

# CASE STUDY

This case study covers a sensitive project to support the development of a leadership succession plan for commercial client.

## Our Client



Our client is an established UK based organisation with a long-established track record within their sector. As they prepared for the next stage of growth, their challenge was to balance immediate operational performance improvement with the long-term development of leadership capacity.

## The Problem

The organisation had a mature and long-serving leadership group whose stability had been a strength for many years. However, this longevity had begun to limit innovation, fresh thinking, and objectivity in decision-making. While historically successful, the business was showing signs of stagnation, with:

- An over-reliance on a small number of senior leaders
- Declining commercial performance
- Limited innovation in ideas and initiatives
- Leadership behaviours shaped by a “we’ve always done it this way” mindset
- This combination created both operational and commercial risk, threatening the organisation’s ability to evolve and remain competitive.

Thrive Consulting was engaged to review the organisation’s leadership capability, succession readiness, and critical role coverage, acting as a critical friend to the Executive Team. We provided independent analysis, constructive challenge, and practical support to help the business understand its leadership depth, identify succession risks, and build clarity on where capability development was most needed.



## Our Solution



Our approach combined **qualitative insight** and **quantitative analysis**, ensuring the review reflected both data and lived experience.

We:

- Defined critical leadership roles across the executive function and mapped each to business continuity importance and leadership impact.
- Evaluated internal successors through readiness assessments, using a structured 9-box framework to measure performance, potential, and risk.
- Assessed succession coverage and identified gaps, providing a clear view of key positions.
- Analysed capability strengths and gaps using leadership diagnostic data, surfacing where targeted development or recruitment was needed.
- Modelled risk exposure by combining time-to-readiness, attrition probability, and role criticality, creating a visual heatmap for the Executive Team.
- Facilitated succession planning workshops with the CHRO to agree readiness actions, ownership, and governance cadence.
- Developed a Succession Roadmap, outlining immediate interventions, medium-term development priorities, and long-term leadership pipeline strategy.

Our output provided a single source of truth for succession readiness. The framework was used to drive a leadership succession process.

## The Outcomes



100% of critical roles mapped – each with clear successors identified and readiness levels defined.



CEO successor identified and action plan agreed – ensuring leadership continuity with defined readiness milestones and mentoring support.



Comprehensive risk assessment completed – all leadership positions evaluated for business continuity exposure and mitigation actions agreed.



60% reduction in single-point-of-failure risk – through identified deputies and targeted development plans.

## Our Client Says:

“We always knew succession planning mattered, but we didn’t know how to start. Thrive’s structured yet practical approach made it achievable and energising. The clarity they brought to leadership capability and readiness has transformed how we think about developing our people. We now have a living plan — not just a spreadsheet.”  
(CHRO)

“Succession planning is often viewed as an HR exercise - but when done well, it’s a business continuity strategy. This organisation demonstrated real commitment to embedding it as part of how they lead, review, and grow. The result is a confident leadership pipeline ready for what’s next.”  
(Matt Gascoigne)

Focusing on your most important asset - your people - is critical to achieving sustainable transformation and growth. Yet it is often overshadowed by immediate operational or commercial pressures. At Thrive, we bring assurance to the people side of change helping organisations build leadership strength, clarity, and confidence. We assess, challenge, and strengthen your team, tools, and ways of working to accelerate progress, reduce risk, and create lasting impact.

To discuss further contact:

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