



**Macdonald
Associates
Consultancy**

Work Complexity

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For any organisation to be successful, there are a number of problems that need to be solved to get the work done. Some of these problems are more complex than others. Problems become more complex when they have more variables, which are less tangible, more interlinked and with greater ambiguity and uncertainty, with results further into the future and their cause and effect less easy to discern.

A role is created by linking tasks of different complexity together. A role will have some tasks of greater or lesser complexity than others but the complexity of the bulk of the tasks should define the level of the role. Because of the distribution of capability, in particular mental processing (cognitive) ability, there will be fewer and fewer people who can solve the problems as complexity increases. So, it is really important to understand the complexity of work in a role so that we can put the right person with the right capability in that role and expect them to be successful.