

10 Ways to Use the Knowledge Silo Matrix

The data from the Knowledge Silo Matrix (KSM) can be analyzed and utilized by pool managers, executives and those responsible for talent risk to benefit your pool. Use the KSM to:

- 1. Assess overall staff capabilities and talent risk.** Inventory the expertise and capabilities of your existing team to consider how well your pool is prepared for future changes. Do you have enough people who are learning skills in each silo? Where does your pool experience the greatest number of quality or schedule problems? What is the impact of a mistake in each silo?
- 2. Align talent risk and priorities.** Facilitate a quick and clear conversation within your pool about talent risks and priorities. The KSM creates common language and measures so it is easier to talk about talent risks.
- 3. Plan for future capacity needs.** Plan the skillsets needed to support your pool going forward. Assign apprentice roles according to pool needs in each silo to prepare your operations for the future.
- 4. Manage for overreliance on individual experts.** Spot inefficiencies and bottlenecks caused by people with unique knowledge. Level the workload (including cross-training/mentoring) among your most critical experts. Build apprentices to reduce risks associated with relying on a single expert resource.
- 5. Capitalize on next-generation expertise.** When changing pool business requirements and member needs suggest new skills and expertise will be valuable, identify where and how to best use the knowledge of up-and-coming talent resources.
- 6. Aid in recruiting and retention.** Show your KSM to staffing prospects and your top talent as an indication of how you can help them develop in their careers over time. Each silo represents another area of opportunity for them to drive their own learning and growth.
- 7. Determine structured resource and training needs.** Identify any skillsets that have such a volume of need that they would benefit from more structured developmental resources such as classroom training, templates or written standards.
- 8. Enforce consistency.** Note the skillsets that require uniform application of operational practices among staff. Then, set expectations and drive consistency appropriately.
- 9. Inform staffing structure decisions.** Identify how to successfully size and scope staffing teams and staffing assignments for optimal performance and learning. Enter discussions about adding or reducing headcount based on a shared understanding of talent risk.
- 10. Run scenarios before reorganizing.** Perform “what if” analyses for reorganizing people by projecting silo impacts of the moves. Resulting KSM scenarios will clearly identify how changes impact talent risks and can be used to establish buy-in for reorganizing.