

Competency Framework (example)

Below is a basic set of competencies that can be applied to everyone in an organisation with leadership in their role.

Competencies provide a process for senior leaders to define the knowledge, skills and behaviours required from people, especially managers.

In use, everyone needs to understand them and they should underpin development and provide a basis for feedback to people at all levels.

Supervisors and managers (at all levels) must role model them well if they are to be impactful.

In the past, organisations have sought to define and deliver such frameworks. However, they are much stronger if people at all levels are engaged in their development – even if only to define the day to day behaviours that reflect the desired culture. In this respect ownership is all – the framework should reflect the prevailing culture in terms of ‘How we do things round here’.

Business Focus

The will and ability to think beyond own day to day activities in a strategic way that takes account of the implications of issues, decisions and actions across the organisation. Generating business focused ideas, decisions and actions which contribute to organisational strategy and goals.

Has an up to date understanding of organisation's operations, business strategy and objectives. Sees and communicates the bigger picture and shows foresight. Anticipates problems and generates ideas.

- Actively updates own and others' awareness of direction and objectives.
- Demonstrates a knowledge of organisation, its business and the competition.
- Understands how each area contributes to the operation.
- Sees and communicates the bigger picture.
- Searches out sources of information to better inform own business thinking.
- Sees connections and implications across the organisation.
- Thinks ahead rather than only pursuing own short term objectives.
- Promotes a positive image with internal and external customers and staff.

Communications

The ability to convey complex thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively, in both spoken and written English. Able to negotiate with and persuade others using an appropriate range of styles.

Communicates effectively at all levels and in all situations, using a range of techniques to gain commitment outside formal authority. States own position assertively, orally and in writing.

- Clear oral and written communication in all situations.
- Conveys complex ideas and data clearly in all situations.
- Tailors communication to meet needs of a wide variety of audiences inside organisation.
- States own views persuasively and with vigor.
- Supports own case with well reasoned arguments.
- Openly states non-negotiable issues without alienating others.
- Anticipates and overcomes objections.
- Demonstrates ability to see other viewpoints.
- Negotiates successful outcomes on internally disputed issues.
- Applies a range of persuasive strategies.
- Applies a range of influencing skills.
- Persuades and influences without resort to formal authority.

Confidence and Control

The ability to appear calm and perform effectively in challenging and stressful circumstances. Projecting a belief in own ability to exercise sound, independent judgment and acting decisively. Acknowledging when others' skills and ideas and proposals are superior. Accepting accountability for own actions and continuing to direct with confidence the work of others in difficult situations.

Calm under pressure, can express ideas and views clearly and confidently. Handles criticism, makes decisions and takes personal responsibility in own business area and stands own ground without alienating others. Understands own strengths and limitations and can allow others to contribute without losing control of the situation.

- Shows confidence in own decisions and proposals.
- Remains calm under pressure.
- Invites and acts on feedback, handling it positively.
- Stands own ground non-defensively with peers and senior management.
- Takes departmental responsibility for the buck.
- Consistently uses languages that takes personal responsibility.
- In meetings, lets others have their say, reining in control when appropriate.
- Meets own agenda without preventing others from expressing theirs.
- Aware of own limitations without dwelling on them.
- Projects clearly and confidently in presentations to peers.
- Projects voice clearly and articulately in most situations.
- When under pressure, remains calm and confident displaying body language that is consistent with this.

Customer Focus

The will and ability to provide a level of service that consistently exceeds internal and external customer expectations. Working to identify what the customer will want tomorrow as well as today and setting excellent customer service standards that will differentiate the organisation from its competitors.

Continually focuses self and team on the importance of quality and service. Seeks clarity on what customers expect, their needs and concerns, acting on feedback to ensure internal and external customer satisfaction and ensuring information on best practice is shared across the business.

- Identifies the full range of internal and external customers and listens to their needs.
- Anticipates internal and external customers' needs and concerns.
- Focuses self and others consistently on delivering quality and company standards.
- Sets clear service standards for internal and external customer service.
- Monitors and evaluates internal and external customer feedback to identify improvements in customer service.
- Identifies best practice in own operations and shares the information.
- Displays and encourages commitment to deliver service level agreements.
- Works with customers, suppliers and colleagues to improve service.

Interpersonal Awareness (relationships)

The will and ability to foster and maintain relationships with others without discrimination. Listening and addressing their concerns and feelings, displaying sensitivity, addressing contentious issues openly whilst maintaining an effective channel for productive communication.

Addresses needs and concerns of customers and colleagues using appropriate language and behaviour. Listening, acting on information, showing sensitivity and understanding. Consistently demonstrates an awareness of equal opportunities. Monitors and modifies behaviour in response to others, giving constructive and supportive feedback.

- In familiar situations, puts others at ease and builds rapport.
- Fosters and maintains relationships inside the company.
- Shows sensitivity and empathy to others' needs and concerns; takes an active interest in their views and ideas.
- Takes time to listen and to understand the reasons for others' points of view and behaviour. Checks to test own understanding.
- Observes, interprets and responds to others' non-verbal behaviour.
- Monitors and modifies own behaviour in response to others, even when faced with unhelpful or negative behaviour from others.
- Gives feedback which can be handled by the receiver.
- Generally expresses self assertively without alienating others.
- Addresses conflict and contentious issues openly and with sensitivity.

Leadership

The will and ability to channel individual and group effort to achieve business goals and deliver to the highest standard.

Assigns clear roles and responsibilities at a team and individual level that are aimed at getting the best out of the team. Delegates work to get the required results, monitoring and giving feedback on performance and taking corrective action when it falls below standard.

- Uses resources effectively to achieve optimum results.
- Co-ordinates and directs the work of others to achieve demanding targets.
- Assigns clear responsibilities to subordinates.
- Sets and communicates clear limits of responsibility.
- Delegates work according to skills of others to achieve required results.
- Confronts and resolves performance problems.
- Ensures individuals have the up to date information required to achieve targets and standards.
- Listens to the team and is receptive and responsive.
- Gives clarity of goals and procedures.
- Gives regular balanced feedback on performance.
- Takes ownership for situations and problems. Guides the team to achieve goals and targets.

Planning and organisation

The will and ability to define goals, establish priorities, allocate the use of resources, plan and organise the work of others to achieve challenging objectives. Monitoring progress and identifying action to ensure goals are achieved despite challenging obstacles and change.

Defines goals and develops plans to ensure the contribution of own business area to company goals, identifying clear roles and responsibilities for self and others. Obtains and allocates resources and monitors progress towards delivering outputs to specified time scales and standards.

- Defines short and medium term goals to meet own and team contribution to organisational goals.
- Develops clear, realistic management and operational plans to achieve objectives.
- Sets targets, schedules and time scales for self and others to meet deadlines.
- Organises own and others' work to achieve objectives whilst making best use of resources.
- Uses monitoring systems to ensure planned targets are achieved.
- Builds contingency planning into operational plans.
- Reorganises resources swiftly to ensure progress is maintained.
- Anticipates resources required and plans to obtain these.
- Designs systems and methods to make best use of resources.

Problem Solving and decision making

The will and ability to apply a logical thought processes. Identifying causes and thinking through the consequences of different decisions or courses of action to develop clear criteria for effective decision making.

Brings structure to most situations and problems, seeing the relationship between different sets of data, thinking beyond the obvious to produce solutions and looking ahead to minimise risk.

- Applies a logical process to analysing data.
- Sifts data to identify relevant information to support the formulation of solutions within own area of responsibility.
- Uses available criteria for making decisions.
- Identifies data on which conclusions are based.
- Identifies underlying causes to most problems.
- Identifies trends and patterns.
- Makes timely decisions.
- Knows the right questions to ask.
- Knows the limits within which decisions can be made and when to step outside them.
- Prepared to make and stand by own decisions.
- Makes sound decisions within short time scales when required.

Teamworking

The will and ability to work collaboratively as part of a team to achieve organisational goals. Fostering a cooperative spirit, showing commitment to teamwork and motivation to pursue team as well as own goals.

A co-operative teamworker who interacts positively with colleagues, builds a strong sense of team identity; supports organisational decisions, puts and encourages effort into pulling in the same direction.

- Puts effort into pulling in the same direction in order to meet the organisations strategy.
- Emphasises the importance of teamworking by ensuring team members understand how their role and objectives fit with organisational goals.
- Consistently communicates information to help team see how their work contributes to that of the team.
- Builds a strong team identity within own team.
- Supports management decisions.
- Willingly volunteers information and skills across the organisation.
- Gives positive feedback, encouragement and support to colleagues.
- Responsive to feedback from colleagues.
- Builds on others' contributions.
- Ensures all team members participate.