

UIC

Knowledge Loss Risk Assessment



Instructions – Complete the steps below to assess knowledge loss risk.

1. Identify positions that are key to business goals and objectives using **Points to Consider when Identifying Key Positions**.
2. Once key positions are identified, identify employees who possess knowledge that is both crucial and unique to those positions using **Position Risk Factor** table.
3. Estimate timeframe for retirement/departure using **Retirement/Departure Factor** table.
4. Use **Total Attrition Factor** formula to calculate Total Attrition Factor (TAF).
5. Use **Total Attrition Factor Weighting Scale** to determine priority for planning for future of position.

STEP 1: Identify Key Positions

Management must identify positions that are key to UIC's goals and objectives. A key position is not necessarily determined by the location of the position on an organizational chart, but rather by its influence on UIC's overall performance.

Points to Consider when Identifying Key Positions

✓	Mission critical tasks are activities that, if left undone, will result in an adverse effect on the accomplishment of UIC and college/unit goals and objectives.
✓	Unique expertise is crucial knowledge or expertise that is inherent to the position. If possessed by the incumbent, this places that person in a technical leadership position
✓	Organizational fit describes the position's area of responsibility and its importance to the overall organizational structure.
✓	Strategic location is determined on a job-by-job basis. In one location a position may be "key," but in another, it may not.
✓	Decision-making responsibilities are assessed based on the position's role as a part of the decision-making process, or how it frees others to make critical decisions.

Adapted from State of New York's Succession Planning Criteria for a Key Position program.

STEP 2: Identify Knowledge and Skills

Once key positions are identified, use the chart below to identify employees who possess knowledge that is both **crucial and unique** to those positions.

Position Risk Factor

5	Critical and unique knowledge or skills: This is mission-critical knowledge, college- or unit-specific knowledge that is undocumented and requires three to five years of experience to bring skills to journey level. No skilled replacement is available to move into the position.
4	Critical knowledge and skills: The knowledge and skills are mission-critical. Limited duplication exists in other positions, units, or colleges, and only limited documentation exists to guide employee moving into this position. It requires two to four years of focused training and experience.
3	Important organizational knowledge and skills: Documentation exists for the knowledge and skills and/or other personnel on site possess the knowledge/skills necessary to be successful in these positions. Applicants can generally be trained in one to two years.
2	Procedural or non-mission-critical knowledge and skills: Clear, up-to-date procedures exist. Training programs in place are current and effective. Training can be completed in less than one year.
1	Common knowledge and skills: External hires possessing the knowledge/skills are readily available and require little additional training.

Adapted from Tennessee Valley Authority's Knowledge Retention Program.

STEP 3: Estimate Timeframe

Apply a rating of 1 - 5 (according to chart below) to estimate the timing and probability of the incumbent retiring or leaving the key position. Attrition data can be gathered at least two ways at present: A manager's survey of employee population to get an estimate of probable retirement dates, or manager's awareness of the career paths of their staff (For example: Are some employees looking to advance their careers by moving on to another job, or might some be less than satisfied in their current job?).

Retirement/Departure Factor

5	Projected attrition date within one year
4	Projected attrition date within one to two years
3	Projected attrition date within two to three years
2	Projected attrition date within three to five years
1	Projected attrition date is more than five years

STEP 4: Calculate Total Attrition Factor

Multiply Position Risk Factor and Retirement/Departure Factor numbers to calculate Total Attrition Factor. See formula below:

$$\text{Position Risk Factor (PRF)} \times \text{Retirement/Departure Factor (RDF)} = \text{Total Attrition Factor (TAF)}$$

STEP 5: Determine Priority Level

Check weighting scale below to determine priority for planning for position, including necessary actions.

Total Attrition Factor Weighting Scale

20-25	High Priority and Immediate Action Needed: Action plan with due dates should be developed to include the method of knowledge transfer and specific training required.
16-19	Priority with Candidate Development Planning Needed: Planning should include method and timing of replacement, recruitment efforts and the method by which knowledge will be transferred.
10-15	High Importance: Assess how position will be filled in the future.
1-9	Important: Recognize the functions of the position and determine the transfer timing and methods.

Sample Risk Assessment Worksheet

Dept. Name	Job Title	Incumbent	Anticipated Retirement Date	Source: Employee, Estimated Date, or Other	Retirement Factor	Position Risk Factor	Total Attrition Factor	Risk Level
HR	Senior Project Coordinator	Jane Doe	4/1/09	Employee	5	X	5 = 25	A
HR	Business Analyst	John Doe	6/10/14	Survey	2	X	3 = 6	D

Score Rating & Risk Level Legend

A	20 – 25 = High Priority, immediate action needed
B	16 – 19 = Priority; staffing plans should be established
C	10 – 15 = High Importance; look ahead to how the position will be filled or the work accomplished
D	1 – 9 = Important; intermediate succession planning triggered