

How to Effectively Use Talent Management Tools and Processes in a Post-Recession World:

A State of the Art & Practice Report
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Executive Summary

Background

A major challenge for organizations continues to be leveraging their human capital as a source of competitive advantage. Talent management practices allow organizations to maximize their human capital by identifying who in the organization is top talent or high potential, and placing these individuals into key roles where they can have the greatest impact.

The Great Recession, and the overall challenging nature of today's business environment, has forced organizations to make difficult decisions regarding cost allocation. One area in which some organizations have reduced spending is in talent management, particularly leadership development. Before the recession, organizations invested heavily in leadership development programs for most management level employees; in 2008, however, these programs were increasingly removed from the budget as organizations attempted to scale back on spending. Even as the economy improves, cost cutting has become inevitable. Another way organizations have tried to remain profitable, other than cost reduction, is through increasing employee productivity. Still, organizations are finding it difficult to increase prices for services and products due to reduced customer tolerance of such practices. Therefore, it remains critical for organizations to improve the productivity of employees as a means of profitability, and this requires effective talent management practices.

Purpose

The present survey was conducted to determine what today's leading organizations are doing to manage talent in a post-recession environment with limited dollars. More specifically, we want to know how organizations are using various tools to differentiate top talent, develop and retain them, and fill key roles.

Data Collection

Data was collected in two phases. In the first phase, surveys were sent to over 40 respondents in HR related roles. The questions on the survey dealt with succession planning/talent planning within organizations, understanding the use of talent planning tools such as 9-Box Grids, and how companies manage key roles and key jobs. The response rate was 50% with 20 completed surveys in 17 different organizations. In the second phase, any respondent that indicated in their survey that they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview was contacted for a follow-up interview. There were 9 follow-up interviews in total.

Key Findings

Talent Planning Processes

- In general, there was wide variation in terms of *who* was included in the talent planning process. Most often, the talent planning process focused on middle-level managers and above. Most organizations surveyed conducted a talent planning or talent review process on an annual basis.

High Potential Identification

- Organizations reported using various tools to identify high potential employees, including 9-Box Grids (Performance vs. Potential Matrices), performance appraisals/reviews, organization charts, 360 appraisal data. Ultimately, most organizations relied on subjective methods, such as the recommendation of committees or a managers “gut-based” recommendation. Most organizations had set criteria that had to be met in order for employees to be identified as “high potential” (60%). Among these, only 25% of responders said they used assessments or surveys during this process.

Talent Planning Tracking & HRIS Systems

- Many organizations did not have an HRIS system in place (84%), but almost every interviewee indicated a desire to implement one. Convenience, speed, and streamlining were some of the benefits most cited as being associated with HRIS systems. Also, some of the interviewees expressed a desire to use HRIS software in regards to housing and storing talent planning data. Costs or lack of resources and time were some of the factors that impeded the implementation of HRIS systems. We found that the use of spreadsheets is most prevalent when it comes to 9-Box Grid data.

Talent Planning Tools: 9-Box (Performance x Potential Matrix)

- Not all organizations use a 9-Box Grid or Performance vs. Potential matrix. Only 50% of respondents indicated they routinely use this tool. For organizations that do use this tool, there is great variation in how the data is used. In general, the data suggests that the majority of employees who place in the top right box (highest in potential and performance) are either placed into a role with greater responsibility, moved into a role that could be considered a key role or key job, or placed into a leadership development type program.
- In speaking with organizations in the follow up interviews, the format of the 9-Box Grid varied. Some organizations used 6 boxes, while others used the full 9 boxes. In addition, some had definitions associated with each box placement while others did not. Lastly, some organizations had forced distributions around the percent of individuals within each box or group of boxes, while others imposed no such forced ranking. In summary, it was clear from our interviews that the 9-Box Grid or Performance x Potential matrix was something that was not one-size-fits-all, but rather something that was flexible enough to fit the needs of each organization. All interviewees felt the tool was valuable and enhanced the talent planning process.

General Recommendations

Based on the information gathered from the survey and the follow-up interviews, we have three major suggestions:

- The first suggestion is to focus on developing more objective and rigorous methods for identifying high potentials and leveraging their talent. One interviewee in particular noted that his role in the process was to help make it more objective, in order to facilitate accuracy and reduce bias. We acknowledge the accomplishments and successes that organizations have had thus far in establishing talent discussions and conversations. Now, the field needs to move into more formal methods to get the most out of our talent and ensure we're investing in the right people.
- The second major suggestion is in regards to the formal identification of High Potentials. Even though most organizations we spoke to did not formally recognize high potentials as such, a 2008 study from the Center for Creative Leadership highlights the positive effects formal recognition can have in an organization, from retention of top talent to leveraging high potential employees to develop other talent. It should be noted, that if an organization does decide to implement formal and public identification of High Potential employees, this should be done delicately and with tact. While there can be positive effects for having formal identification, we do not want to marginalize or discourage other employees who have not been identified as High Potential. It is well known that a scorned workforce can have detrimental effects on business results.
- The final general suggestion to take away from this study is, if you have the resources, invest in an integrated HRIS system. While it is true that not all survey respondents and interviewees had integrated HRIS systems, but everyone we spoke to saw the value and wanted such a system. Where they did exist, saving time and being able to organize data more seamlessly were some of the benefits cited most among interviewees.

Next Steps – Future Research

It should be noted that this study was done on a small scale, and was meant to gauge what some of the current practices in the field were regarding talent planning and high potential management. Much further and larger scale research is needed for several reasons. Primarily to validate the findings of this study and determine if there are any significant differences between certain demographics, including: company size, market position, and others. Also, to investigate more clearly what happens in organizations once the talent planning discussion has occurred. Future research would also be able to help determine what happens in situations of success or failure of individual contributors. Another research question that might be of particular interest and concern is which clients/business units are being managed by whom, and what effects do the individual contributors have on the business outcomes of those managed clients. Yet another topic that could be further developed through future research is the relationship between placement in a 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix and turnover. Does it exist; if so, to what extent?

Overall, this small, exploratory study has unearthed that despite being a popular topic of discussion as of late, and a function of Human Resources that every organization seems to take part in some way, there is still much variety in the “How’s” and “What’s” of talent planning and high potential management. It is our hope that this will stimulate further research and discussion to guide and facilitate future decisions and policies made by organizations in these areas.

Methods and Demographics

Talent planning is a practice utilized by organizations to identify performance potential and maximize continued employee, and executive performance through targeted development and role changes (both horizontal and vertical). The current study investigated how key variables such as the criteria and process used to select high potential individuals; the use of specific talent planning practices, namely the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix; and other business metrics specifically relate to talent planning, future role changes, and business performance.

In order to identify the best practices and trends employed in industry today, E. Rogers Associates, Inc. designed, administered, and analyzed the survey presented here. Approximately 18 large and mid-sized organizations responded to the survey. The survey consisted of several items representing the general areas of overall talent planning processes, the use of a 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, and potential links to other business analytics.

This survey was meant largely to be exploratory about the different methods that are actually being used in organizations today for talent planning. For that reason, and to ensure that all possible answers and methods of the talent planning process were captured by the survey, many questions were asked in a “check all that apply” format. These responses were analyzed as the number of organizations who responded in the affirmative for a particular method/response.

Because the sample size was so small ($n = 20$ participants, across 17 organizations), the responses were not divided or typed in any way. Doing so would lead to a statistical power issue and would only misrepresent the findings.

Upon the completion of data collection and preliminary analyses of the survey data, exploratory follow-up interviews were completed. Any respondent that indicated in their survey that they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview was contacted. A total of nine follow-up interviews were conducted during the month of October 2012. Respondents were primarily from the greater New York area. The industries interviewees were representing included a variety from retail to consumer products and finance.

Follow-up interviews were an hour long and conducted in an open format. All interviews, however, did follow a similar pattern. Typically, interviews started with a discussion of overall talent planning processes. Then moving into a discussion of how the 9-Box/Performance x Potential Matrix is used in the organization. Finally, interviews wrapped up with a dialogue of high potentials in the organization; their identification, their development, their recognition, et cetera.

The following tables represent the demographics of the organizations surveyed:

Organization Types:

• Aerospace	• Chemical	• Financial
• Food/Beverage	• Healthcare	• Household/Paper
• Technology	• Insurance	• Retail
• Other		

Total Annual Organizational Revenue (*in millions of dollars*):

• <5.0.....	5.5%
• 5.1-20.0.....	5.5%
• 20.1-100.0.....	5.5%
• 100.1-200.0.....	5.5%
• 200.1+.....	78%

Questions Answered on Behalf of:

• Entire Organization.....	65%
• Respondent's Division.....	6%
• Other.....	20%

Total Number of Employees:

• <50,000.....	55.5%
• 50,001-75,000.....	17%
• 75,001- 100,000.....	0%
• 100,001-250,000.....	0%
• 250,001-500,000.....	22%
• 500,001-1,000,000.....	0%
• 1,000,001+.....	05.5%

Survey Results

Section 1: Talent Planning Process Basics

This section outlines the basic parameters under which respondents performed talent planning or talent reviews within their organizations. Questions ranged from who are included in the process to how often does the process take place.

Figure 1.1
Does your organization go through a talent review/talent planning/succession planning process, which can be defined as a process through which business leaders plan for the transfer of their organizations and roles to the next generation of workers?

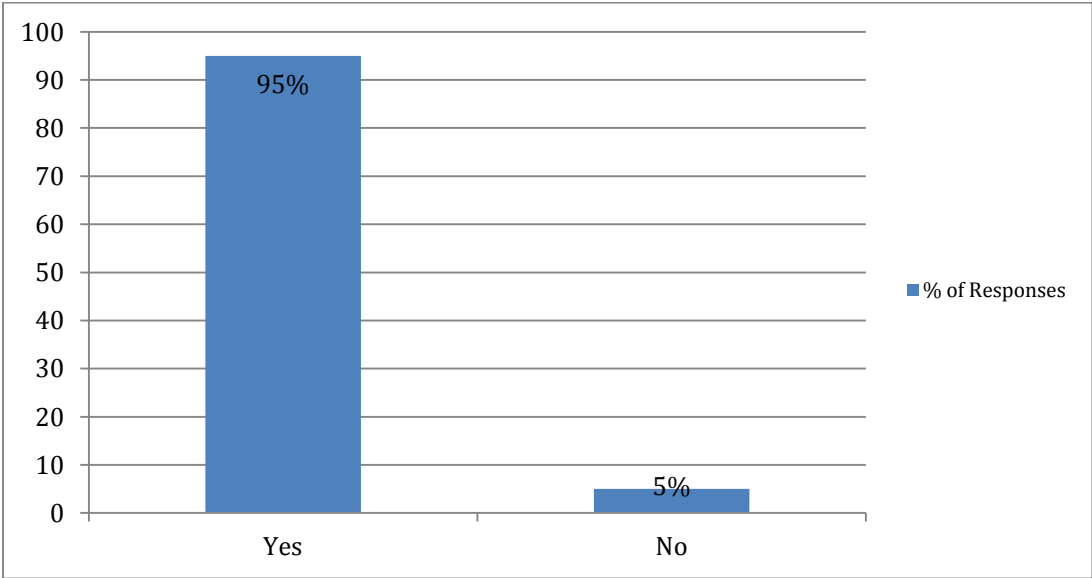


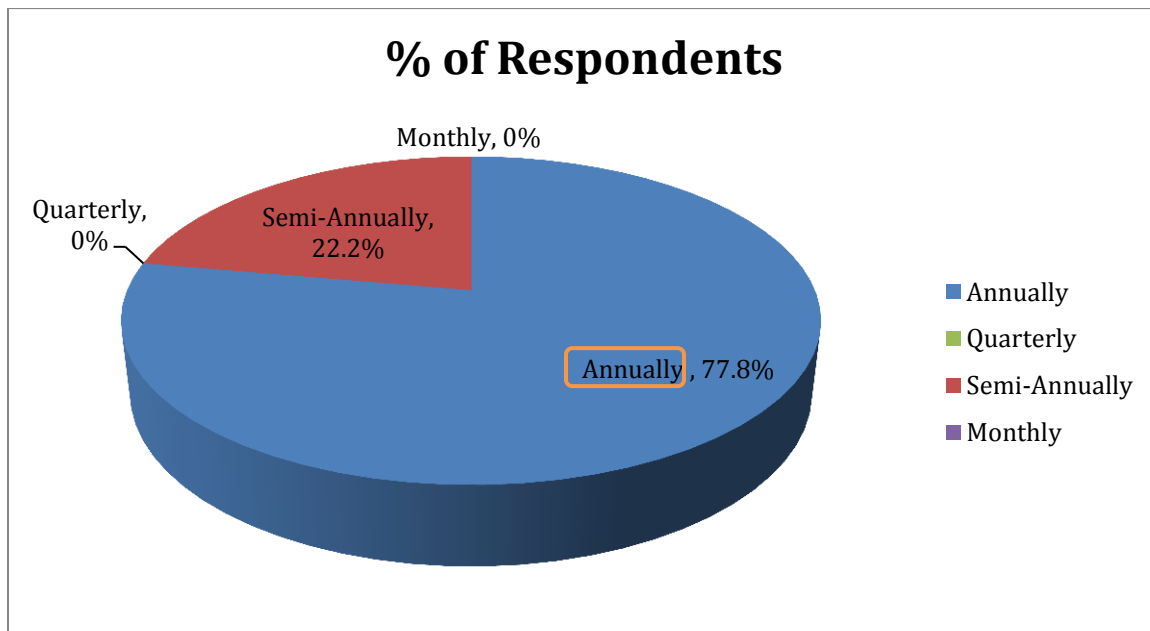
Figure 1.2

What levels of the organization go through the talent planning process? (Please select all that apply)



Figure 1.3

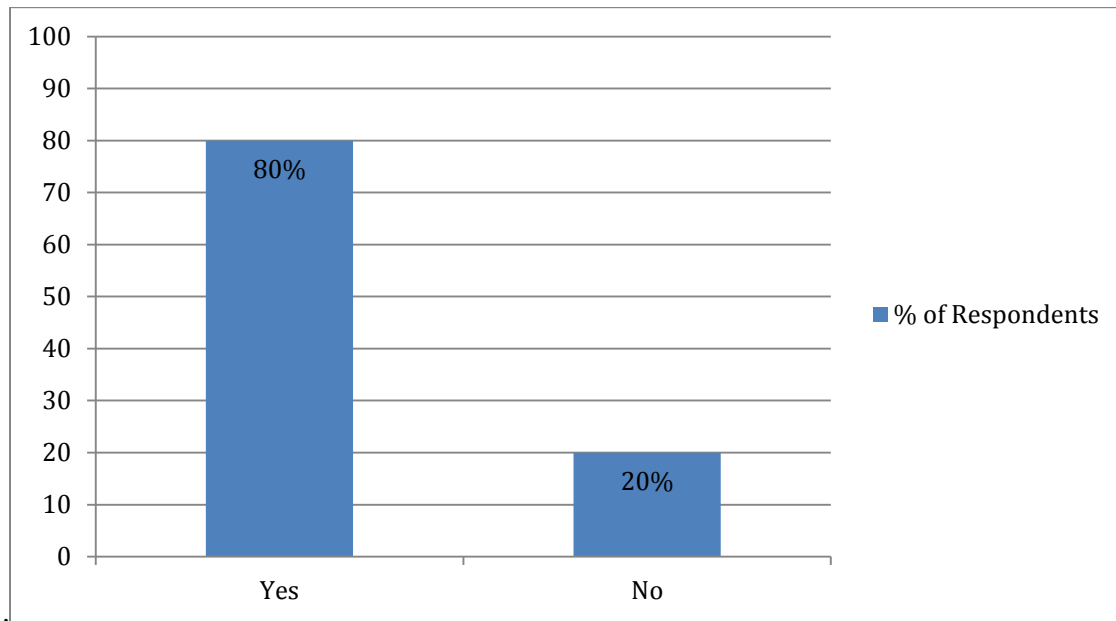
How often does your organization conduct a talent review process?



No respondents indicated that their organizations performed a talent review process more frequently than semi-annually. (This could be due to the fact that most follow-up interviewees indicated that the process was lengthy, time-consuming, and sometimes mentally draining.)

Figure 1.4

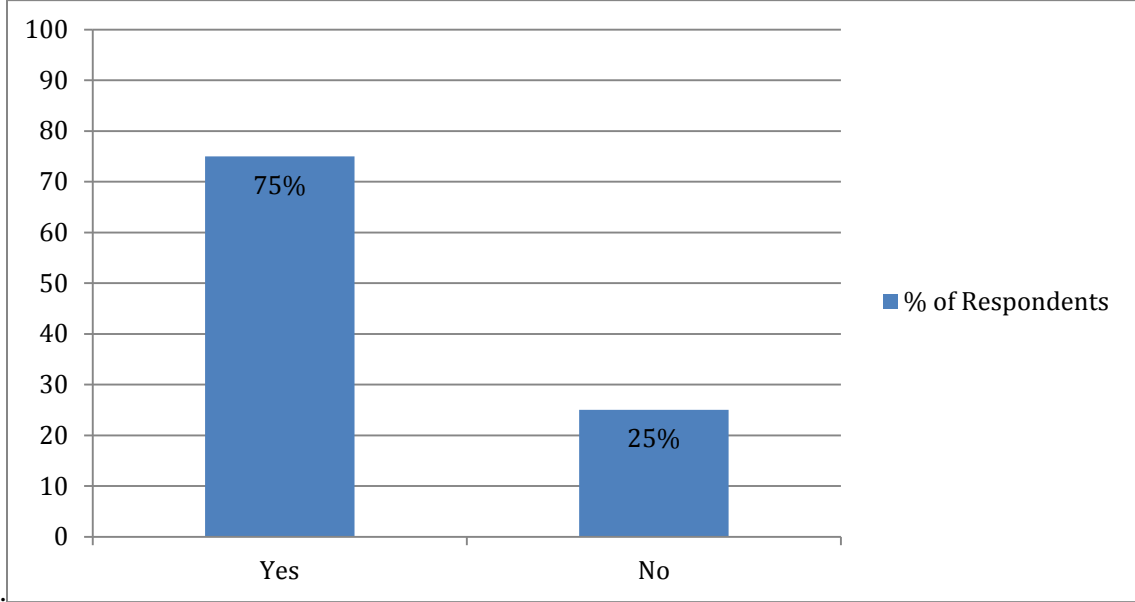
Does your organization have a process in place to identify high performers?



Section 2: High Potential Process

In this section, we asked participants specifically about high potentials in their organizations. How are they identified? What is done once they have been identified? How are they differentiated from the rest of the workforce?

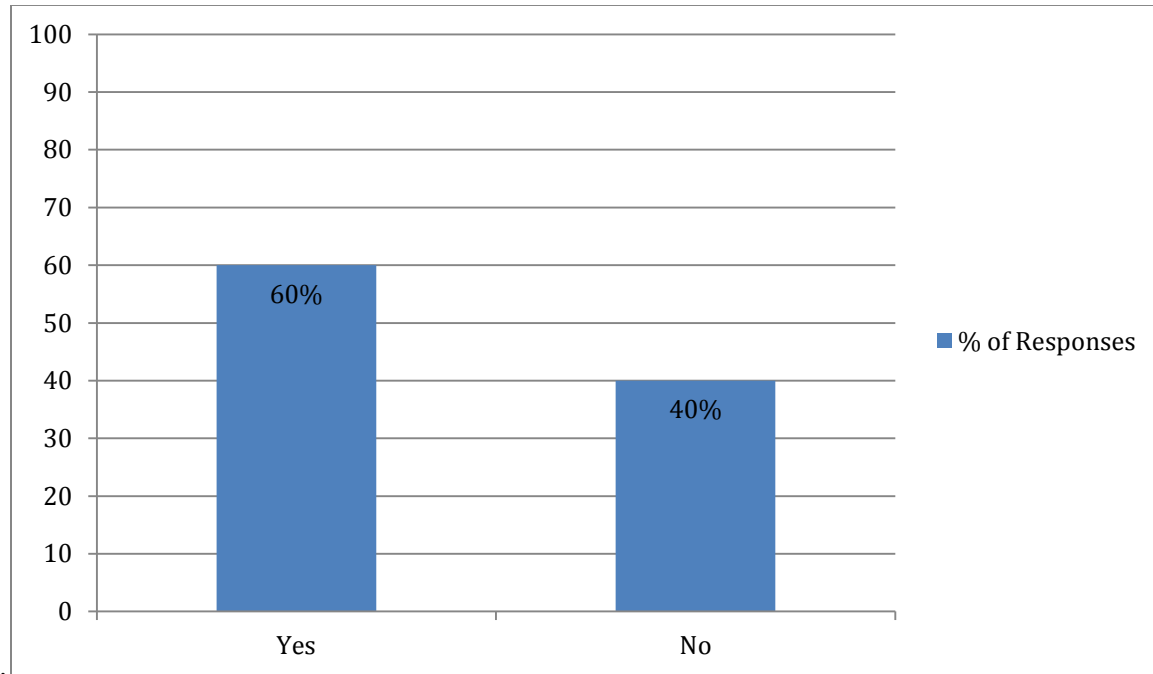
Figure 2.1
Does your organization have a process in place to identify high potentials?



It is clear from the chart that a majority of respondents indicated that they have a process for identifying high potentials within their organizations. How that identification is made is assessed in the following figures.

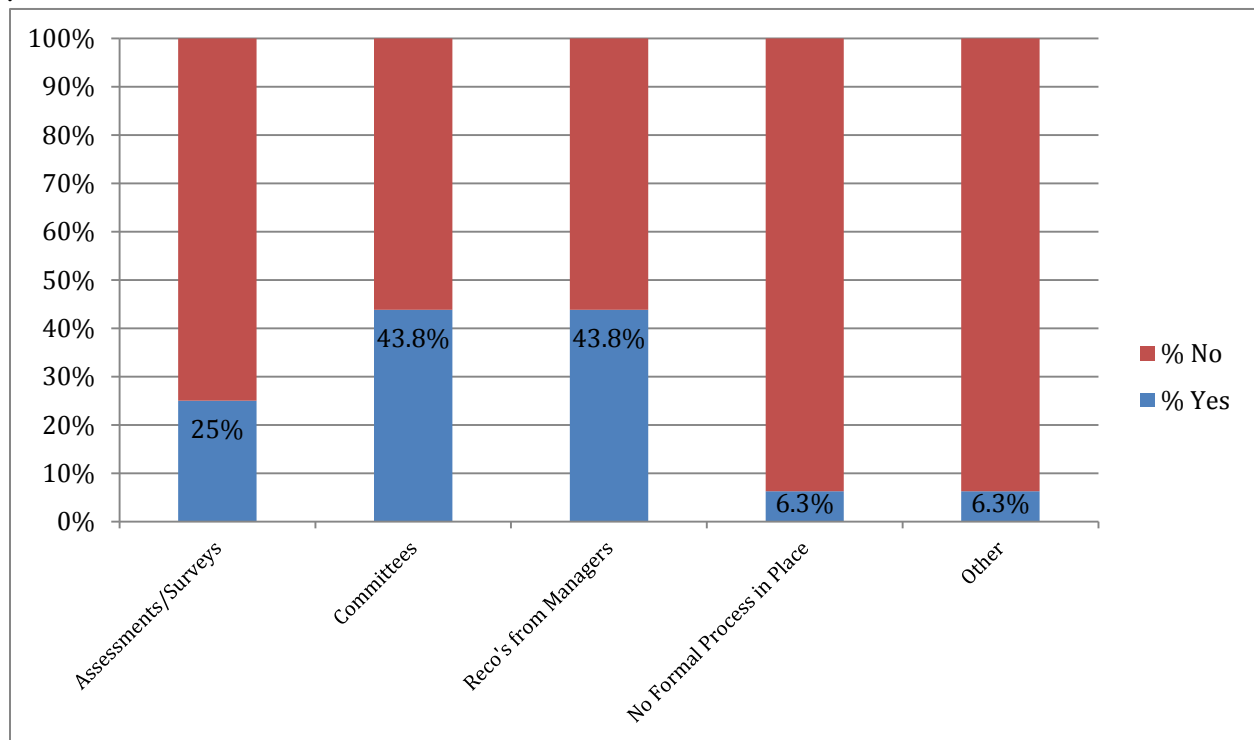
Figure 2.2

Does your organization have clear criteria in order for someone to be identified as a High Potential?



A majority of participants indicated that there were specific criteria for high potential identification. There is still a sizeable amount of participants, however, that indicated that they do not have specific criteria even though they do still identify high potentials within their organization. If participants selected yes to this question, they were then asked to provide a brief description of that criteria for high potential identification.

Figure 2.3
How are High Potentials identified within your organization?



Approximately 44% of respondents indicated that they used talent review committees to identify high potentials. Almost 44% of respondents also indicated using recommendations from managers as the basis for high potential identification. Only 25% of respondents cited more objective and formal methods of identification such as assessments and surveys. These results indicate that the current trend in organizations is to identify high potential employees through subjective, or gut-reaction, methods. This indicates an opportunity for more objective, potentially less biased methods to be implemented.

The good news is that most organizations include various outside tools at some point during the talent planning process. Tools that were typically used included:

- 9-Box Grids (Performance vs. Potential Matrices)
- Performance appraisals/reviews
- Organization charts
- 360 Appraisal data

** Please see Figure 4.1 for specific information regarding the use of those tools listed above. **

The same, however, cannot be said when it came to high potential identification. 40% of organizations did not have any clear criteria in the identification of high potentials. In addition, for those that do have clear criteria, only 25% of respondents said they used assessments or surveys during this process. Most organizations relied on the recommendations of committees or the proposed high-potential employee's direct manager. This demonstrates a need for more structured criteria and evaluation methods within organizations.

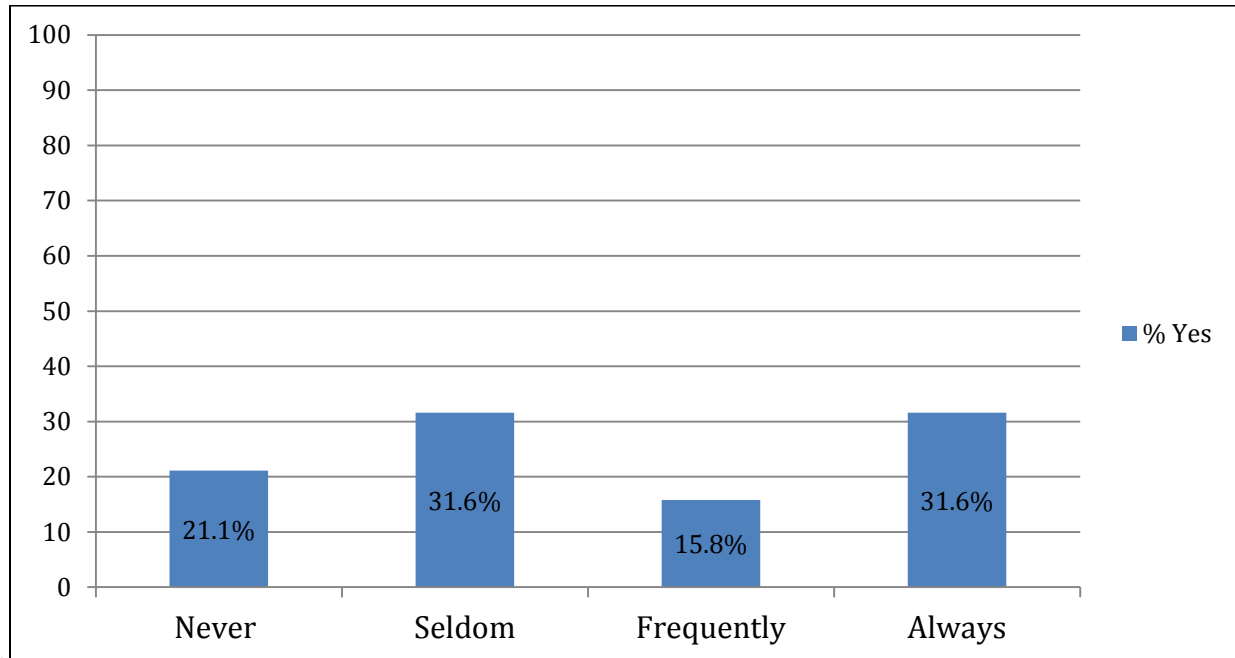
There was also no single method for what happened with high potentials once they had been identified. In follow-up interviews, it was discovered that some organizations (typically those of smaller size) had only one leadership development/high potential program for the entire company, while other organizations had different programs dependent on the business or department that they were a part of. Also, while no organization seemed to "broadcast" or publicize to everyone who was identified as a high potential, there were organizations who would explicitly tell those employees who had been identified as "high potential" and others that did not tell employees.

Section 3: 9-Box Usage within Organizations

We also asked participants to answer questions regarding the use of the 9-Box tool, also known as the Performance x Potential Matrix, in their talent planning or talent review processes.

Figure 3.1

How extensively is the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential matrix used in your organization?



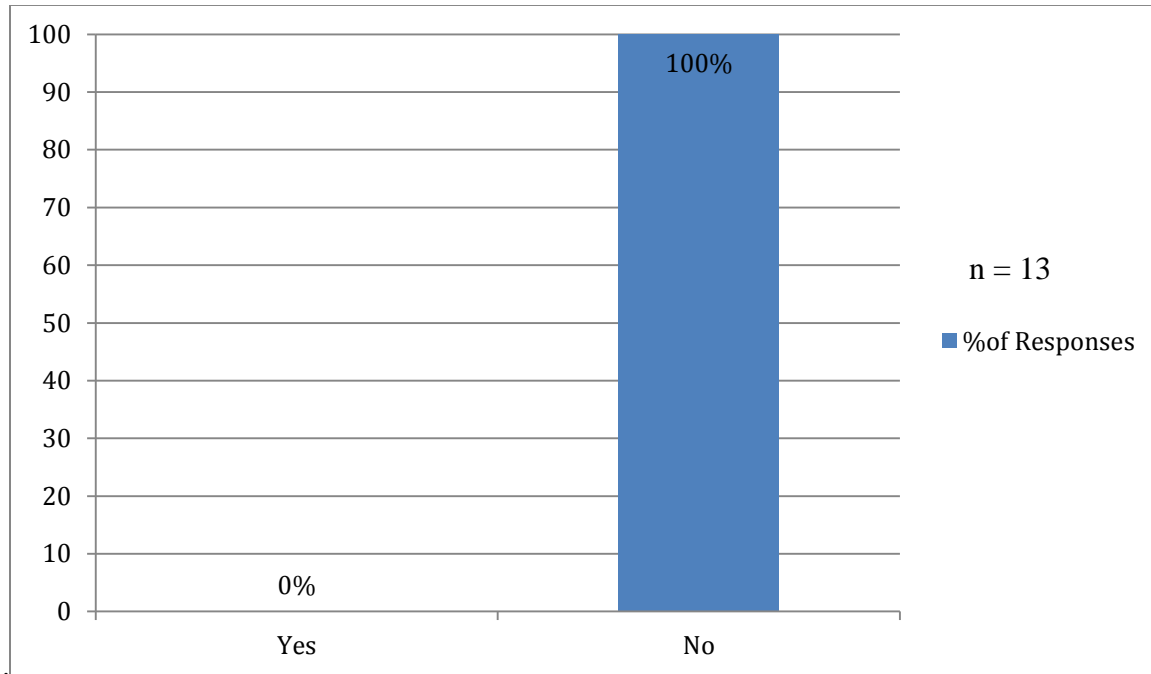
Over half of the participants answered this question that the frequency of their 9-Box use was, in fact, infrequent or even never. Less than half indicated using the 9-Box frequently or greater. Only a third of participants said that this tool was always utilized in their talent planning processes.

If participants answered this question with anything other than “never,” they were asked to briefly describe their organization’s use of this tool. Some of the responses included:

- ▶ “The 9-Box is used by HR and the executive team during the talent assessment process to map out performance and potential. Our organization finds it very helpful to be able to graphically see how the entire team is laid out.”
- ▶ “The 9-Box is the backbone to how we identify PXP (Performance x Potential) placement...”

Figure 3.2

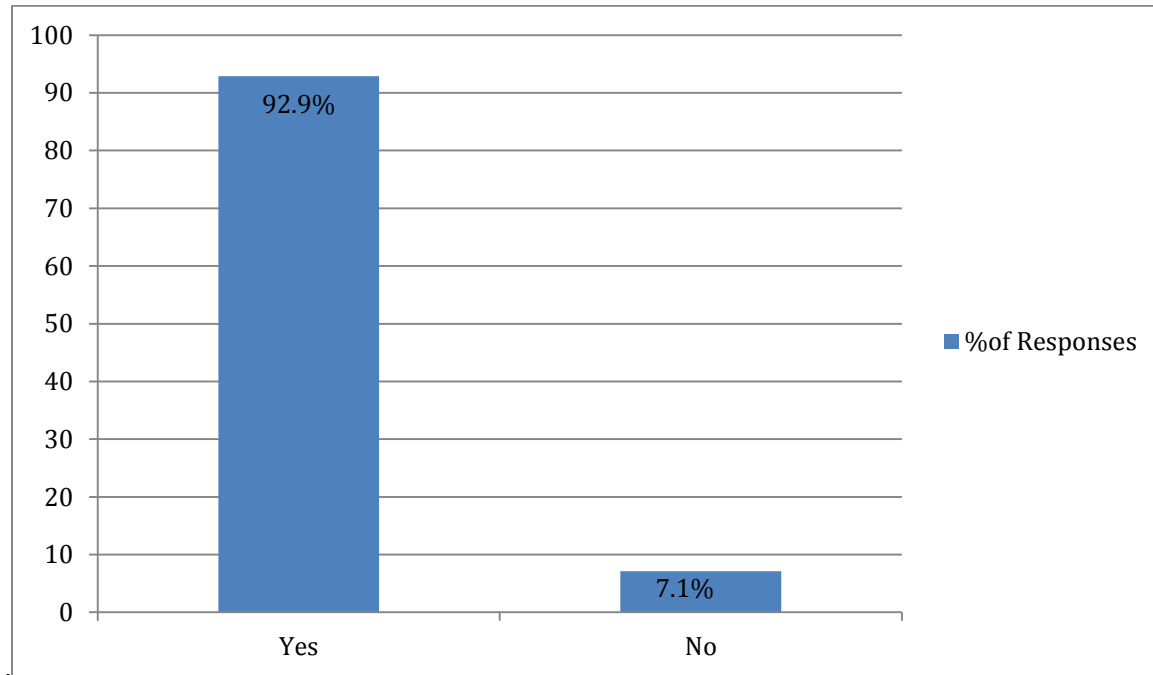
Does your organization use a forced distribution to place employees into the individual cells of the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix?



No participants indicated that they use a forced-distribution, or rank-order method, to make 9-Box placements.

Figure 3.3

Does your organization have definitions/criteria around what each box in the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix mean? (e.g., top right cell considered “key performer” versus bottom left cell considered “ready to exit the business”)

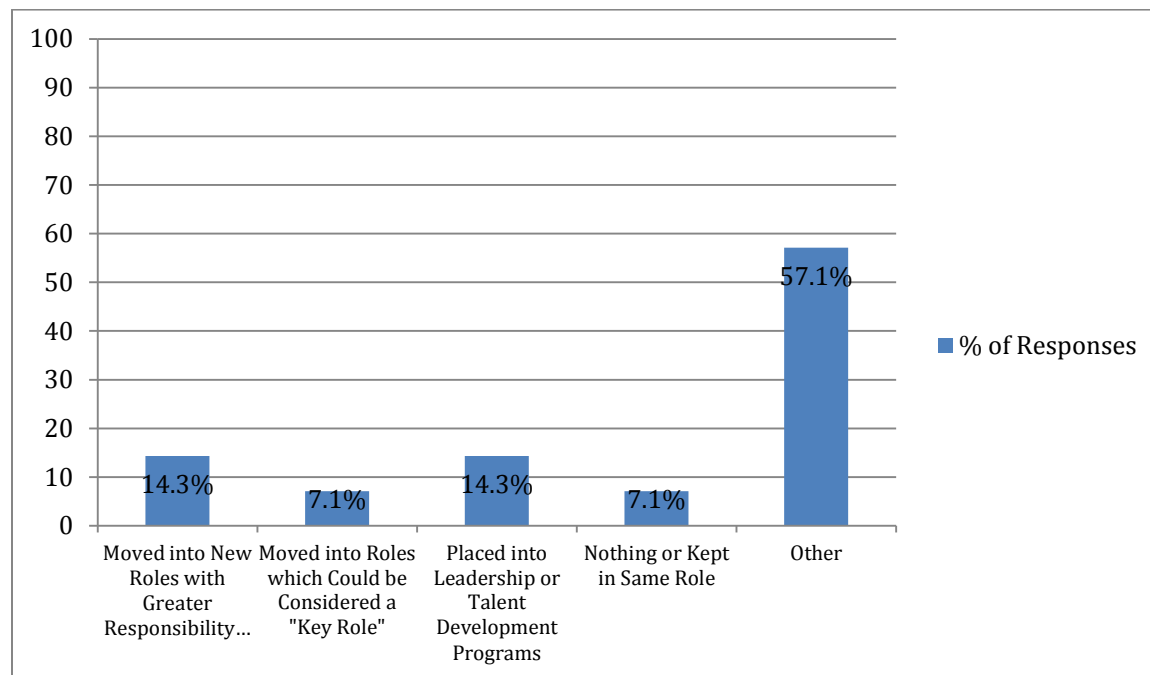


An overwhelming majority of responses were in the affirmative for this question. If participants did indicate a “Yes” answer choice, they were asked to provide some of the definitions for the cells of the 9-Box tool. A sample of the definitions provided is:

- ▶ “We are in the process of changing the definitions.”
- ▶ “All keyed to moving to the next level of management. There are [a number] of ranked pools from middle managers to top executives.”
- ▶ “1. Too new to rate. 2. Must keep. 3. High potential. 4. Outplace. 5. Performance improvement needed. 6. Well Placed.

Figure 3.4

Once your organization has finalized the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix positions, what is done with the individuals who are in the top right box (i.e. highest in performance and highest in potential)?

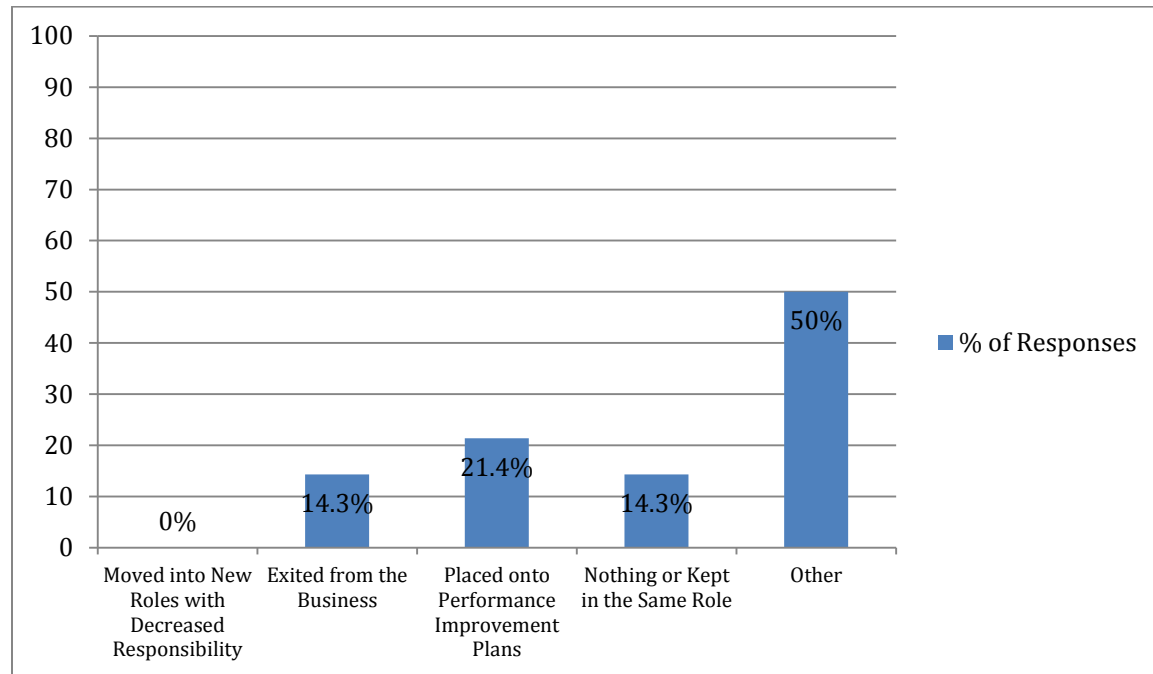


Due to the lack of responses in any given answer choice category, and a majority of responses being “Other,” it can be ascertained that there is a lot of variety in the field, specifically on what the next steps are once 9-Box placements have been made and the talent review process conducted. If a participant selected the “Other” answer choice, they were asked to specify. Responses included:

- ▶ “It depends on the person & the role. They can be placed into a Leadership Program, moved into a new 'key job' or given greater responsibility.”
- ▶ “Try to find them opportunities to accelerate their growth based on business needs.”
- ▶ “It depends on the tenure in which the individual has been in their current role but it is a combination of the first 3 options.”

Figure 3.5

Once your organization has finalized the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix positions, what is done with the individuals in the bottom left box (i.e. lowest in performance and lowest in potential)?

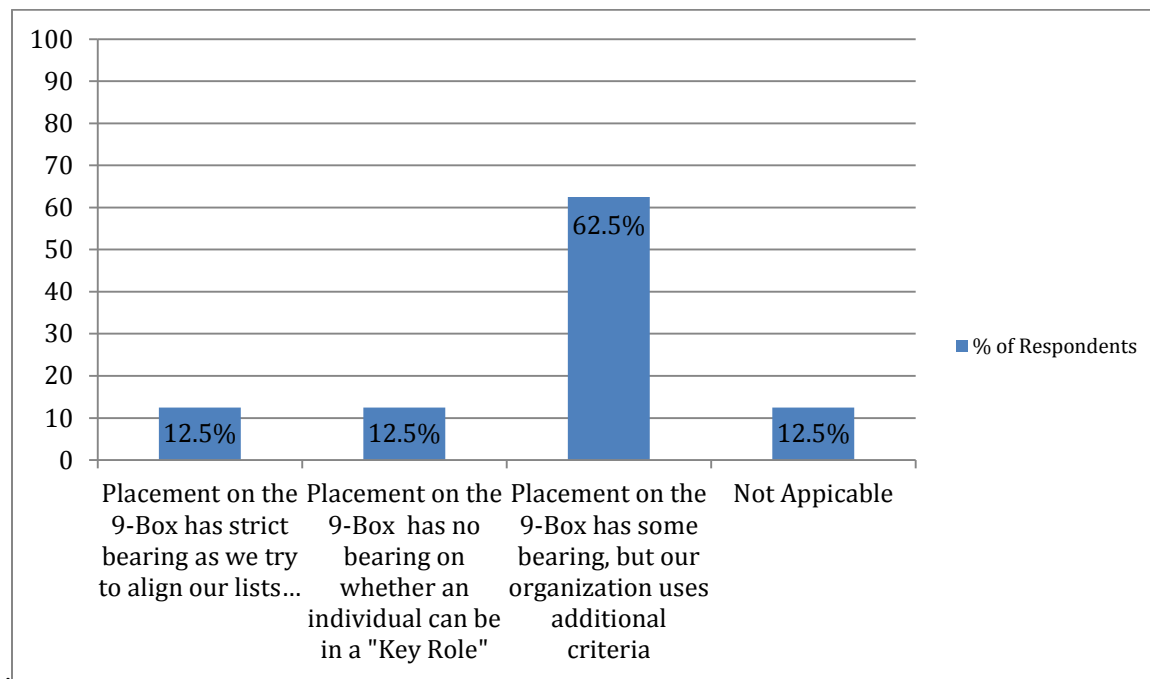


Similar to the results of the previous question and figure, there was a large variety of actions taken by organizations in this situation. One response, “Moved into New Roles with Decreased Responsibility and Decreased Scope,” was not chosen by any participants. As in the previous question, if participants answered with “Other,” they were asked to specify. Among the responses were:

- ▶ “Both exit from business and involved in last minute save coaching initiatives.”
- ▶ “Dependent on person and role, can be placed on an improvement plan, coached or exit the business.”
- ▶ “On-going conversations about what the right "next" move is for them.”

Figure 3.6

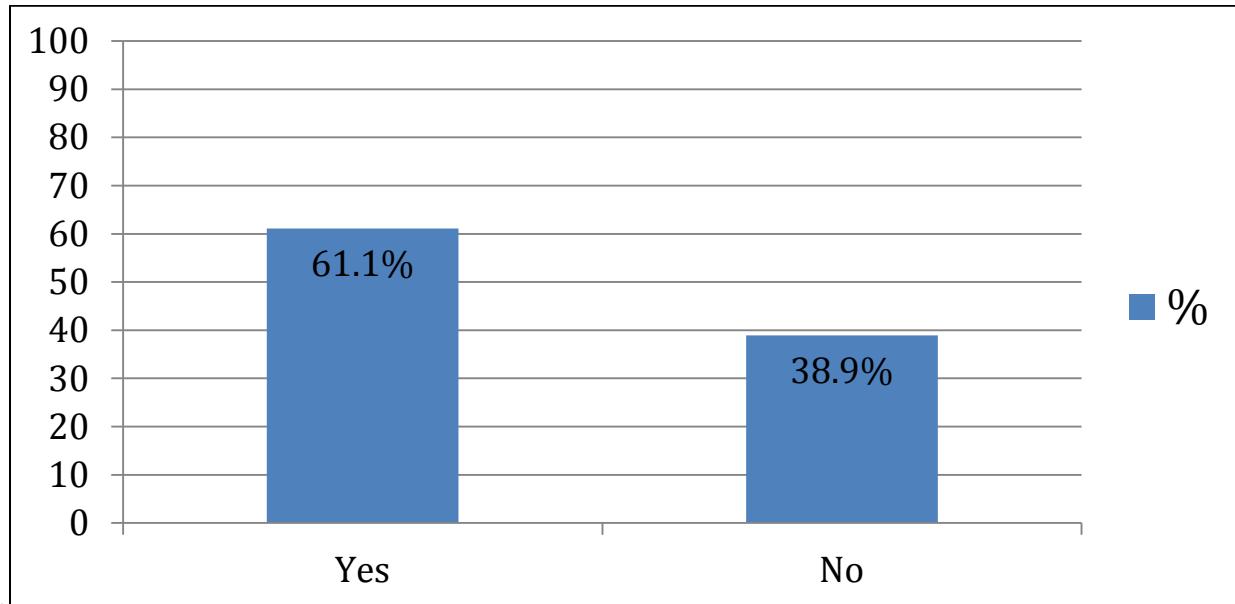
How does placement on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix (either high performer/potential or low performer/potential) influence lists of “Key Roles”/“Key Jobs”?



In the follow-up interviews one interviewee even stated, *“It would be great if they used the Talent Review binders when looking to hire internally, but no one remembers they’re there.”*

Figure 3.7

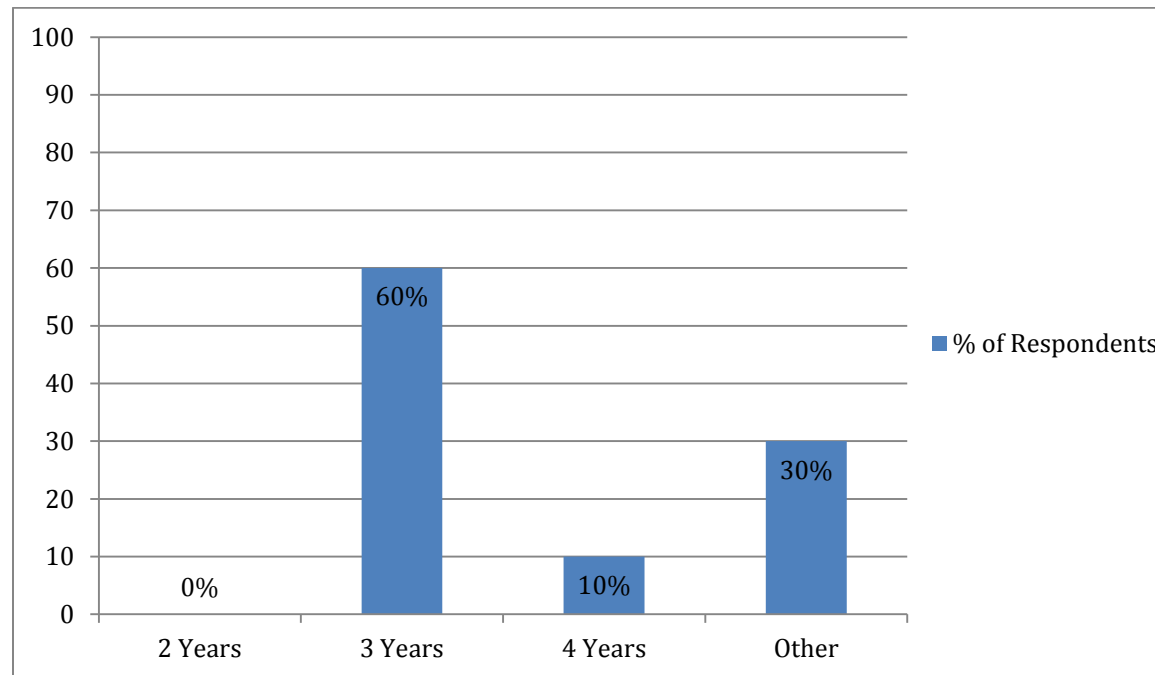
When you are plotting your employees on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, does your organization use multiple years of performance appraisal data?



The recommended practice by Lombardo and Eichinger (2011) is to use multiple years of performance data to assess performance ratings on the 9-Box Grids/Performance x Potential Matrix. A majority of respondents indicated that they do follow this practice for their own 9-Box use.

Figure 3.8

If you selected “Yes” to the previous question, how many years are included in your assessment of “performance” for the purposes of the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix?

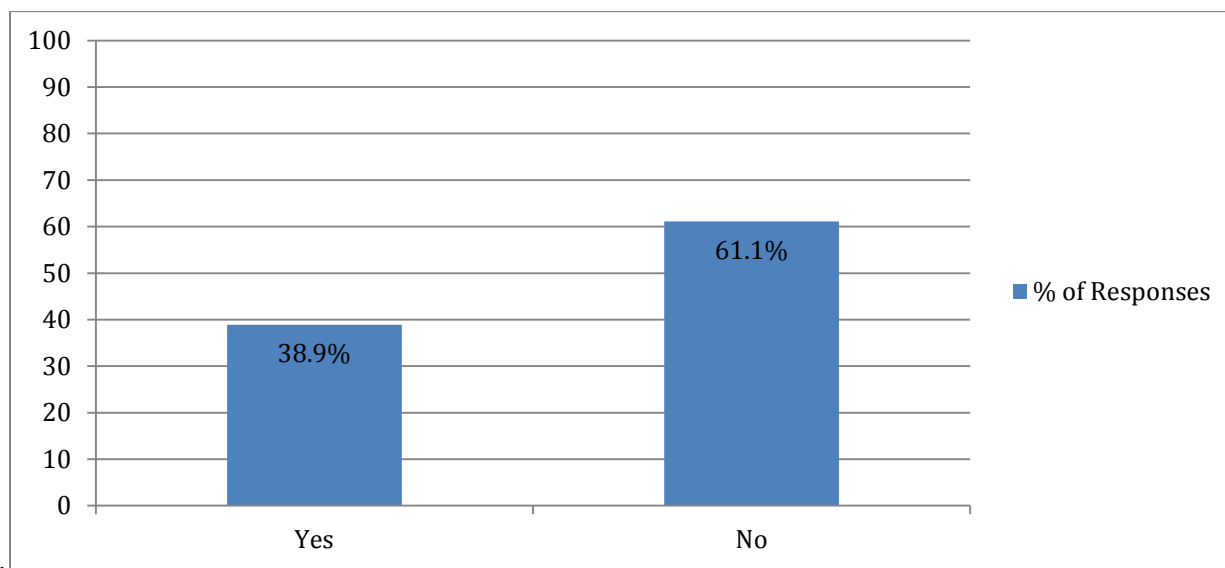


A majority of respondents indicated that they used three years’ worth of performance data or more when making 9-Box ratings. If participants indicated that they used a different amount of performance data than two, three or four years, they were asked to specify the amount of performance data they did use. Some of the responses included:

- ▶ “2-3 [years].”
- ▶ “As many years as they've been with the organization.”
- ▶ “Well we say it is a few years of performance data, but let’s be realistic, this is a short term lens. And the problem is the drastic change that can take place in terms of box movement.”

Figure 3.9

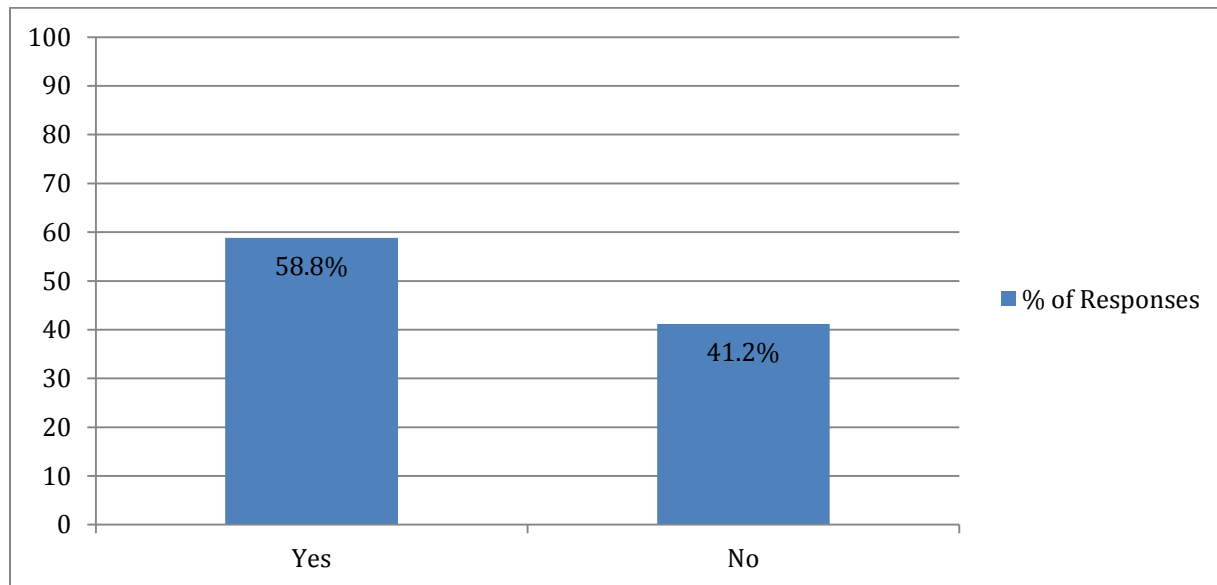
When plotting employees on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, do you use number weights to rank order which plots are more valuable to your company? (i.e. Lower left-hand corner box is weighted as a “1” because it ranks lowest on performance and potential, or middle right-hand box is weighted as an “8” because it ranks highest on potential and middle on performance)



The majority of respondents did not use number weights, or rank, the different cells of the 9-Box Grid.

Figure 3.10

When using your 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, does your organization cross-check or compare your ratings against the ratings of another team/department at the same level?

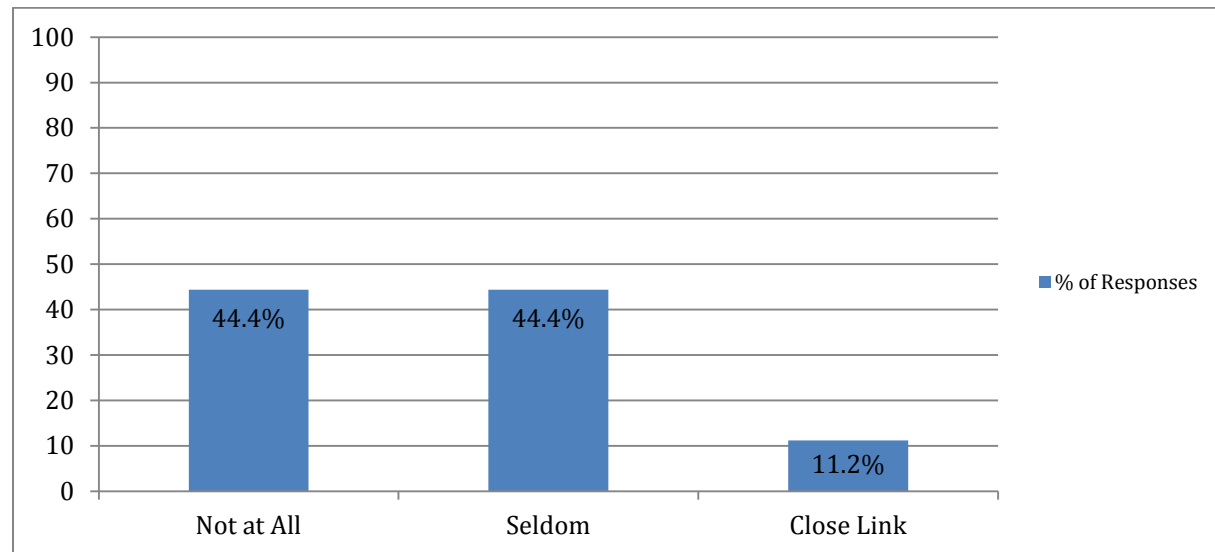


Approximately 60% of respondents indicated that they do cross-check the placements of employees on the 9-Box Grid. If respondents indicated that they did cross-check placements and rankings, they were asked to describe which teams or departments they cross-check against. Some of the responses were:

- ▶ “Compare global to regional business units. All regions are compared by role within the matrix.”
- ▶ “As HR, we cross check all departments.”
- ▶ “They are compared on a regional basis. We currently have [a number of] regions and all associates who work in those regions are compared to one another.”
- ▶ “All [executives] who discuss [mid-manager] level and above positions cross-check/calibrate who is plotted and where in the 9-Box.”

Figure 3.11

How closely does your organization link 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential matrix outcomes to financial metrics?



Most participants did not regularly link their 9-Box Grid results to the financial metrics. Only $n = 2$ participants indicated that there was a close link of the results to financial metrics. The researchers feel that there may have been some confusion with the definition of “financial metrics” in this question that could have led to inaccurate results.

If participants did indicate that their organizations linked 9-Box Grid results to financial metrics, they were asked to specify in what way this happened. A sample of these responses includes:

- ▶ “Financial metrics are used in relation to ranking of performance in certain roles and departments.”
- ▶ “Project financial success [is accounted for].”
- ▶ “[We use] business scorecards.”
- ▶ “Financial metrics drive where a person ranks on [the 9-Box] Grid.”

Despite many participants indicating that they did use a 9-Box Grid or Performance x Potential Matrix at some point, not all organizations did. Only 50% of respondents indicated they routinely use this tool.

When it came to individual employee placements on the 9-Box Grid, of those who were placed in the bottom left hand box (lowest in potential and performance) about 35% are still retained by the business and asked to go through some type of performance improvement plan or coaching. In addition, as an outcome of the 9-Box process, the majority of employees who were placed in the top right box (highest in potential and performance) are “rewarded” for this achievement with either:

- ▶ Being Placed into a role with greater responsibility
- ▶ Moved into a role that could be considered a key role or key job
- ▶ Or placed into a leadership development type program

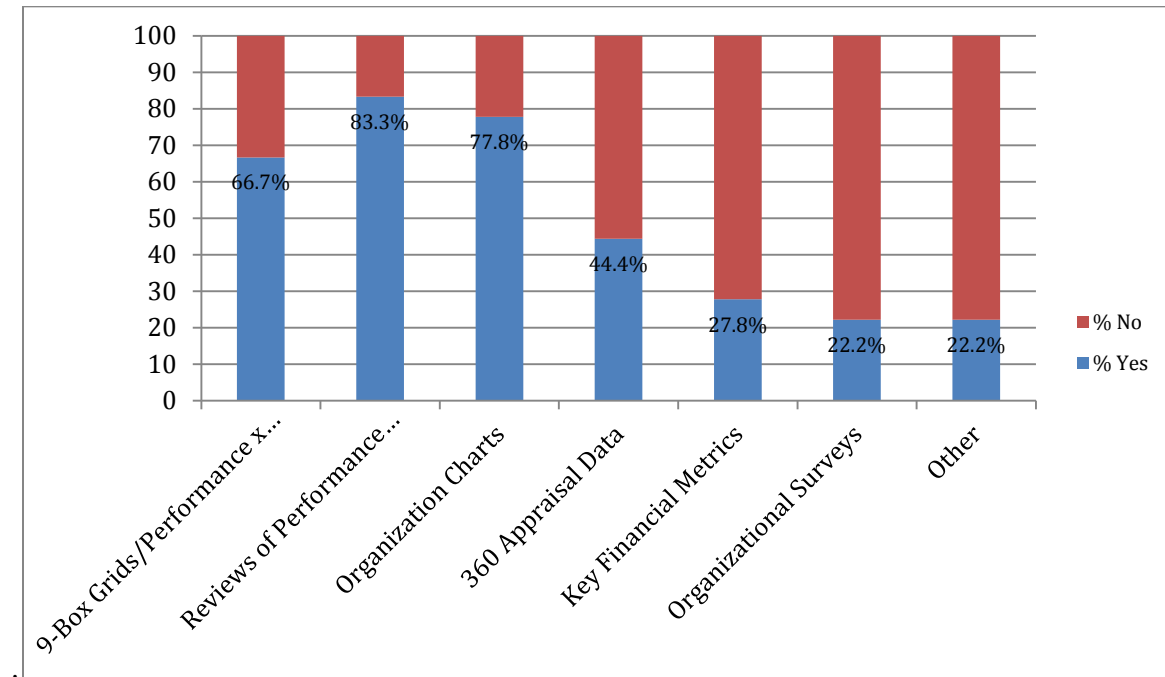
Overall, there was a lot of variety in how organizations make 9-Box Grid ratings and placements, and how that information is used after the placements have been finalized. In the follow-up interviews, it was revealed that most participants were familiar with the 9-Box Grid even if it was not currently in use at their organization. All follow-up interviewees expressed a desire to implement this tool into their talent planning process. Some of the issues that were discussed in association with using the 9-Box Grid included the confusion and sense of being overwhelmed for managers when actually using all nine boxes. A few organizations cited using “shortened” versions of the tools with only six cells. The second issue that was brought up during the follow-up interviews was the ambiguity and confusion associated with the concept of potential. One interviewee even said, “Potential, what are we really talking about here?”. We were excited and enthusiastic to learn how many organizations we surveyed were using the 9-Box Grid, but it is obvious that a little clarity and streamlining could be used to make the process more effective in some organizations.

Section 4: Talent Planning Tracking and HRIS Systems

This section outlines some of the methods participants used to track talent planning data and information within their organizations. Questions ranged from what tools are used, to questions regarding lists of “Key Roles”/“Key Jobs”.

Figure 4.1

What tools are used during the talent planning process? (please select all that apply)

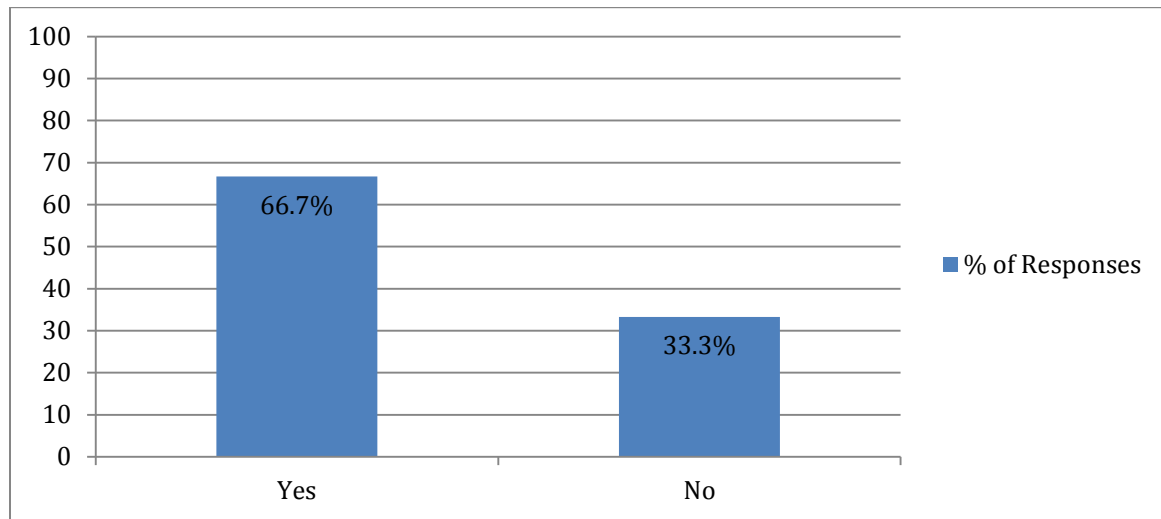


If participants indicated using another tool not part of the list provided, they were asked to specify what that tool was. Some of the responses were:

- ▶ “[We like to use the] viaEDGE© [assessment by Korn/Ferry International powered by Lominger] when possible, movement potential, etc.”
- ▶ “Competency models.”
- ▶ “Capability assessment and testing.”
- ▶ “[We sometimes use] an Individual Development Plan (IDP) to understand career aspirations and areas to develop.”

Figure 4.2

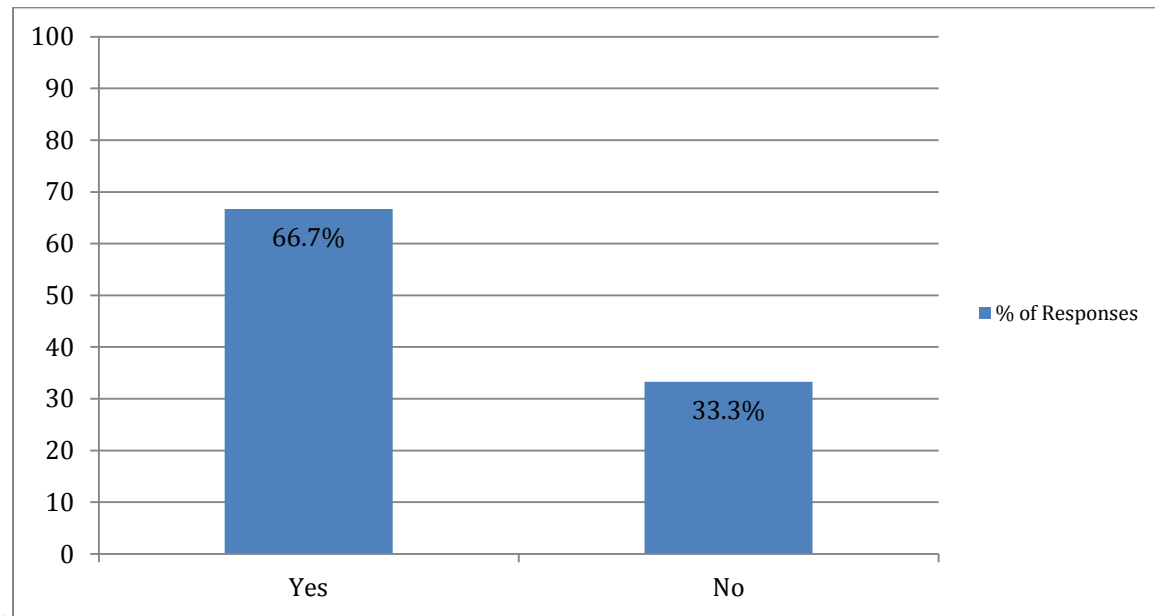
Does your organization keep a list of “Key Roles” or “Key Jobs” for senior/executive level positions?



Approximately two-thirds of participants indicated that their organization did have a list of “Key Roles.”

Figure 4.3

Does your organization use any criteria to define “Key Roles” or “Key Jobs”?

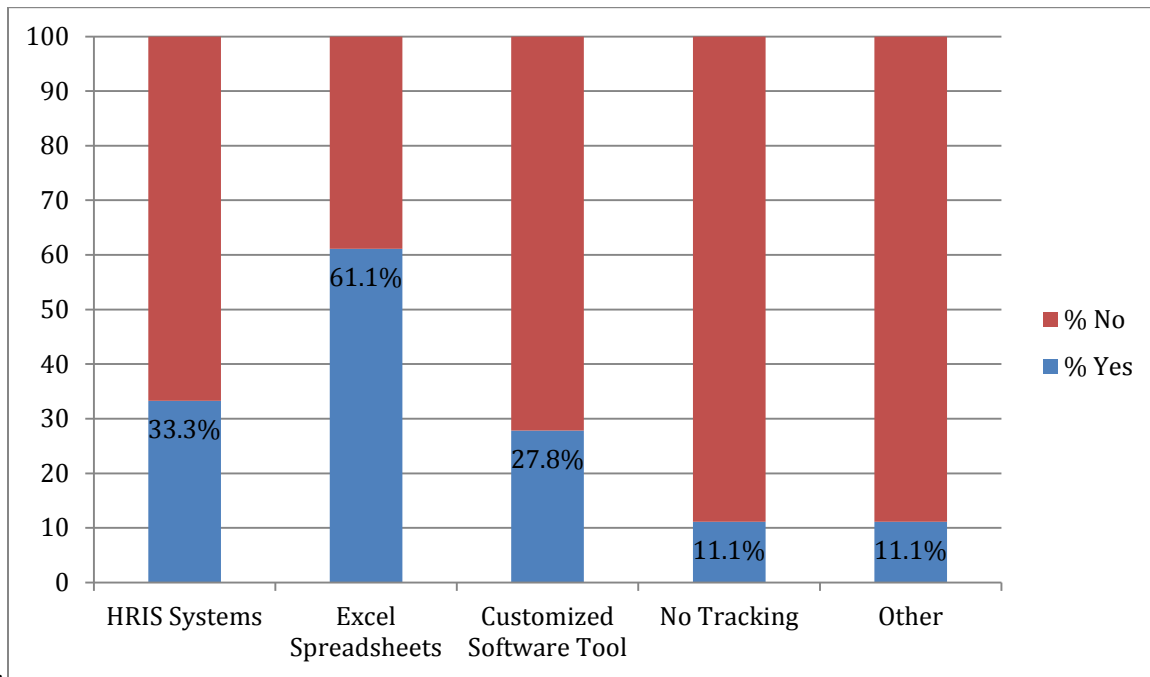


A majority of respondents did indicate that they did have a set of criteria defining what a “Key Role” or a “Key Job” is for their organization. Those participants that responded “Yes” to this question were then asked to provide a brief description of what these criteria were. Some of the responses were:

- ▶ “Roles which are linked to the business's change strategy and have the highest impact on business [profitability].”
- ▶ “A select few positions that are ‘mission critical’ to the business. [In other words,] if person left, the company would experience great hardship. Usually limited to 10 or less critical positions.”
- ▶ “Business GM...running certain functions involving customers.”

Figure 4.4

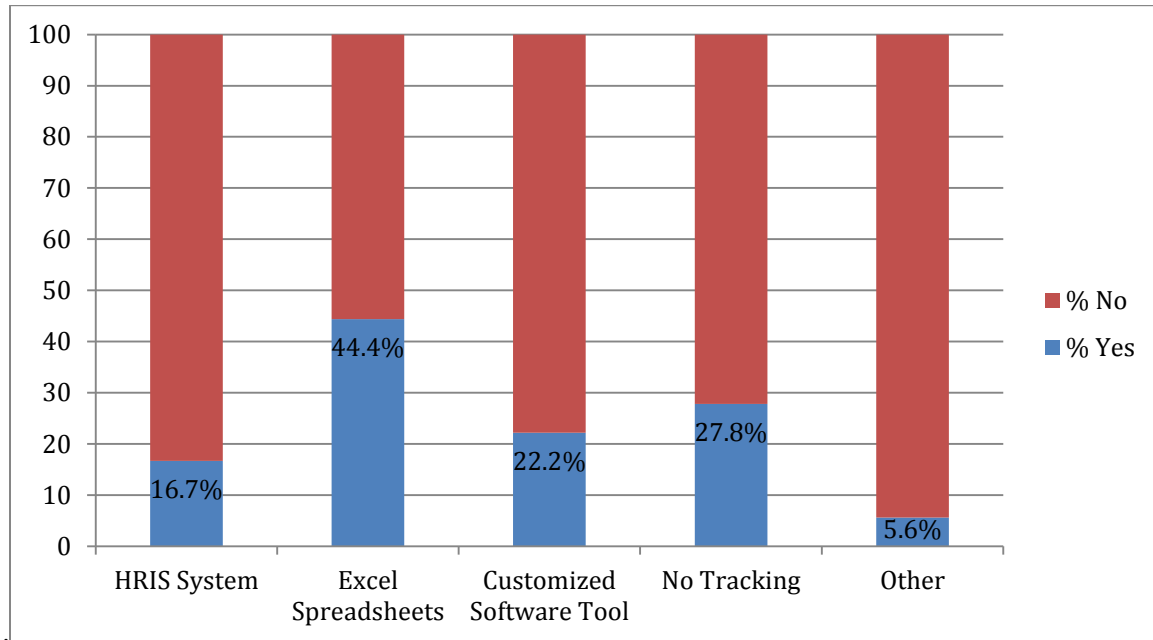
What method does your organization use to keep track of succession planning data? (please select all that apply)



A majority of respondents use Excel spreadsheet to keep track of succession planning data. Only approximately one-third of respondents indicated they used a more sophisticated or integrated system such as an HRIS system. Some of the other tools cited if a participant selected “Other” were “Success Factors Talent System” or “PowerPoint Slides.”

Figure 4.5

If used, what method does your organization use to create and track 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix data? (Please select all that apply)



A small majority of participants selected using the “Excel Spreadsheets” option for this question. Also, a little over a quarter of responses for this question were for the “No Tracking” answer choice. One participant indicated using another tool not already listed in the answer choices, but did not specify as to what tool was used in their organization.

Again, we see a wide variety of methods used by organizations to track employee data from talent planning to turnover and retention.

References

- Campbell, M. & Smith, R. (2008). High-Potential Talent: A View from Inside the Leadership Pipeline. Retrieved from <http://www.ccl.org> .
- Huselid, M. A., Beatty, R. W., & Becker, B. E. (2006). “‘A Players’ or ‘A Positions’?.: The Strategic Logic of Workforce Management.” *Harvard Business Review*, 84(3), 143-144.
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Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

Survey Questions

This survey aims to identify and understand different aspects of an organization's Talent Planning process. You will also be asked questions regarding your organization's use of the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix and some demographic questions about your organization.

The survey will take about 10-15 minutes of your time.

We appreciate your participation!

Does your organization go through a talent review/talent planning/succession planning process, which can be defined as a process through which business leaders plan for the transfer of their organizations and roles to the next generation of workers?

- Yes
- No

What levels of the organization go through the talent planning process? (Please select all that apply)

- Individual Contributors
- Managers
- Executives
- All Employees
- Other (please specify)

What tools are used during the talent planning process? (Please select all that apply)

- 9-Box Grids/Performance x Potential Matrix
- Reviews of Performance Appraisals
- Organization Charts
- 360 Appraisal Data
- Key Financial Metrics
- Organizational Surveys (e.g. Engagement, Climate)
- None of the Above
- Other (Please specify)

How often does your organization conduct a talent review process?

- Annually
- Semi-Annually
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- Never

Does your organization have a process in place to identify High Performers?

- Yes
- No

Does your organization have a process in place to identify High Potentials?

- Yes
- No

Does your organization have clear criteria in order for someone to be identified as a High Potential?

- Yes
- No

If you selected "Yes" to the previous question, please briefly describe that criteria for identifying High Potentials.

How are High Potentials identified within your organization? (please check all that apply)

- Assessments/Surveys
- Committees
- Recommendations from Managers
- No Formal Process in Place
- Other (Please specify)

How extensively is the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix used in your organization?

(The 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix can be defined as a process in which a 3x3 grid is used to plot employees in regards to their level of performance against their level of potential)

- Never
- Seldom
- Frequently
- Always

If used, briefly describe your organization's use of the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix.

Does your organization use a forced distribution to place employees into the individual cells of the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix?

- Yes
- No

Does your organization have definitions/criteria around what each box in the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix mean?

(e.g. top right cell considered "key performer" versus bottom left cell considered "ready to exit the business")

- Yes
- No

If you selected "Yes" to the previous question, what are the definitions?

Once your organization has finalized the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix positions, what is done with the individuals who are in the top right box (i.e. highest in performance and highest in potential)?

- Moved into New Roles with Greater Responsibility and Increased Scope
- Moved into Roles which Could be Considered a "Key Role" or "Key Job"
- Placed into Leadership or Talent Development Programs for Further Development
- Nothing or Kept in Same Role
- Other (please specify)

Once your organization has finalized the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix positions, what is done with the individuals in the bottom left box (i.e. lowest in performance and lowest in potential)?

- Moved into New Roles with Decreased Responsibility and Decreased Scope
- Exited from the Business
- Placed onto Performance Improvement Plans
- Nothing or Kept in Same Role
- Other (please specify)

Does your organization keep a list of "Key Roles" or "Key Jobs" for senior/executive level positions?

- Yes
- No

Does your organization use any criteria to define "Key Roles" or "Key Jobs"?

- Yes
- No

If you selected "Yes" to the previous question, please define the criteria used for "Key Roles"/"KeyJobs" within your organization.

How does placement on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix (either high performer/potential or low performer/potential) influence lists of "Key Roles"/"Key Jobs"?

- Placement on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix has Strict Bearing as We Try to Align Our Lists so that Only High Performers/Potentials are in "Key Roles"/"Key Jobs"
- Placement on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix has No Bearing on Whether an Individual can Be in a "Key Role"/"Key Job"
- Placement on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix has Some Bearing, But Our Organization Uses Additional Criteria in Making Our Final Lists
- Not Applicable

What method does your organization use to keep track of succession planning data? (please select all that apply)

- HRIS System
- Excel Spreadsheets
- Customized Software Tool
- No Tracking
- Other (please specify)

If used, what method does your organization use to create and track 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix data? (please select all that apply)

- HRIS System
- Excel Spreadsheets
- Customized Software Tool
- No Tracking
- Other (please specify)

When you are plotting your employees on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, does your organization use multiple years of performance appraisal data?

- Yes
- No

If you selected "Yes" to the previous question, how many years are included in your assessment of "performance" for the purposes of the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix?

- 2
- 3
- 4
- Other (Please specify)

When plotting employees on the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, do you use number weights to rank order which plots are more valuable to your company?

(i.e. Lower left-hand corner box is weighted as a "1" because it ranks lowest on performance and potential, or middle right-hand box is weighted as an "8" because it ranks highest on potential and middle on performance)

- Yes
- No

When using your 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, does your organization cross-check or compare your ratings against the ratings of another team/department at the same level?

- Yes
- No

If you selected "Yes" to the previous question, to which teams or departments do you cross-check your 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix with?

Does your company track turnover and retention statistics?

- Yes
- No

If your organization uses the 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix, have you ever tracked your turnover and retention statistics according to your 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix cells?

- Yes
- No

If you selected "Yes" to the previous question, what tools does your organization use for this purpose? (please select all that apply)

- HRIS System
- Excel Spreadsheets
- Customized Software Tool
- No Tracking
- Other (please specify)

How closely does your organization link 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix outcomes to financial metrics?

- Not at All
- Seldom
- Close Link

If your organization does link 9-Box Grid/Performance x Potential Matrix outcomes to financial metrics, in what way are they used?

Demographics

Before you end the survey we would like to ask you some questions about your company.

What is the name of your company?

Which type of industry best describes your organization (check all that apply)

- Aerospace
- Automobile
- Chemical
- Delivery
- Entertainment
- Financial (Institutions/Service)
- Food and/or Beverage
- Forest and/or Paper
- General Merchandiser
- Healthcare
- Household and/or Personal Product
- Industrial and/or Farm Equipment
- Insurance
- Metal
- Petroleum Refining
- Pharmaceutical
- Retail
- Technology
- Tobacco
- Wholesaler
- Other (please specify)

Which of the following best describes your organization's total annual revenue (in millions):

- Less than 5.0
- 5.1-10.0
- 10.1-20.0
- 20.1-50.0
- 50.1-100.0
- 100.1-200.0
- 200.1 or More

Which of the following best describes the number of employees at your organization:

- Less than 50,000
- 50,001-75,000
- 75,001-100,000
- 100,001-250,000
- 250,001-500,000
- 500,001-750,000
- 750,001-1,000,000
- 1,000,001 or More

Have you answered these questions on behalf of

- Your division
- Your entire organization
- Other (please specify)

General Comments

Would you or someone on your staff be willing to participate in a follow-up interview

- Yes
- No

Please enter the contact information for the follow-up interview:

Name	<input type="text"/>
Title	<input type="text"/>
Phone Number	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail Address	<input type="text"/>