



Chief of Staff Readiness Assessment

Feedback Report

PREPARED FOR

Aarron McGurk

DATE COMPLETED

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DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Niki Bradley

MD of NB Executive Solutions

OVERALL SCORE

256 / 300



SCORE BAND

Operating at Chief of Staff Level

SCENARIO PATTERN

Structural Intelligence

85%



Overall Readiness Summary

A comprehensive view of capability and development opportunity.



Aarron's response puts him firmly in the "Operating at Chief of Staff Level" band, with an impressive score of 256/300. He is a genuinely capable operator, who builds strong relationships, is politically astute, and disciplined enough to deliver what he commits to. The development opportunity for Aarron is not foundational – it is about building his commercial 'armour', and assertiveness, to match the relational and operational capability he already has.

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Three Strengths

The capabilities that define this profile.

1. Influence Without Authority

25/25

A perfect score here is rare; and this is significant. Aaron demonstrates that he has a consistent ability to operate without formal authority, building coalitions before resistance appears, and challenging upwards without damaging the relationship. In the CoS role, almost everything is achieved through influence without authority, and this is his single most valuable strength.

2. Organisational and Cultural Awareness

25/25

Aaron is able to read organisations with real sophistication. He understands who actually holds influence, can read the room in high-stakes situations, and is politically aware without being manipulative. This gives him a significant advantage in the CoS role, where the unwritten rules matter as much as the formal ones.

3. Project and Execution Discipline

24/25

Aaron delivers on his commitments. He defines scope, identifies dependencies and tracks progress in order to close projects properly. This is a combination of intelligence and execution discipline, and is exactly what separates a true CoS from a well-connected generalist.

Two Risk Areas

Where development and investment will have the greatest impact.

1. Prioritisation and Judgement

18/25

This is Aaron's lowest score, and the pattern within it is worth examining. He scores highly on knowing what matters, and on saying no without damaging relationships, but drops significantly on avoiding work that doesn't create real value. The risk here is that his relational instincts and willingness to help can override his judgement about where his time belongs. In the CoS role (which is relentlessly demanding), and where time's the scarcest resource, this tendency will be tested daily.

2. Personal Resilience and Presence

19/25

Aaron's resilience scores suggest someone who is capable under pressure but not yet fully insulated from it. The specific dip (on recovering from setbacks), is worth taking seriously. The Chief of Staff role is one of the most demanding in any organisation, and without deliberate investment in how he recovers from difficulty, the role will expose this gap quickly.

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Scenario Analysis

How decisions reveal capability beyond self-assessment.

OBSERVED PATTERN

Structural Intelligence

Aarron's scenario choices are consistently the highest maturity responses available, and his rationales show genuine depth of thinking. He clarifies before acting, facilitates rather than dictates, and understands when to hold and when to move. The note on Scenario 4 ("details and diagnosis always before escalation"), is a particularly strong indicator of someone who has internalised good CoS instincts rather than simply selecting the right answer.

CONTRADICTION WITH SELF-RATING

There is no classical contradiction between his self-ratings and his scenario choices (both are strong). However, his own written commentary introduces a more subtle and interesting tension. He openly acknowledges weaker areas around direct confrontation and pushback, and describes his compensation strategy as using foresight to pre-empt the need for them. This is intelligent and often very effective, but it is a workaround rather than a solution. The scenarios in this assessment happen to reward the structured (facilitative) approach, that is also his natural style. In real situations where pre-emption hasn't worked, and direct challenge is unavoidable, the underlying avoidance tendency may surface.

"The scenarios reward the structured, facilitative approach that is also his natural style. In real situations where direct challenge is unavoidable, the underlying avoidance tendency may surface."

The Single Acceleration Lever

The one shift that unlocks the most.

Building commercial confidence as the missing piece of his armour.

He already has the relationships, the execution discipline, and the cultural intelligence to operate at the highest level. What he doesn't yet have is the ability to back his position with hard commercial argument when it counts. Right now (when direct challenge is required), his instinct is to pre-empt it - which works until it doesn't. If he can argue with numbers, he will need to rely less on avoidance, and that will take significant pressure off his resilience too. This is one shift that quietly unlocks three things at once.

THIS ONE SHIFT UNLOCKS:

- 1 Commercial assertiveness
- 2 Reduced avoidance under pressure
- 3 Strengthened resilience

Recommended Next Steps

Tailored pathways for continued development.

Based on Aarron's results and the development arc identified, my recommended first step would be Option A, followed by Option C:

A 90-Minute Readiness Debrief

RECOMMENDED

Aarron's results are strong and his self-awareness is genuine. The most valuable immediate step is a structured conversation about what the findings really mean for him – not just the scores, but the patterns, the triangle identified across B, C and L, and what closing those gaps would actually look like in practice. This session will give him clarity on his priorities and a clear direction of travel before committing to anything further.

B 6-Week Influence and Authority Accelerator

Aarron's scores in Influence Without Authority and Organisational and Cultural Awareness are both perfect. Directing him towards an influence-focused programme would be working on his strongest ground rather than his most important development need. His time and investment would be better spent elsewhere.

C 3-Month Chief of Staff Capability Programme

RECOMMENDED

This is where I would expect Aarron to land. His score of 256/300 means he is not starting from scratch – he is refining and strengthening a profile that is already operating close to the level. The programme covers strategy, governance, commercial fluency and executive influence in combination, which is precisely what his development arc requires. The commercial confidence piece cannot be built in isolation – it needs to be developed alongside the strategic and governance context that gives it weight.

Your Next Chapter

Starts with a conversation.

GET IN TOUCH

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