TEAM SKILLS MATRIX
Knowing what we know

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Team Skills Matrix: Knowing what we know

The Team Skills Matrix will help you work out who needs training, who can help you, what the career next-moves are for your team.

You need a skills matrix for your team or department so you can identify:

- Skills gaps or gluts
- Experts, novices, collaborators
- A benchmark

When you identify skills gaps you can

- Plan development to fill the gap (experience, exposure, education)
- Recruit to fill the gap
- Up-skill appropriately
- Show what we need to automate
- Set goals in performance feedback sessions
- Increase collaboration across teams
- Allocate training budget or source in-house experts to train
- Set expectations
- Gamify learning and development opportunities
- Plan development to make people even more valuable

If you know your experts, novices and in-betweens you and your team can:

- Manage performance even better
- Allocate work appropriately
- Retain resources more effectively (through offering challenge and comfort)
- Ask the right expert for help (across departments and sections)
- Borrow the right staff member's brain
- Plan how the department can move ahead
- Gear your management style (look up four quadrant leadership – you should manage competent and confident differently to incompetent and confident, or anything in between)

And a benchmark is important because it means you can:

- Build awareness of skills vs perception of skills (at both individual level and for those managing them)
- Develop individuals
- Use as a tool for recognition
- Create a vision of where the department could be
- nform your change management efforts

You can pimp your skills matrix to do all kinds of things. Always keep in mind **this is a tool, not an end in itself**. It is much better to have a hand-written star chart sticky-taped to the fridge that you actually use than to have a full-on masterpiece semi-completed in your drafts folder.

Sample Skills Matrix

Here's what a simple skills matrix looks like.

	Skill 1	Skill 2	Skill 3	Skill 4	Skill 5	…	Totals
Anton							
Bech							
Carm							
Didi							
Ed							
Frank							
…							
Totals							

Key
1 – Mentor, can teach others
2 – Reliable subject matter expert
3 – Needs some supervision or checking.
0 – Doesn't have this skill

How to populate the skills matrix

Here's how to populate the matrix.

Start by listing your top 10 skills across the top of the matrix.

Secondly, list the names of your team down the left hand side of the matrix.

Finally, rate each person for each of the skills.

I suggest a rating system like this:

> 1 – Mentor, can teach others
> 2 – Reliable subject matter expert
> 3 – Needs some supervision or checking.
> 0 – Doesn't have this skill

This is a basic system. I urge you to start with this and then later add your own bells and whistles.

Analysing the information in the skills matrix

For your first pass, just fill it in. Then look for patterns.

Ask yourself these kinds of questions:

Within the team:

- Where are the gaps? What's the impact of these gaps? What do you need to do to fill them?
- Where are the opportunities? What action should you take to leverage them?
- What does this mean for recruitment, for training, for gamifying learning, for making career progression clearer?
- How can I leverage the knowledge in the team better?
- Who needs help? Who can help them besides me?

For individuals:

- Where are the gaps? What's the impact of these gaps? Which gaps do you need to fill for the team's needs? Which gaps do they want to fill? Which gaps will give them the best career opportunities?
- Where are the opportunities? What action should you take to leverage them? What actions could they take?
- How can you leverage this person's knowledge better? How could they leverage the knowledge of their colleagues and even those in other parts of the organisation?

Pimp your Team Skills Matrix

Once you have the basic team skills matrix up and running, here are some enhancements you could consider.

- Colour-code, make graphs or other visualisations of the information
- Automate it
- Display the matrix prominently so team members can contrast and compare their skills and learn from each other.
- Make an "actual" column for where they are up to now, and a "planned" column, to show development paths and help you plan resources
- Include skills your team don't have now but you would like them to acquire
- Include people skills, not just tech skills
- Use it as the basis for a regular team planning meeting
- Use it to set up who you need to recruit
- Share it with other teams, and ask to see theirs too so you can cross-train.

Tools to complement your skills matrix

So now you have a skills matrix, you might like to check out the other free tools at cindytonkin.com/free-stuff

Consider the Internal Consultant's Consulting Strengths Navigator, the Team discussion guide on Documenting What You Do, or Self-Promotion.

About the author - Cindy Tonkin

Cindy Tonkin is the Consultants' Consultant.

She is a management consultant with more than 20 years experience.

She specialises in soft skills for clever people, and has a niche with data analysts. She runs several consulting brands, improvises, creates visual art and hangs out with her cats in Newtown, NSW Australia.

Cindy's first book, the **Australian Consultants' Guide** helped more than 6000 consultants set up their business.

Cindy gives consultants and managers tools to make doing business with people easy. She is one of the best-educated NLP-trained consultants operating in the business environment, with masters-level qualifications from the Université de Paris VIII and a First-Class Honours Degree from Sydney University. Cindy has worked for big consultancies such as Accenture and KPMG and boutique consultancies like her own. She has truckloads of practical, on-the-floor experience implementing organisational change from Chief Executive to Supervisor Level.

Her clients include major consultancy firms, public service organisations and Financial Services companies with internal consulting forces. She has written a fleet of books on how to make consulting businesses work more effectively, and how to be a better consultant.

In this century all of Cindy's clients have been repeat or referral business, a testament to her good work.

Cindy writes regularly for publications like Mortgage Professional Australia and Executive Excellence magazines. She has been featured on Radio 2GB and ABC Radio, in the Sydney Morning Herald and the Sun-Herald. She is a sought-after keynote speaker on a range of soft skills topics.

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