

Meridian Group Leadership Potential Assessment

Leadership Potential Assessment

Leadership simulation - structured potential evaluation

Participant	Lena Hofmann
Report ID	MER-LP-2026-0117
Assessment	Leadership potential - people-leadership simulation
Scenario	Leading a resistant senior team member through the rollout of a new AI-assisted workflow
Format	AI-led voice simulation, approx. 15-20 minutes
Date of assessment	12 June 2026
Evaluation generated	12 June 2026
Decision owner	Human reviewer, Meridian Group (this report does not decide)

Scope of this report. This report covers the following deliverables: 1) the leadership scoring summary, 2) the key behavioural highlights, and 3) an indicative leadership-readiness level. The full conversation transcript is provided separately. The scenario is fictional; the participant is assessed on leadership behaviour, not domain or technical knowledge.

1. Assessment Summary

This report scores a 15-to-20-minute AI-led leadership simulation, in which Lena led a one-to-one with a long-tenured, skeptical team member who was resisting the rollout of a new AI-assisted workflow, across the five leadership dimensions shown in the scorecard below. The headline: a warm, self-aware people-leader who creates safety and listens well, whose growth edge is leading digital and AI change with conviction.

Across the five dimensions, she led with genuine empathy and strong coaching instincts (Leading People, 4/5) and stayed calm and self-aware under direct challenge (Self-Awareness & Adaptability, 4/5). Her communication was clear but leaned on positional authority rather than a compelling why (Communication & Influence, 3/5), and she took ownership while hedging the harder call (Decision-Making, 3/5). The clear development area was Digital, AI & Innovation Leadership (2/5): she could not yet make a confident, concrete case for the change and fell back on "leadership has decided", which left the team member compliant rather than convinced.

SCORECARD AT A GLANCE

Competency	Score	Band	Weighting
A. Leading & Developing People	4 /5	Strong	Core predictor
B. Communication & Stakeholder Influence	3 /5	Competent	High
C. Decision-Making & Accountability	3 /5	Competent	High
D. Digital, AI & Innovation Leadership	2 /5	Developing	Priority development
E. Self-Awareness & Adaptability	4 /5	Strong	Core predictor
Overall leadership band	People-strong, developing digital-change leader		
Indicative leadership readiness	Ready for a stretch role, with targeted support on leading digital change		

Scale: 5 Excellent, 4 Strong, 3 Competent, 2 Developing, 1 Weak, N/E Not enough evidence. For leadership potential, Leading People and Self-Awareness & Adaptability are read as the strongest predictors of growth; Digital, AI & Innovation Leadership is the priority development dimension for modern roles.

Scoring method and compliance

- Each dimension is scored 1 to 5 from the simulation only; every score is justified with a quoted moment. Behaviour not present in the simulation is marked as not enough evidence rather than assumed.
- The simulation places the participant in a realistic leadership situation and observes behaviour under pressure, rather than relying on self-report.
- This report contains no hiring, promotion or development decision. The indicative readiness level and the leadership band are non-binding observations to support a human reviewer, in line with EU AI Act expectations for AI-assisted assessment.
- Disclosure, consent and wrap-up portions of the call are excluded from scoring; only the in-character simulation is assessed.

2. Leadership Dimensions

A. Leading & Developing People

Score: **4 / 5** (Strong)

BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS

- Opened by acknowledging the team member's experience and asking how he saw the change, rather than leading with the mandate.
- Listened actively and reflected his concerns back accurately, which visibly lowered his defensiveness.
- Coached rather than instructed, drawing out his worry about being sidelined and treating it as legitimate.

STRENGTHS

- Created psychological safety quickly; the team member moved from guarded to candid within a few minutes.
- Specific, genuine recognition of his expertise, used to build trust rather than to flatter.

DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Convert the rapport into a concrete development path for him in the new way of working, not just reassurance.
- Pair the empathy with a clear expectation, so support does not read as optionality.

EVIDENCE

Participant: "You've run this process longer than anyone here. I don't want to lose that - I want to understand what you're worried about before I say anything else."

B. Communication & Stakeholder Influence

Score: **3 / 5** (Competent)

BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS

- Communicated the change clearly and calmly, and kept the conversation structured.
- Leaned on positional framing ("leadership has decided", "this is the direction") more than on a persuasive case the team member could own.
- Did not tailor the why to what he personally values, so agreement came from trust in her rather than belief in the change.

STRENGTHS

- Clear, unhurried and honest; did not oversell or hide the discomfort of the change.
- Held the line on the change without becoming adversarial.

DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Build and lead with a concrete, benefit-led case for the change, tied to what this person cares about.
- Use influence rather than authority; authority wins compliance, not commitment.

EVIDENCE

Participant: "I know it's a big shift, but this is the direction the company is going, and I need us to get on board with it."

C. Decision-Making & Accountability

Score: **3 / 5** (Competent)

BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS

- Took ownership of the rollout and did not hide behind the team member's resistance.
- Hedged the harder call: when he pushed for an exemption, she deferred to "let's see how the trial goes" rather than setting a clear expectation.
- Made a sensible, low-risk decision (a trial on one workflow) but framed it as a concession rather than a deliberate plan.

STRENGTHS

- Owned the change and her role in it; did not blame "them upstairs" even while citing them.
- Chose a pragmatic, reversible first step rather than forcing a confrontation.

DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Decide and state the expectation clearly, then offer support, rather than trading the expectation away to keep the peace.
- Separate how we roll it out (negotiable) from whether we adopt it (not), and be explicit about which is which.

EVIDENCE

Participant: "Okay, let's not decide everything today. Let's see how the trial goes and take it from there." (a reasonable step, framed as a concession)

D. Digital, AI & Innovation Leadership

Score: **2 / 5** (Developing)

BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS

- Could not articulate a confident, concrete case for the new AI-assisted workflow beyond "it will save time" and "the company has decided".
- When challenged on what the tool actually does and why it is better, she acknowledged she was still learning it herself, which undercut her authority on the change.
- Did not connect the change to a wider purpose or to how the team's work evolves, so it read as a tool swap rather than a shift in how the team creates value.

STRENGTHS

- Honest about the limits of her own knowledge rather than bluffing, which protected trust.
- Open and curious about the technology rather than dismissive of his concerns about it.

DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Build genuine fluency in the change she is asked to lead; a leader cannot inspire conviction in a shift she cannot explain.
- Frame digital and AI change as a way the team's work and value grow, not as a mandate to comply with.

EVIDENCE

Participant: "Honestly, I'm still getting my head around exactly what it does, but I'm told it's a big improvement." (candid, but it cost her credibility on the change)

E. Self-Awareness & Adaptability

Score: **4 / 5** (Strong)

BEHAVIOURAL OBSERVATIONS

- Stayed calm and non-defensive when the team member challenged her directly, including about her own grasp of the tool.
- Named her own learning curve openly and adjusted her approach mid-conversation when the mandate framing was not landing.
- Read the team member's emotional state accurately and slowed down when he became guarded.

STRENGTHS

- Secure self-awareness; comfortable saying "I don't fully know yet" without losing composure.
- Adapted in real time, shifting from telling to listening when the room cooled.

DEVELOPMENT AREAS

- Pair the humility with visible conviction; self-awareness lands best when the leader still projects direction.
- Use the adaptability proactively to pre-empt resistance, not only to recover from it.

EVIDENCE

Participant: "Fair point - and I'll be honest, I don't have all the answers on this yet. Let me come back to you with specifics rather than wing it."

3. Critical Leadership Indicators

Each indicator is rated Low, Moderate or High from the in-character simulation only.

Indicator	Rating	Justification
Self-awareness	High	Named her own learning curve openly and stayed composed when challenged on it.
Empathy & active listening	High	Reflected the team member's concerns back accurately; visibly lowered his defensiveness.
Coaching & developing others	High	Drew out his worries and treated them as legitimate rather than instructing.
Influence & persuasion	Moderate	Leaned on positional authority; won compliance through trust, not a compelling case.
Decisiveness	Moderate	Owned the rollout but hedged the harder expectation when pushed.
Resilience under challenge	High	Calm and non-defensive when challenged directly about her own grasp of the change.
Digital & AI confidence	Low to Moderate	Could not explain the tool or its value with conviction; still learning it herself.
Change advocacy	Low to Moderate	Framed the change as a mandate to comply with rather than a shift worth believing in.

4. Key Conversation Outcome

How the pivotal moment was handled: The team member moved from resistant to willing to trial the new workflow, out of trust in Lena rather than belief in the change.

Read as an alignment ladder from defensive, through tolerant, to willing-to-try, to genuinely committed and an advocate, the conversation reached willing-to-try. Lena's listening and recognition got the team member to agree to a trial on one workflow and to keep an open mind. She did not reach genuine conviction: he is cooperating because he trusts her as a manager, not because she gave him a reason to believe the change makes his work better. A strong outcome on people-leadership; an incomplete one on leading the change itself.

THE PIVOTAL EXCHANGE

Participant: "Would you be willing to run it on just the one workflow for a few weeks, and we review it together, honestly?"

Team member: "For you, I'll try it. I'm still not sold that it's better than what I do now." (agreement on trust, not conviction)

Participant: "That's fair, and that's all I'm asking. Let me get you the specifics so it's not just my word for it." (recovered well, but the case still owed)

5. Key Behavioural Highlights

1. **[Strength]** Turned a defensive opener into candour by leading with recognition, not the mandate.

Participant: "You've run this process longer than anyone here. I want to understand what you're worried about before I say anything else."

2. **[Strength]** Stayed secure and honest under a direct challenge to her own credibility.

Participant: "I'll be honest, I don't have all the answers on this yet. Let me come back with specifics rather than wing it."

3. **[Development]** Fell back on authority instead of a persuasive case for the change.

Participant: "This is the direction the company is going, and I need us to get on board with it."

4. **[Development]** Could not yet articulate the value of the AI change with conviction.

Participant: "I'm still getting my head around exactly what it does, but I'm told it's a big improvement."

6. Indicative Leadership Readiness (Non-binding)

Indicative readiness: Ready for a stretch role, with targeted support on leading digital change

Overall leadership band: People-strong, developing digital-change leader

The strongest signals for leadership potential are present: genuine empathy, coaching instinct, composure under challenge, and secure self-awareness. These are the hardest dimensions to teach and among the best predictors of growth into a bigger role.

The clear, coachable gap is leading digital and AI change: she manages people well but cannot yet carry conviction on the change itself, and defaults to authority when the case runs thin. This is learnable with exposure and a deliberate plan. A reviewer might read her as ready for a stretch role now, paired with targeted development on digital-change leadership and on converting empathy into clear expectations.

Disclaimer. This indicative readiness level and leadership band are non-binding observations derived from a single 15-to-20-minute simulation. They are intended to support a human reviewer making any development, promotion or hiring decision, and are not a decision, a ranking, or an automated assessment of the person.