



## Introduction

This document is for SSC staff and partners who engage with employers on Management and Leadership (M&L) development. It aims to help you find appropriate diagnostic tools to analyse your employer's M&L skills gap. Its purpose is to help you be more confident and credible when talking to employers and be able to offer guidance based on real evidence.

## Contents

Introduction .....	1
Contents .....	1
Background .....	1
What are diagnostics and diagnostic tools? .....	1
Types of diagnostic.....	2
What works best?.....	2
Advantages of using diagnostics for skills assessments .....	3
Barriers.....	4
English Region diagnostic tools .....	5
General M&L Diagnostics.....	6

## Background

Management and Leadership diagnostics help SSC staff and their partners assist employers in assessing the skills gaps that exist at all levels of their organisation, starting from first level manager all the way up to the Managing Director.

Managers are often not aware they have leadership and management development needs and, if they do, they often do not know specifically what they might be. In some cases they refuse to believe that they have any development needs. A diagnostic tool can help identify and determine what these development needs are and, in many cases, convince managers that they do have skills gaps to address.

## What are diagnostics and diagnostic tools?

Diagnostics can take the form of company-wide Training Needs Analysis (TNAs), or can look specifically at individuals, no matter what their level of seniority.

If a manager is unsure of their M&L development needs a diagnostic, performed with a diagnostic tool, can assist in identifying the exact areas in which they need to 'up-skill' and improve.

Tools can help identify any gaps that exist between a manager's current skills base, and the competencies which are necessary for them to successfully carry out their roles. Diagnostics can also help identify personal leadership and management aspirations.

A diagnostic tool can help SSC staff and their partners:

- Analyse the business goals and the skills required by the manager to meet those goals
- Determine what information or training managers require to be effective in their roles
- Evaluate what skills the managers have and determine where their skills gaps are
- Decide which learning method will be preferred by the manager
- Determine the amount of resource a manager can afford to allocate to their skills needs in terms of both funding and time

## Guide to Diagnostics

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Once the diagnostic is complete it will translate into a set of outcomes, usually encapsulated in a Personal Development Plan (PDP). This will address the above points, and then help determine the following:

- Evaluate what training the business itself can provide in-house
- Help the manager seek guidance on which training providers or consultants can plug these gaps
- Help the manager choose the correct training to suit their needs

SSC staff and their partners may then offer to help identify appropriate provision and support the manager in making an informed decision when choosing a provider.

### Types of diagnostic

Diagnostic tools can range from of a set of broad topics, which you then discuss with the manager, to a formalised on-line questionnaire. Diagnostic tools broadly fall into one of the following categories:

- Formal questionnaires
- Informal discussions
- On-line diagnostics
- Psychometric testing
- Brainstorming Sessions

There are also various methods by which the diagnostics can be delivered. This will usually be determined by the tool being used, but common examples include:

- Face-to-face discussion
- Telephone-based discussion
- Analysing self-completion questionnaires
- Brainstorming sessions with participant
- Assisting participants to complete their own assessment
- Workshop scenario: one-to-many session

In essence, diagnostics vary greatly in scope and intensity. There is no set formula for what classifies as a diagnostic tool. Some can be performed in-depth and take up to two days to complete; others can be light-touch, such as BITE, and be completed within an hour. In some cases diagnostic tools can be used to complement one another: a light-touch tool can be used as a 'taster' to encourage the participant to carry out a more in-depth diagnostic.

### What works best?

- Anecdotal evidence suggests light-touch tools are more popular among managers than their more in-depth alternatives<sup>1</sup>. This is a reflection on the regularly quoted fact that managers lack the time to commit themselves to intensive skills assessments.
- The role of a consultant in providing one-to-one support, in a face-to-face session, is often cited as being essential in helping the manager understand what the diagnostic is asking and any results that it produces. This is supported by anecdotal evidence gathered on the LSC/DfES L&M Programme, which cited that

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<sup>1</sup> CFE L&M Evaluation

## Guide to Diagnostics

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managers lack the time and motivation to complete a skills assessment using on-line diagnostic tools<sup>2</sup>.

- Diagnostic assessments do not necessarily require the use of a diagnostic tool. Managers may prefer not to use a tool, or you might feel that using a tool might not be appropriate. Therefore the diagnostic could take the form of an informal discussion around relevant issues. You can then draw out the development needs from the discussion and help produce a PDP.
- Bespoke tools, developed for specific programmes, such as the STAP or RTS tools, or enhanced versions of existing tools, are often received well by managers as they can be tailored specifically to their needs.
- The length of time required to conduct a diagnostic can determine the success of the tool, as managers often have many competing pressures on their time. Evidence collected on the DfES/LSC L&M Programme found 62% of intermediaries conducted diagnostics with managing directors that took between 1 and 2 hours to complete<sup>3</sup>. Diagnostics that took half a day or more to complete were less popular, with only 10% of intermediaries using them.
- In essence, what works for one manager might not work for another. Therefore the most effective approach to diagnostics is to offer the participant a choice of tools and a choice of delivery methods. Focusing only one tool will mean it will not be to the liking of all managers.
- Flexibility is the key to providing a diagnostic to managers that they are happy with.
- The most significant factor to consider is that the results of the diagnostic are more important than the type of diagnostic used. The production of a PDP as an outcome of the diagnostic process is deemed important in helping managers to understand, and then prioritise, their skills development needs.

### Advantages of using diagnostics for skills assessments

- The DfES/LSC L&M Programme evaluation found that a significant proportion of managing directors, some 38%<sup>4</sup>, were already aware of their development needs prior to undertaking a skills assessment. However, it was also noted that confirmation of needs, that MDs were already aware of, was seen as beneficial in giving them the confidence to source provision to address those needs<sup>5</sup>.
- The DfES/LSC L&M programme evaluation also found that in 60% of cases the skills assessment 'identified at least some needs that the participant was unaware of at the time'<sup>6</sup>.
- In some cases managers might believe they have specific skills needs they need to address, while the diagnostic draws out other, deep-seated, needs which have not previously been considered.
- The assessment/diagnostic process can also lead to the identification of potential approaches to address the relevant skills needs, meaning an assessment/diagnostic should be seen as 'a means to an end', rather than 'an end in itself'<sup>7</sup>.
- Often, the process of going through a diagnostic can in itself be beneficial as it provides an opportunity to reflect on skills and abilities. It allowed managers to

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<sup>2</sup> CFE L&M Evaluation

<sup>3</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation – Intermediary Survey

<sup>4</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation

<sup>5</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation

<sup>6</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation

<sup>7</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation

## Guide to Diagnostics

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take time to look at themselves, and concentrate on their own development rather than focusing solely on the needs of their business in general.

- Anecdotal evidence collected on the DfES/LSC L&M Programme suggested that, although a £1,000 grant was made available to address development needs, one of the most advantageous aspects was the diagnostic assessment process.

### Barriers

It is not uncommon for managers to be unwilling to undertake a diagnostic with a Broker.

Various reasons cited by managers often include:

**Barrier:** “I don’t have the time to undertake an assessment”

**Solution:** Most diagnostics only take between 1 – 2 hours and can benefit the leader/manager in the long term by investing a small amount of time up front.

**Barrier:** “I don’t have any leadership and management skills needs”

**Solution:** A diagnostic can help identify skills needs that managers didn’t know, or weren’t willing to admit, that they had. The DfES/LSC L&M programme evaluation found that in 60% of cases a skills assessment ‘identified at least some needs that the participant was unaware of at the time’<sup>8</sup>.

**Barrier:** “I already know what my leadership and management skills needs are”

**Solution:** Even if a diagnostic does not uncover any additional skills needs, the LSC/DfES L&M Programme found that the confirmation of their needs, through a diagnostic, often gave managers the confidence to source provision to address their needs<sup>9</sup>.

**Barrier:** “I don’t want to pay for a diagnostic”

**Solution:** The time, and small amount of money, invested in the process can benefit the manager for many years.

or,

Once the organisation’s needs have been assessed, the you could advise/encourage the manager to consider their own development needs.

**Barrier:** “I only want my staff assessed: I don’t need to be”

**Solution:** Advise that skills provision and management are important elements in increasing productivity (Leitch Review), and training and development at the top level can encourage a culture of learning and development to cascade down through the organisation.

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<sup>8</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation

<sup>9</sup> York Consulting L&M Final Evaluation

## Guide to Diagnostics

### English Region diagnostic tools

All regions diagnose the skills needs of organisations, using a Train to Gain Organisational Needs Analysis (ONA). In many cases these ONAs have the ability to identify L&M skills needs. Tools vary slightly across the regions, but essentially they all achieve the same final product: an analysis of an organisation's skills gaps.

In addition to ONAs, regions also use a wide range of diagnostic tools to specifically diagnose M&L skills needs of managers and management teams. These include<sup>10</sup>:

Region	Diagnostic Process / Diagnostic Tools Used
East of England	Management TNA, based on the Management Standards developed by the Management Standards Centre (MSC).
London	'Individual Training Assessment' forms basis of discussion to diagnose L&M needs of managers.
North East	IIP UK business improvement tool <a href="http://diagnostic.iipuk.co.uk/">http://diagnostic.iipuk.co.uk/</a> L&M assessments also conducted by brokered-in organisations, which managers pay for themselves.
East Midlands	Exponential Management Perspectives 360 degree appraisal tool used to diagnose L&M needs ( <a href="http://www.managementperspectives.co.uk">http://www.managementperspectives.co.uk</a> )
South East	The Balanced Wheel diagnostic, developed for use on L&M Business Leaders programme
South West	SW Organisational L&M programme uses the STAP online tool developed with Survey Shack.
West Midlands	West Midlands' L&M BITE (Business Improvement Tool for Entrepreneurs) tool IIP UK's business improvement diagnostic Thomas International
Yorkshire & Humberside	An online TNA process, linking to the major competencies in the CMI framework ( <a href="http://www.mytna.org.uk">www.mytna.org.uk</a> ) The Adaptability Index ( <a href="http://www.adaptabilityindex.com">www.adaptabilityindex.com</a> )
North West	BITE diagnostic; a regionally developed L&M paper based diagnostic

<sup>10</sup> Tools listed are examples of those being used by each region, but is not an exhaustive list. Other tools (not listed) are also used across the brokerage network and the inclusion here does not necessarily suggest that these tools are better than those not mentioned.

## Guide to Diagnostics

### General M&L Diagnostics

A selection of general M&L diagnostic tools used by staff on the LSC/DfES L&M Programme is presented in the table below. They are diagnostic tools that can be undertaken specifically with managers. The list is not exhaustive, nor does it imply that the tools listed here are better than any others that are available on the market.

Diagnostic tool	Comments
ASSESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers a complete suite of tools that can be used to support each part of the leadership development cycle.</li> <li>Organisations, and managers, can choose to use one or more of the ASSES tools, depending on their specific needs:</li> <li>Development &amp; 360 reports identify strengths and weaknesses in different competencies.</li> <li>Selection reports to identify candidates with the highest potential.</li> </ul> <p>Contact Details: E-mail Liz McCormac on: <a href="mailto:mccormac@btconnect.com">mccormac@btconnect.com</a> Telephone Liz McCormac on: 07710 278927 <a href="http://www.bigby.com/assess/mdt">www.bigby.com/assess/mdt</a></p>
BITE (Business Improvement Tool for Entrepreneurs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal and light touch diagnostic, developed by CEML</li> <li>Works well in group or peer setting</li> <li>Positive feedback from areas delivering L&amp;M Programme</li> <li>Useful 'first time' tool, often used as a pre-diagnostic</li> </ul> <p>Contact via: <a href="http://www.managementandleadershipcouncil.org.uk/bite/bite01.htm">www.managementandleadershipcouncil.org.uk/bite/bite01.htm</a></p>
CMI SMART Management Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Takes approximately 2.5 hours to complete, does not result in PDP</li> <li>Identifies issues but not solutions</li> </ul> <p>Contact via: <a href="http://cpd.managers.org.uk/">http://cpd.managers.org.uk/</a></p>
Exponential Management Perspectives 360 degree appraisal tool	<p>Management Perspectives is a 360 degree assessment tool that incorporates individualised feedback and development suggestions appropriate to the outcome of the assessment. The tool is fully web-based and automated making it straightforward and time efficient to use. The whole assessment can be set up and managed on-line (e.g. invitations to respondents, questionnaire completion and the production of the feedback report).</p> <p>Each model comprises a set of Core Skills which are further divided into Specific Skills. The body of knowledge that underpins the assessment models is appropriate National Occupational Standards for each assessment group.</p> <p>The assessment questionnaire requires each respondent to commit 10 -15 minutes per teamleader/manager/advisor/assessor. The questionnaire comprises a set of behaviours which respondents are asked to indicate the frequency with which they observe the person being assessed demonstrates those behaviours. Companies can choose to have 180 – 360 feedback depending on who they invite as respondents – most choose to invite 4 – 8 people (in theory there is no limit).</p> <p>Contact via: Michelle Moore on 01455 271123, or: <a href="http://www.managementperspectives.co.uk">www.managementperspectives.co.uk</a></p>

## Guide to Diagnostics

Diagnostic tool	Comments
Honey & Mumford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies preferred learning styles Provides more detail post initial assessment.</li> <li>Useful to use in conjunction with other diagnostics which can then translate preferred learning styles onto the PDP</li> </ul> <p>Main Switchboard: 01628 633 946  <a href="http://www.peterhoney.com">www.peterhoney.com</a></p>
Inspirational Leadership Programme	<p>Inspirational Leadership leads to a highly motivated workforce which, in turn, leads to inspirational results. The Inspirational Leadership Programme provides a number of powerful practical pointers for leaders at all levels on how they can inspire and motivate their people and colleagues to achieve superior performance.</p> <p><b>Inspirational Leadership Offer to the SSCs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A proven and very powerful way to engage your employers</li> <li>An easy to use and tested tool to identify employers' needs</li> <li>A door-opener to the provision of quality employer support</li> </ul> <p><b>Inspirational Leadership Offer to the Employer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Practical quality support to enhance your business performance</li> </ul> <p>Contact details:            Nigel Crouch            T: 0771 505 4633            E: <a href="mailto:nigelcrouch@f2s.com">mailto:nigelcrouch@f2s.com</a>            W: <a href="http://www.sfbn-mandl.org.uk/IL.htm">http://www.sfbn-mandl.org.uk/IL.htm</a></p>
LQ Metrics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-line psychometric and aptitude assessment product, developed to measure those characteristics most likely to determine the quality of an individual's leadership behaviours.</li> <li>Detailed reports enable individuals to set about establishing or improving leadership in the workplace.</li> </ul> <p>Contact via: <a href="http://www.lqmetrics.com">www.lqmetrics.com</a></p>
MAP (Managerial Assessment of Proficiency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For MDs who wish to undertake a more robust and in-depth assessment of development needs.</li> <li>Assesses managers at all levels in 12 essential management competencies. It is video based and computer scored.</li> </ul>
Management Reflections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developed by Skills for Enterprise, in conjunction with the LSC, Management Reflections is a 360° appraisal tool used to help identify managers' training needs.</li> <li>Gathers and analyses the manager's perception of their skills with those of their line manager, and peers. The results are used to identify skills gaps and training needs.</li> </ul> <p>Contact Details:            T: 0116 229 3301            E: <a href="mailto:Elaine.Mclaughlin@skillsforenterprise.co.uk">Elaine.Mclaughlin@skillsforenterprise.co.uk</a>            W: <a href="http://www.skillsforenterprise.co.uk">www.skillsforenterprise.co.uk</a></p>
PBM Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light touch diagnostic tool developed by People and Business in Mind</li> </ul> <p>Contact via: <a href="mailto:neil@pbmltd.com">neil@pbmltd.com</a></p>
RTS Diagnostic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CD-ROM based diagnostic, used in 1-to-1 meetings with adviser</li> </ul>

## Guide to Diagnostics

Diagnostic tool	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produces detailed report</li> </ul> Contact via: <a href="http://www.rtsconsultants.co.uk/">http://www.rtsconsultants.co.uk/</a>
Surveyshack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training Needs Diagnostic tool includes 360 capability</li> <li>• Based on the latest version of the Management Standards from the <a href="#">Management Standards Centre</a> but can be based on any question set as required.</li> </ul> Contact via: <a href="http://www.stap.co.uk/">http://www.stap.co.uk/</a>
The Critical Factor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One day workshop based assessment, developed for use in the South East region</li> <li>• Streamlined process, designed to take MD from engagement to agreed PDP in one day.</li> </ul>
Thomas International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-line psychometric software, easy to use diagnostic tool</li> </ul> Contact via: <a href="http://www.thomasinternational.net/">http://www.thomasinternational.net/</a>
Investors In People	<p><b>IIP Interactive</b></p> <p>IIP Interactive launched on the 5th of November 07. It's a free online tool for employers, developed to give access to information and advice on the Investors in People Standard. It allows organisations to learn and develop for themselves, at their own pace, with the additional option of linking with their local IIP Centre for specialist adviser's support.</p> <p>IIP Interactive is has information, good practice advice, tips, downloads and templates – all of which can be downloaded for free and customised by organisations. By combining audio and video material with text and graphics it offers a varied and stimulating learning experience.</p> <p><b>What happens to the previous Diagnostic Tool users?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>New users</b> who intended to register on the Business Improvement Diagnostic tool can now <a href="#">register on IIP Interactive</a>.</li> <li>▪ <b>Existing users</b> can continue using the Diagnostic Tool until <b>December 31st</b>, giving them time to finish existing projects and save any files they need. After this point, the Business Improvement Diagnostic will be permanently replaced by IIP Interactive.</li> </ul> <p><b>What about the Diagnostic?</b></p> <p>The front end of IIP Interactive is a new diagnostic tool adapted from the current diagnostic. Whilst not compulsory, users are recommended to start by taking the IIP Interactive diagnostic to get a good picture of strengths and development areas. On completing the diagnostic, users will be presented with an executive summary and a visual diagram indicating 'where do we go from here' in the form of a wheel with a % score for each management practice section.</p>