw that you hold the line, support decisions even when you disagree with the outcome, and correct your own mistakes publicly when you get something wrong. Recognition from a manager whose standards are seen as real carries weight that generic praise cannot.

The structural dimension of your encouragement adds further depth. With your dispatch lead, the investment was a redesign of the role around decision ownership rather than escalation comfort. You stopped answering every question immediately, required them to bring options, and debriefed their judgement regularly. A year later, the result is visible: faster, cleaner decisions and earlier risk escalation. That kind of growth comes from the conditions you created, which is a form of encouragement more durable than any verbal recognition.

Your emotional self-management means your authority is not undermined by composure losses, and your recognition is specific and credible because you know what is actually happening through your communication channels, rather than relying on what is reported.

The developing area is in the interpersonal warmth that connects at a personal level. Your authority model is built on reliability and competence. Learning what matters to people individually, beyond their work performance, is the relational dimension that becomes increasingly important at more senior levels for sustaining motivation through periods where structural investment alone is insufficient.

6. Shaping Interpersonal Relationships

Readiness: Ready

If you can see problems that others miss and intervene before they embed, the quality of relationships in your department becomes a managed outcome rather than a fortunate accident. Your ability to read multiple channels at once catches what any single channel would miss. The informal code engineers were using to park awkward close-outs did not surface in normal updates because the headline numbers still looked stable. It took data anomalies, direct conversations, and a sample review to triangulate what was actually happening. That ability to detect what is really happening is the foundation of relationship management at the departmental level: you know the real state of things, which means your interventions are grounded in reality rather than in the version people present.

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Your conflict management adds the structured diagnostic approach that matters at cross-functional boundaries. When your planning lead and dispatch lead were blaming each other over the weekend backlog, you walked them through the actual handoff sequence with real data rather than mediating between positions. The temperature dropped because both could see the problem was partly mutual and partly structural. The resolution was a tighter handoff point and a single exception log: a mechanism that addresses the root cause rather than the relationship.

Your authority credibility means these interventions carry weight. When you restructure a process or require a behavioural change, people comply because the standard is seen as real. Your emotional composure means you can hold space in charged conversations without your own state distorting the outcome. You dealt with the planner's concealment of a capacity shortfall by addressing the operational problem first, then holding a separate conversation about the concealment itself: the bigger breach was deciding to protect appearances, and the norm you built afterwards specified when uncertainty must be escalated even when the manager still feels responsible for solving it.

The developing area, as noted in the Conflict Management assessment, is in how quickly the accurate diagnosis translates into a structural fix at cross-functional boundaries. Your detection and analysis are strong; the remaining step is closing the interval between seeing the problem and installing the mechanism that prevents it from recurring.

7. Developing Employee Skills

Readiness: Ready

How do you develop four people who need four different things? Your answer shows adaptive development in practice. One direct report is technically excellent but developing in interpersonal assertion: you gave them cross-functional meetings for exposure and asked them to lead part of the weekly meeting to practise presenting judgement rather than numbers. A second needed confidence and decision ownership: you redesigned the role around making decisions rather than escalating them, stopped answering every question immediately, and debriefed their judgement regularly rather than correcting outcomes. A third is ambitious and close to being ready for a bigger role you cannot currently offer: your response combines retention through the development they are actually asking for with a contingency plan built on documented processes and cross-trained cover. The fourth avoids the people-accountability part of the role too often: you have them in a structured improvement phase with clear expectations.

Encouragement supports this by reinforcing the right behaviours. When development progress is visible, your recognition is specific enough to teach the person (and the wider team) what mattered about the improvement.

A willingness to examine and change your own practice gives you credibility in these conversations. You can ask your managers to look honestly at their own gaps because you have done the same: you recognised that your helpfulness was creating dependency, and you persisted through the uncomfortable period of requiring options rather than answering questions.

The developing area connects to the planning that structures development investment. The threshold for reassessing the fourth case has conditions but no timeline. Without an explicit deadline for when the structured improvement phase must show measurable results, the two constraints you named, wanting to be fair and lacking a successor, could function as delay mechanisms that extend the status quo beyond its useful life.

8. Assessing Interim and Final Results

Readiness: Ready

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The productivity investigation tells the story of how these competencies work together. Reported numbers looked stable, but you noticed that the work mix had shifted towards simpler jobs. Rather than accepting the headline figure, you pulled the underlying data, cross-referenced it with the planning schedule, and discovered that vacancy-driven capacity erosion was being masked by easier job selection. Your control detected the signal; your decision-making diagnosed the cause; your response was calibrated to the finding rather than to the surface data. That sequence, from detection through diagnosis to proportionate action, is what assessment of results looks like when it functions well at the departmental level.

Your exactingness ensures that assessment is held to a standard beyond the numbers. You return work that meets the headline target but misses the underlying quality: logic, clarity, ownership, or risk thinking. Your approach is that “technically complete” is a different thing from “ready to rely on.” This multi-dimensional standard means your assessments catch problems that a purely quantitative review would miss.

Your self-development at the mid range within established practice brings an important quality to this responsibility: you apply the same scrutiny to your own assessment methods. When you recognised that the stable numbers had kept you comfortable for longer than they should have, you treated the miss as information about your own control system. A manager who examines what their monitoring failed to catch is actively improving the reliability of their own assessment, which compounds over time.

The supporting competencies reinforce the primaries without creating risk. Your overall ability to assess results for this responsibility is strong, and the competency interaction is mutually reinforcing rather than compensatory.

9. Optimising Work Processes

Readiness: Ready

Separating reactive dispatch from planned scheduling was a structural redesign that addressed the systemic cause rather than managing the symptoms. That decision tells you something about the interaction between your planning and your decision-making when they work together well: the diagnosis was accurate, the solution was structural, and you tracked the results through specific indicators rather than relying on a general sense that things improved.

Your decision-making is the stronger half of this combination. You identify what needs to change, revise your diagnosis when the first fix does not hold (the recurring handoff problem that has been “solved multiple times in theory”), and investigate root causes rather than repeating the same approach with more effort. That diagnostic quality is essential for process optimisation at the departmental level.

Your planning is the constraining half. The mobile workflow rollout is the clearest illustration: the direction was right, the diagnosis was correct, but the execution plan underestimated the complexity of the change because the underlying process was never mapped end-to-end before launch. Process optimisation at the middle management level requires designing phased approaches that survive contact with the reality of the process being changed, and that means testing assumptions before committing resources and building checkpoints where deviation can be detected early.

The three supporting competencies, all solid but mid-range in practice, create a related pattern. Your operational management rhythms and personal development practice are solid, but forward-looking and project work is the first thing squeezed when operational pressure rises. Process optimisation is inherently long-horizon work. This responsibility is functional, and the analytical quality underpinning it is strong, but it is the one most likely to underperform if the planning gap and the time-protection gap are not addressed together.

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Overall Responsibility Summary

All nine responsibilities are assessed as ready. This is a strong profile for a middle manager and reflects the consistency of your competency base: no single competency falls below the established standard, and two meet the full standard for your role level. Ensuring Task Completion and Assessing Interim and Final Results stand out as particular strengths, both anchored by your control practice. The recurring constraint across Setting the Direction, Task Allocation, Developing Employee Skills, and Optimising Work Processes is Executive Planning. It is the lowest-positioned competency in this assessment and the one that limits multiple responsibilities simultaneously. Closing the planning gap would have disproportionate effect because the same competency gates four different responsibilities. A second systemic pattern is the personal-attention dependency: your standards hold when you are present and attentive, but the mechanisms for sustaining them without your direct involvement are not yet fully built. Addressing this would strengthen every responsibility that depends on your operating system functioning independently.

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Development Plan

Your assessment shows a strong and consistent management profile. Every competency meets a functioning professional standard, with two at the full standard for your role level. The development plan that follows is designed to close the specific gaps that prevent your strongest competencies from reaching their full effect, rather than to address weaknesses. The plan is built in three phases: immediate actions you can start this week, structural changes to embed over the first year, and sustained development over two years.

First 90 Days: *Immediate actions you can start this week*

Priority	Development Action	Linked Competency	Mode	How You'll Know It's Working
1	Before your next project or change initiative, map the full end-to-end process you are changing on paper. Walk each step with the people who do the work and ask: "What actually happens here, and what depends on what?" Do not commit resources until you can describe every handoff and every assumption the plan relies on. Test at least three assumptions by checking them against real data or direct observation before launch.	Executive Planning	Independent	Your project timelines start hitting their original estimates more often. Track: for each project over the next 90 days, record the original timeline and the actual completion date. If you mapped the process end-to-end before starting, compare the variance against projects where you did not.
2	Block two hours per week in your calendar for longer-horizon and project work. Treat this time with the same protection you give the Tuesday management meeting: it does not get cancelled, only compressed if genuinely necessary. Use the time for the planning, review, and improvement work that currently gets squeezed when operational pressure rises.	Self-Organisation	Independent	You complete at least six of eight scheduled blocks in the first two months. Track the number of blocks protected versus rescheduled or cancelled. If the number drops below 75%, investigate what displaced them and whether the displacement was genuinely unavoidable.

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Priority	Development Action	Linked Competency	Mode	How You'll Know It's Working
3	Pick one recurring cross-functional handoff that has caused friction in the past three months. Map the full handoff sequence with the people on both sides. Identify every point where information is lost, delayed, or assumed rather than confirmed. Design one structural fix (a shared checklist, a single point of confirmation, or a defined escalation trigger) and install it with a 30-day review date.	Executive Planning (Decision Making)	Independent	The specific handoff runs without unplanned rework for three consecutive weeks. Track rework incidents at that handoff point weekly. After 30 days, compare the count against the previous three months.
4	For one of your subordinate managers, define three specific situations where they should make the call themselves rather than escalating to you. Write these down, share them, and review the results in your next three one-to-ones. Adjust the boundaries based on what you see.	Managing the Operating System	Independent	Your manager makes at least two independent decisions in those defined areas within the first month without reverting to you. In your one-to-ones, review the decisions they made: were they sound? Where the call was wrong, was the error in judgement or in scope?
5	At the end of each week, spend 15 minutes reviewing how you spent your time against how you planned to spend it. Note specifically: how much time went to operational work, how much to management work, and how much to longer-horizon or project work. Do this for eight consecutive weeks to build a baseline you can manage against.	Self-Organisation	Independent	After eight weeks, you have a clear picture of where your time actually goes. The ratio of non-operational to operational time should be moving, even slightly, in the direction you want. If it is not, the data itself will tell you where the compression is happening.

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Year One: *Building new systems and practices*

Priority	Development Action	Linked Competency	Mode	How You'll Know It's Working
1	Build a project planning checklist that you use before committing to any initiative longer than two weeks. The checklist should include: process mapping completed, dependencies identified, assumptions listed and tested, phased milestones defined, and a checkpoint where you can detect deviation early enough to correct it. Use it on at least three projects over the year and refine it after each one.	Executive Planning	Independent	By the third project, the checklist catches at least one assumption you would previously have missed. Track: for each project, record how many assumptions the checklist surfaced that you had not considered, and whether any of those would have caused delay if left untested.
2	Extend your management rhythm to include a monthly strategic review. This is not an operational review. It is 60-90 minutes where you step back and ask: what is working, what is drifting, what needs to change in the next quarter? Protect it with the same discipline you apply to the daily control call.	Self-Organisation (Executive Planning)	Guided coaching recommended	Keep a log of decisions made during each monthly review. After six months, count the decisions that led to a change in how your function operates. Target: at least two changes that would not have happened without the review. If the log shows zero changes after three months, examine whether you are using it as a status meeting rather than a thinking session.
3	For each of your subordinate managers, define the judgement standard that their area must meet when you are not present. Write it as a set of specific situations and the expected response: "When X happens, the standard is Y." Review these standards quarterly in your one-to-ones and adjust them as each manager's capability develops.	Managing the Operating System	Independent	When you take a week away, the quality of decisions in your absence is visibly closer to the quality when you are present. Ask your managers to log the three hardest calls they made in your absence. Review the log against the standards you defined.

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Priority	Development Action	Linked Competency	Mode	How You'll Know It's Working
4	Before any significant decision on a project or change initiative, spend 30 minutes imagining the project has already failed. List the five most likely reasons. Then check whether your current plan addresses each one. If it does not, adjust before you proceed.	Executive Planning (Decision Making)	Independent	Track each time this exercise changes your plan before launch. Log what the change was and what it would have cost to discover later. Target: at least one plan change per quarter. After three projects, compare the variance between planned and actual timelines on projects where you ran this exercise versus projects where you did not.
5	Shift enforcement of one established standard (such as the close-out note quality) from your personal follow-up to your subordinate managers' management rhythm. Define what "enforced" looks like for them, set a review date, and measure compliance through the same channels you currently use yourself.	Regulation (Managing the Operating System)	Independent	Compliance on the transferred standard holds at or above its current level for three consecutive months without your direct involvement. Track compliance weekly using your existing data channels. If it drops, investigate whether the issue is the manager's enforcement or the mechanism you gave them.
6	Read the first book in the Resources table below (*Critical Chain*). Focus on how the scheduling and buffer concepts apply to your project planning. After reading, apply one idea from the book to your next project and note what changed.	Executive Planning	Independent	You can describe, in your own words, how the scheduling approach would have changed the mobile workflow rollout. Apply the concept to one real project and compare the result against your previous planning approach.

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Two-Year Horizon: *Sustained development and deepening capability*

Priority	Development Action	Linked Competency	Mode	How You'll Know It's Working
1	Build a structured self-development rhythm: once per month, review one specific aspect of your own management practice. Choose the aspect in advance, collect evidence during the month (decisions made, feedback received, outcomes observed), and draw one conclusion you can act on. This turns the honest self-examination you already do occasionally into a continuous system.	Self-Development	Guided coaching recommended	Keep a written log of each monthly review: the aspect examined, the evidence collected, the conclusion, and the change made. After 12 months, count the changes that stuck for at least three months. Target: at least three sustained changes. If the log shows fewer than one change per quarter, narrow the scope of each review so the conclusion is more actionable.
2	Extend your project planning discipline to your subordinate managers. Require them to produce a process map and assumption list before launching any initiative in their area. Review the first three with them in detail; after that, review by exception.	Executive Planning (Staff Development)	Independent	Your managers produce process maps and assumption lists without prompting. Track: after six months, count how many of their projects were planned using the framework versus how many reverted to the previous approach.

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Priority	Development Action	Linked Competency	Mode	How You'll Know It's Working
3	Develop the interpersonal dimension of your authority. You have built strong professional credibility through consistency and competence. The next layer is learning what matters to each of your direct reports beyond their work performance, what motivates them personally, what pressures they carry outside the role, and how that affects their engagement over time. Schedule one conversation per quarter with each direct report that is explicitly not about work performance.	Authority Management (Encouragement)	Independent	Start a simple tally now: each time a direct report raises a personal or motivational concern before it affects performance, mark it. Also mark each time you discover such a concern only through performance signals. After 12 months, compare the ratio. Target: the proactive count exceeds the reactive count by the end of the period. If the ratio is not shifting after six months, review whether the quarterly conversations are creating enough trust for early disclosure.
4	Address the recurring cross-functional handoff problem with a coordinated system rather than sequential fixes. Map all the handoff points between your function and adjacent teams. Identify which ones fail most often, diagnose whether the cause is process, information, or accountability, and design fixes that address the root cause for each. Review progress quarterly.	Executive Planning (Coordination)	Guided coaching recommended	The number of recurring cross-functional issues that have been "solved before" decreases measurably over 12 months. Track: maintain a log of cross-functional incidents and tag each as new or recurring. The recurring count should trend downward.

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Resources

Development Priority	Resource	Type	Why This Resource
Executive Planning	*Critical Chain* by Eliyahu M. Goldratt	Book	Your assessment identified project planning as the widest gap: the mobile workflow rollout ran over because assumptions were not tested before resources were committed. This book provides the exact planning discipline your assessment found missing: realistic scheduling, buffer management, and detecting deviation before it becomes delay.
Executive Planning, Decision Making	*The Goal* by Eliyahu M. Goldratt	Book	Your diagnostic ability is strong, but the recurring handoff problem shows that sequential fixes without constraint thinking allow root causes to persist. This book teaches you to find the single constraint that limits the system, which directly addresses the distance between your sharp diagnosis and the coordinated fix your assessment identified as the next step.
Self-Organisation	*First Things First* by Stephen R. Covey, A. Roger Merrill, and Rebecca R. Merrill	Book	Your assessment found that longer-horizon and project work is the first casualty under pressure. This book provides the priority management framework that protects important-but-not-urgent work from being displaced by operational demand, directly addressing the time protection gap.
Managing the Operating System	*High Output Management* by Andy Grove	Book	Your operating system works when you are present; the gap is embedding the judgement standard so it holds in your absence. This framework for management as a production function, including performance indicators, variable inspection, and delegation through subordinate managers, maps directly to the self-sustaining system your assessment identified as the next development target.
Self-Development, Authority Management	*The Effective Executive* by Peter F. Drucker	Book	Your self-assessment is unusually honest and specific. This book deepens the discipline of contribution-focused management and structured self-examination, building on the strength your assessment already identified while providing the systematic framework your current practice lacks.
Managing the Operating System, Regulation	*Out of the Crisis* by W. Edwards Deming	Book	Your close-out note standard illustrates the gap between a rule that exists and one that enforces itself. This systems thinking explains why personal follow-up cannot sustain quality at scale, and how to design processes where the system, not the manager, holds the standard.

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Development Priority	Resource	Type	Why This Resource
Conflict Management, Power Management	*It's Not Luck* by Eliyahu M. Goldratt	Book	Your conflict resolution is already structurally sound. This book introduces the method of resolving conflicts by surfacing and challenging the assumptions beneath each position, rather than mediating between them, which directly extends your current diagnostic approach.
All development priorities	Business Fortification coaching programme (Greg Kurnikov)	Coaching	This report identifies what to work on. The coaching programme provides structured guidance on how to work on it, with accountability and expert support over 12 months. The programme's three coaching toolkits map directly to the Character, Structure, and Influence development areas identified in this assessment.

Aspects of this assessment draw on the work of Aleksandr Fridman. For more information: https://www.asfridman.com/

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Next Steps

Your single most important first step is the first item in the 90-day plan: before your next project or change initiative, map the full end-to-end process on paper, walk each step with the people who do the work, and test your assumptions before committing resources.

Return to this report at 30, 90, and 180 days. At each point, re-read the development plan and check your own progress using the "How You'll Know It's Working" indicators. The patterns you see in your own progress will tell you more than any single reading.

This report identifies what to work on. If you want structured guidance on how to work on it, with accountability and expert support, that is what the Business Fortification coaching programme is designed for. To discuss how the programme connects to your specific findings, contact Greg Kurnikov at greg.kurnikov@odexpert.co.uk.

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Reference: Competency Definitions

#	Competency	What It Measures
1	Decision Making	How you think through problems, weigh options, and arrive at sound decisions under real conditions
2	Presentation of Decisions	How effectively you structure and present your thinking to gain genuine agreement, not just compliance
3	Self-Organisation	How you manage your own time, priorities, and working rhythms to ensure the most important work gets done
4	Executive Planning	How you plan beyond the immediate: building phased approaches, anticipating obstacles, and designing control points that detect problems early
5	Self-Development	How honestly you assess your own practice, how actively you work to improve it, and whether you have built the conditions for continuous learning
6	Emotional Management	How you manage your own emotional state under pressure (personal) and how you read and shape the emotional climate around you (team)
7	Power Management	How you build and use influence, manage relationships with authority, and read the political environment to position yourself and your function effectively
8	Managing the Operating System	How you design and maintain the principles, standards, and rules that govern how work gets done in your area, and whether those standards hold without your personal presence
9	Regulation	How you create, install, and sustain the specific rules and procedures that shape behaviour and culture across your function
10	Group Management	How you manage your team as a collective: meeting architecture, group dynamics, decision-making processes, and the informal structures that shape how people work together
11	Delegation	How you assign work with the right level of clarity, purpose, authority, and control, balancing autonomy with oversight and using delegation as a development tool
12	Coordination	How you keep work aligned across people and teams during execution: resolving emerging issues, providing support, and ensuring that changing priorities are communicated clearly
13	Control	How you monitor progress and outcomes without micromanaging: the indicators you watch, the channels you use, and how you respond when something is off track
14	Authority Management	How you build and maintain authority through your actions, consistency, competence, and genuine investment in the people you lead
15	Exactingness	How you set and hold high standards, how you respond when standards are not met, and whether you provide the resources and support needed to meet those standards

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#	Competency	What It Measures
16	Encouragement	How you recognise and reinforce good work: the specificity, timing, and credibility of your recognition, and whether you create the structural conditions for people to grow
17	Discipline	How you address underperformance, rule breaches, and behavioural standards: the fairness, proportionality, and consistency of your approach
18	Communication Management	How you stay informed about what is really happening in your area: the channels you maintain, the quality of information you receive, and how you handle gaps between what is reported and what is real
19	Conflict Management	How you handle disagreements and tensions: whether you diagnose the structural cause, choose the right resolution strategy, and act early enough to prevent friction from embedding
20	Staff Development	How you identify and develop the people in your team: the specificity of your development plans, how you adapt your approach to each person, and whether your investment produces measurable growth

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