

Group Activity: Leadership Development Strategy Simulation

Objective:

To help students apply theoretical frameworks (Leadership Pipeline, Human Capital Theory, RBV) to diagnose leadership capability gaps and design a leadership development strategy that improves organisational performance.

Scenario for Students

You are the **senior leadership team** of a rapidly growing medium-sized organisation (300–600 employees).

The company is facing several challenges:

- Inconsistent leadership capability across departments
- Over-reliance on external recruitment for senior roles
- Weak succession planning
- High turnover among early-career employees
- Poor cross-functional collaboration
- Declining innovation and staff engagement
- Difficulty competing with larger firms for talent

The Board has requested a **complete leadership development strategy** to strengthen long-term organisational capability.

Task (60 minutes)

Each group (4–5 students) must:

1. Identify 3 major leadership capability gaps using session concepts

Examples students may choose:

- Leadership Pipeline breakdown (e.g., Manager of Others → Manager of Managers gap)
- Weak human capital investment (training inconsistent/no LD budget)
- Lack of leadership culture (no shared values or leadership model)
- Leadership not aligned with strategic goals
- No competitive advantage through people (RBV gap)

2. Propose at least 3 actionable leadership development strategies

Strategies can include:

- ✓ A structured **Leadership Pipeline development programme**
- ✓ Succession planning framework
- ✓ Coaching and mentoring system
- ✓ Leadership academies or internal training
- ✓ Human Capital investment (training, EI, decision-making, problem-solving)
- ✓ RBV-focused cultural development (creating unique, inimitable leadership behaviours)
- ✓ Cross-functional leadership rotations
- ✓ Leadership competency frameworks
- ✓ Internal promotions policy with leadership readiness assessments

3. Apply the three frameworks directly in their solution

Groups must explicitly use:

- **Leadership Pipeline Model**
→ Where are the gaps? How will development support each passage?
- **Human Capital Theory (Becker)**
→ How is LD an investment? How will ROI be demonstrated?
- **Resource-Based View (RBV)**
→ How will stronger leadership become valuable, rare, inimitable, and organisationally embedded?

4. Prepare a 5-minute presentation or poster covering:

- Key leadership gaps identified
- Proposed LD strategies
- How each strategy aligns with the three frameworks
- Expected organisational benefits (e.g., retention, innovation, culture, productivity)
- **Measurement of success**
 - Leadership competency assessments
 - Retention rates
 - Internal promotion ratios

- Employee engagement
- Innovation metrics
- Cross-functional collaboration scores
- Training evaluations (Kirkpatrick levels)

Presentation & Reflection (5 mins per group + 10-minute debrief)

Class Discussion Prompts

- What leadership gaps appeared most frequently?
- Which strategies demonstrated strong theoretical alignment?
- Which solutions reflect practices used by real organisations (e.g., NHS, Amazon, Microsoft, Unilever)?
- How does leadership development create long-term organisational value?
- Which solutions would be most effective in a rapidly changing environment?