



How the Department of National Defence Increased Representation of Visible Minorities Within the Executive Cadre

CLIENT
**Department of National
Defence**

TIME
3 days

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES
400+

THE CHALLENGE

The Department of National Defence (DND) identified a critical gap in representation within its executive ranks. Despite a diverse applicant pool, visible minorities, Indigenous Peoples, and Persons with Disabilities were significantly underrepresented in leadership roles. DND's traditional promotion process, heavily reliant on subjective measures and reference checks, was often influenced by biases, particularly at key decision points. For example, Black employees, despite making up 10% of the talent pool, accounted for only 6.6% of those in leadership roles.

To address these challenges, DND set two main objectives:

- 1. Improve diversity within the executive ranks, with a focus on visible minorities and underrepresented groups.**
- 2. Create a more standardized, competency-based internal promotions process that would ensure fair assessment across all employees.**

DND also aimed to explore alternatives to its traditional approaches by piloting Knockri's assessment platform for internal talent management and promotion. Success would mean both achieving a more representative leadership cadre and establishing a sustainable framework for equitable promotions.

THE SOLUTION

Knockri worked closely with DND to design a custom assessment solution aligned with the Government of Canada's six Key Leadership Competencies (KLCs). This solution included an automated, AI-driven framework that assessed and scored each employee on relevant competencies, removing personal identifiers and mitigating unconscious bias. Key elements of the Knockri solution included:

- **Customized Competency Assessment:** Knockri used the DND's existing leadership competencies to build a targeted assessment framework. This allowed for a seamless integration of DND's values and priorities into a structured evaluation process, which helped ensure that promotions were grounded in skill and performance.
- **Automated Leadership Pools:** Knockri's platform created pre-assessed talent pools of high-potential employees who were ready for executive roles. This enabled DND to quickly identify and promote individuals from diverse backgrounds who were already vetted for leadership competencies.
- **Performance Feedback:** After completing assessments, every individual received personalized feedback detailing their strengths and potential areas for growth, allowing them to refine their skills and prepare for future promotions.
- **Detailed Analytics for HR:** Knockri provided DND with analytics and insights on diversity representation within the talent pool, enabling HR teams to track progress toward diversity goals and make data-driven promotion decisions.

In total, over 400 employees were evaluated across the six competencies, and accommodations were offered to ensure accessibility and fairness. Knockri's assessments were validated through human reviewers to ensure alignment with the competencies, and employees provided an overall satisfaction score of 4.4/5.



Leadership Impact




232 


Hours of interviews autoscored and shortlisted in under 3 days
– Over \$300,000 in cost saving

20% 

The top 20th percentile of highest performing candidates were Women and Persons with Disabilities

93% 

Of employees completed the assessment

88% 

Average employee feedback score

THE IMPACT

Knockri's solution brought measurable improvements in DND's talent management processes, particularly in promoting diversity within its leadership. Key outcomes included:

- **Time and Cost Savings:** With a 45% reduction in cost per screened employee, Knockri's automated assessments saved DND over \$300,000 by autoscoreing 232 hours of interviews in under three days.
- **Accelerated Time to Promote:** The average time to promote was reduced by 60%, allowing DND to rapidly evaluate and identify top talent within a three-day window, expediting the entire promotion cycle.
- **Increased Diversity in Leadership:** Representation of visible minorities, women, and persons with disabilities rose by 25% within the executive candidate pool. Women and persons with disabilities made up a substantial portion of the top 20th percentile of high-performing individuals.
- **High Employee Engagement and Positive Feedback:** An impressive 93% of employees completed the assessment, highlighting the platform's accessibility and fairness. Additionally, employees rated their experience with Knockri's assessment process highly, giving it an average feedback score of 88%.

45%

Reduced cost per employee

60%

Reduced average time to promote

25%

Increased diversity in leadership

Through this initiative, DND not only advanced its diversity and inclusion efforts but also laid the foundation for a more equitable, data-driven approach to talent management. Knockri's platform provided DND with the tools to make the promotion process more transparent and fair, with a lasting impact on the diversity of its leadership.

“Knockri saved us time & helped us uncover diverse and better-performing talent to promote.”



Kin Choi

Former CHRO of Department of National Defence,
Government of Canada

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