



Harvard University

Competency
Dictionary

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(Sample) Overview of Competencies

What are Competencies?

Competencies, in the most general terms, are “things” that an individual must demonstrate to be effective in a job, role, function, task, or duty. These “things” include job-relevant behavior (what a person says or does that results in good or poor performance), motivation (how a person feels about a job, organization, or geographic location), and technical knowledge/skills (what a person knows/demonstrates regarding facts, technologies, a profession, procedures, a job, an organization, etc.). Competencies are identified through the study of jobs and roles.

Competencies and Performance Development/Management

Over the years performance management has progressed from personality- and outcomes-based approaches that provided no constructive developmental focus on behaviors- to approaches that recognize the need to provide individuals with feedback on job responsibilities/objectives as well as competencies—or behaviors. At the individual level this focus on competencies enables people to take a proactive role in their own development by providing guidance in behavior change efforts. At the organizational level the focus on competencies in performance development/management enables us to align individual performance with values and strategy while maximizing individual performance in the pursuit of specific work-related objectives and behaviors.

Performance can be measured against competencies. These measurements then are used to make hiring, promotion, and succession decisions and to guide training and development efforts. The use of competencies has been a key success for many universities and organizations undergoing rapid and dramatic changes.

What do I do with all these competencies?

As you review the competencies, please remember that competencies help to describe “how” work gets accomplished (by engaging knowledge, skills, and abilities). They represent one [important] dimension of work. They do not describe “what” gets accomplished in terms of results, responsibilities, deliverables, or specific project objectives. Competencies are used to plan, guide, and develop behavior/performance. Your goal in using this guide is **not** to pick as many competencies as possible that may apply to your job. The key is to focus on the top 8-10 (there is no magic number) most critical competencies as a competency framework/model, then narrow those down to the top 3-5 for use in performance development/management. When choosing those 3-5 competencies, a good practice is to pick a few competencies that are important strengths (based on your goals), to continue to build upon. In addition, pick a few competencies that may be developmental. This provides balance between strengths and developmental needs.

Adaptability

Maintaining effectiveness when experiencing major changes in work tasks or the work environment; adjusting effectively to work within new work structures, processes, requirements, or cultures.

Key Actions

- **Tries to understand changes**—Tries to understand changes in work tasks, situations, and environment as well as the logic or basis for change; actively seeks information about new work situations.
- **Approaches change or newness positively**—Treats change and new situations as opportunities for learning or growth; focuses on the beneficial aspects of change; speaks positively about the change to others.
- **Adjusts behavior**—Quickly modifies behavior to deal effectively with changes in the work environment; readily tries new approaches appropriate for new or changed situations; does not persist with ineffective behaviors.

Sample Job Activities

- Adapt successfully to major changes in policies.
- Adapt successfully to major changes in administrative procedures.
- Maintain effectiveness when working closely with people of diverse cultures or backgrounds.
- Adapt effectively to culture change efforts.
- Adjust effectively to frequently changing work assignments.

Compare to:

- **Stress Tolerance.** This competency focuses on maintaining stable performance under pressure and relieving stress in an acceptable manner. Stress can be a constant in a job. A person might be able to maintain performance under pressure (Stress Tolerance) but might not be able to adapt well to change (Adaptability).
- **Planning and Organizing or Managing Work (Includes Time Management).** Within these two competencies, individuals must adjust to changes by reprioritizing or by using new resources to accomplish work goals. These are largely cognitive activities; they focus on effective planning and resource management to deal with the situation, not on personal effectiveness in the situation.

Aligning Performance for Success

Focusing and guiding others in accomplishing work objectives.

Key Actions

- **Sets performance goals**—Collaboratively works with direct reports to set meaningful performance objectives; sets specific performance goals and identifies measures for evaluating goal achievement.
- **Establishes approach**—Collaboratively works with direct reports to identify the behaviors, knowledge, and skills required to achieve goals; identifies specific behaviors, knowledge, and skill areas for focus and evaluation.
- **Creates a learning environment**—As necessary, helps secure resources required to support development efforts; ensures that opportunities for development are available; offers to help individuals overcome obstacles to learning.
- **Collaboratively establishes development plans**—Collaboratively identifies observation or coaching opportunities, training, workshops, seminars, etc., that will help the individual achieve important goals.
- **Tracks performance**—Implements a system or uses techniques to track performance against goals and to track the acquisition and use of appropriate behaviors, knowledge, and skills.
- **Evaluates performance**—Holds regular formal discussions with each direct report to discuss progress toward goals and review performance; evaluates each goal, behavior, knowledge, and skill area.

Sample Job Activities

- Communicate the importance of establishing performance goals.
- Involve direct reports in establishing performance goals and expectations.
- Involve direct reports in identifying data sources for tracking individual performance.
- Clarify with direct reports behaviors necessary to achieve performance goals.
- Use a systematic method of observing and evaluating performance.
- Develop action plans with direct reports to ensure success on upcoming challenges.
- Provide timely feedback on direct reports' performance.
- Coach direct reports on successful job behaviors.

- Reinforce behaviors that indicate progress toward or accomplishment of performance expectations.
- Develop a direct report's ability to manage himself/herself.
- Evaluate a direct report's performance against established performance expectations.
- Involve direct reports in developing action plans for improving performance or setting goals during improvement sessions.
- Involve direct reports in identifying developmental needs for current and future jobs.
- Coordinate direct reports' performance goals with the business plan.
- Set and communicate goals with staff that are difficult yet attainable.
- Review and evaluate measures that reflect performance.
- Address performance declines or increases quickly.
- Give employees time for training and development.
- Clearly communicate school/unit/department goals and work with individuals to translate them into specific performance goals.
- Work with each direct report to develop and implement a professional development plan.

Notes

Do not use *Aligning Performance for Success and Developing Others together*.

Aligning Performance for Success focuses on implementing a formal performance management system that includes setting specific and measurable objectives and evaluating performance of direct reports.

Aligning Performance for Success relates to the formal process of shaping job behavior to achieve specific performance objectives and to enhance overall skill. Developing Others shares key actions with the competency Aligning Performance for Success. The difference is that the focus of Developing Others is less formal and is typically more appropriate outside the formal manager/direct report relationship.

Compare to:

- **Coaching.** This competency focuses on day-to-day or task-specific interaction, feedback, and training. While the Aligning Performance for Success process can involve Coaching as part of helping an individual to accomplish goals, Coaching also has many other applications and should be considered separately.

Applied Learning

Assimilating and applying new job-related information in a timely manner.

Key Actions

- **Actively participates in learning activities**—Takes part in needed learning activities in a way that makes the most of the learning experience (e.g., takes notes, asks questions, does required tasks).
- **Quickly gains knowledge, understanding, or skill**—Readily absorbs and comprehends new information from formal and informal learning experiences.
- **Applies knowledge or skill**—Puts new knowledge, understanding, or skill to practical use on the job; furthers learning through trial and error.

Sample Job Activities

- Learn to operate new machines, equipment, or computers.
- Learn to comprehend statistical process control (SPC) charts and analyses.
- Learn to use a computer to input or retrieve basic information.
- Learn to use gauges, micrometers, or other measurement equipment.
- Learn to use office machines.
- Learn new information about changing products, markets, procedures, or management techniques (e.g., project planning, leadership skills, etc.).
- Learn to perform a process with numerous steps.
- Learn changes in work routine or procedures.
- Learn to perform a task through on-the-job training.
- Attend training programs and apply new learning on the job.
- Learn to use different organizational forms or reporting logs.
- Learn highly technical information about a product or operation.
- Learn unique, job-related vocabulary.
- Learn an organization's structure, policies, cultures and values, and procedures.

Notes

Many organizations do not require individuals to have a high level of knowledge or competency in an area when they enter a new position, but they do require individuals to become proficient rapidly. This competency reflects a person's ability to learn material necessary to function in the job and to grasp and apply new information quickly.

Do not use *Applied Learning* and *Continuous Learning* together.

Applied Learning and Continuous Learning share a number of key actions and should not be used in the same set of competencies to describe a job. Applied Learning does not involve the proactive seeking to acquire knowledge that is found in Continuous Learning. Applied Learning is more appropriate in jobs/roles where the information to be learned is prescribed for the individual. Continuous Learning is more appropriate where an ongoing quest for learning and new knowledge is expected.

Building a Successful Team

Using appropriate methods and a flexible interpersonal style to help build a cohesive team; facilitating the completion of team goals.

Key Actions

- **Develops direction**—Ensures that the purpose and importance of the team are clarified (e.g., team has a clear charter or mission statement); guides the setting of specific and measurable team goals and objectives.
- **Develops structure**—Helps to clarify roles and responsibilities of team members; helps ensure that necessary steering, review, or support functions are in place.
- **Facilitates goal accomplishment**—Makes procedural or process suggestions for achieving team goals or performing team functions; provides necessary resources or helps to remove obstacles to team accomplishments.
- **Involves others**—Listens to and fully involves others in team decisions and actions; values and uses individual differences and talents.
- **Informs others on team**—Shares important or relevant information with the team.
- **Models commitment**—Adheres to the team's expectations and guidelines; fulfills team responsibilities; demonstrates personal commitment to the team.

Sample Job Activities

- Communicate purpose and importance of team through a clear charter or mission statement.
- Set specific and measurable team goals and objectives.
- Work collaboratively with the team.
- Monitor team activities to ensure that roles and responsibilities of team members are clear.
- Review support functions and ensure that they are in place.
- Offer suggestions for achieving team goals or performing team functions.
- Value and use individual differences and talents to ensure that the team's work is done effectively.
- Regularly share information with the team.
- Contribute to the fulfillment of team responsibilities.
- Display personal commitment to the team.
- Do not speak badly of the team to others.
- Contribute freely to team discussions.
- Quickly familiarize new team members with the team's purpose and expectations for team member behavior.

Notes

Much of team development takes place in team meetings. Meeting facilitation behaviors in team meetings relate to the competencies Meeting Leadership or Meeting Participation as opposed to Building a Successful Team. Building a Successful Team includes the activities outside of formal meetings and the content of team meetings.

Do not use *Building a Successful Team* and *Contributing to Team Success* together.

Building a Successful Team is closely related to Contributing to Team Success; they share a number of key actions. One does not need to be a formal leader for Building a Successful Team to be the more appropriate competency, but Contributing to Team Success is more commonly used with non-leader positions because it does not contain the leadership behaviors of developing team direction and developing team structure.

Building Customer Loyalty

Effectively meeting customer needs; building productive customer relationships; taking responsibility for customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Key Actions

- **Uses effective interpersonal skills**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).
- **Acknowledges the person**—Greets customers promptly and courteously; gives customers full attention.
- **Clarifies the current situation**—Asks questions to determine needs; listens carefully; provides appropriate information; summarizes to check understanding.
- **Meets or exceeds needs**—Acts promptly in routine situations; agrees on a clear course of action in non-routine situations; takes opportunities to exceed expectations without making unreasonable commitments.
- **Confirms satisfaction**—Asks questions to check for satisfaction; commits to follow-through, if appropriate; thanks customer.
- **Takes the “heat”**—Handles upset customers by hearing the customer out, empathizing, apologizing, and taking personal responsibility for resolving customer problems/issues.

Sample Job Activities

- Be receptive to and empathize with internal/external customers' complaints, requests, or demands.
- Clarify the exact nature of internal/external customers' problems or requests and make recommendations.
- Establish good two-way communication with internal/external customers regarding problems or requests.
- Take responsibility to solve internal/external customers' problems (e.g., service, product, quality, billing, etc.).
- Involve/Enlist the help of others to solve internal/external customers' problems.
- Summarize outcome of discussion with customers to ensure that all requests or problems have been addressed.
- Send information, materials, or products by the most appropriate method (fax, express mail, etc.) to ensure that internal/external customers receive them when needed.
- Answer the phone within a specified number of rings.
- Return phone calls from customers promptly.

- Be pleasant and courteous when interacting with internal/external customers.
- Anticipate internal/external customers' needs whenever possible and respond quickly and accurately.
- Attempt to exceed expectations for every customer.
- Provide quick and thorough service for internal/external customers' requests or problems.
- Obtain internal/external customer feedback for the level of service provided.
- Effectively work with disgruntled customers by defusing their emotions and being fair and consistent.
- Deal with customers in an honest and forthright manner.
- Find ways to satisfy customers who have experienced ongoing problems.
- Follow up with customers to ensure that they are satisfied and that the problem is fixed.
- Listen closely to customers and let them tell their whole story; empathize with their problem.
- Treat all customer complaints as important (even minor ones).
- Maintain professionalism when customers become challenging or demanding.
- Give top priority to customers' complaints.
- Keep commitments to follow up with customers.
- Satisfy customers' expectations by providing acceptable solutions that are fair and in keeping with policies and procedures.
- Communicate with emotional customers in a manner that is calming and focused on the issues.

Notes

Do not use *Building Customer Loyalty* and *Customer Focus* together.

Building Customer Loyalty emphasizes effectively meeting specific customer needs and developing and maintaining productive relationships with individual customers. Customer Focus emphasizes the achievement of business results through structuring and executing work with the customer in mind (the typical customer or a specific one).

Compare to:

Sales Ability/Persuasiveness. This competency emphasizes the successful representation of products and services. However, Building Customer Loyalty can be a component of sales success over time. The attention and quality of interactions and attention to customer needs can have a large impact on subsequent sales success (e.g., in account penetration).

Building Partnerships

Identifying opportunities and taking action to build strategic relationships between one's area and other areas, teams, departments, units, or organizations to help achieve business goals.

Key Actions

- **Identifies partnership needs**—Analyzes the organization and own area to identify key relationships that should be initiated or improved to further the attainment of own area's goals.
- **Explores partnership opportunities**—Exchanges information with potential partner areas to clarify partnership benefits and potential problems; collaboratively determines the scope and expectations of the partnership so that both areas' needs can be met.
- **Formulates action plans**—Collaboratively determines courses of action to realize mutual goals; facilitates agreement on each partner's responsibilities and needed support.
- **Subordinates own area's goals**—Places higher priority on organization's goals than on own area's goals; anticipates effects of own area's actions and decisions on partners; influences others to support partnership objectives.
- **Monitors partnership**—Implements effective means for monitoring and evaluating the partnership process and the attainment of mutual goals.

Sample Job Activities

- Build effective working relationships with other departments.
- Establish relationships and work effectively with others outside the organization.
- Support and encourage good working relationships between departments.
- Share information, ideas, and effective approaches to issues with other regions and departments.
- Work collaboratively with other leaders to meet organizational goals.
- Build effective relationships with key internal partners to enhance collaboration and understanding.
- Provide support to other areas as needed to achieve organizational goals.
- Check with others regularly to discuss partnership problems or issues.
- Build good relationships with other organizations or clients.

- Network with individuals from other organizations or groups in order to share ideas and collect information.

Notes

Do not use *Building Partnerships* and *Building Positive Working Relationships* together.

Building Partnerships and Building Positive Working Relationships emphasize strategic behaviors initiated to accomplish work goals through interdependencies with others. Use Building Partnerships for jobs/roles in which the person is accountable for building relationships between teams, major areas in the organization, or between the organization and external groups. Building Partnerships is usually used for higher-level jobs with direct accountability for business relationships.

Use Building Positive Working Relationships when developing alliances with other individuals as necessary for one's own effectiveness. It is associated with interdependent situations in which individuals need to rely on others as a matter of structure and process to accomplish their work.

Building Positive Working Relationships (Teamwork/Collaboration)

Developing and using collaborative relationships to facilitate the accomplishment of work goals.

Key Actions

- **Seeks opportunities**—Proactively tries to build effective working relationships with other people.
- **Clarifies the current situation**—Probes for and provides information to clarify situations.
- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Seeks and expands on original ideas, enhances others' ideas, and contributes own ideas about the issues at hand.
- **Subordinates personal goals**—Places higher priority on team or organization goals than on own goals.
- **Facilitates agreement**—Gains agreement from partners to support ideas or take partnership-oriented action; uses sound rationale to explain value of actions.
- **Uses effective interpersonal skills**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

Sample Job Activities

- Work with others to accomplish tasks, assignments, etc.
- Acquire information and skills necessary to contribute to team goals.
- Receive feedback from peers, team members, and/or others in order to perform the job successfully.
- Support group decisions even if not in total agreement.
- Share credit for good ideas or accomplishments with peers, team members, and/or others.
- Address conflicts within the group/team without help from supervisor/manager/team leader.
- Communicate changes or problems (e.g., material defects, production goals, new information, adjustments to equipment, etc.) to peers, team members, and/or others and work on solutions.
- Work cooperatively with peers, team members, and/or others to set responsibilities (e.g., agree on schedules or rotations).
- Ask for input from peers, team members, and/or others.
- Share information, ideas, and solicit ideas and suggestions from others to accomplish mutual goals.

- Assist peers, team members, and/or others by temporarily filling in as needed.
- Accept requests for assistance from peers, team members, and/or others.
- Solicit feedback from others on recurring problems.
- Communicate with peers and others to exchange feedback on product/service issues and to solve problems.
- Show support, give encouragement, and willingly share information, ideas, and suggestions to accomplish mutual goals.
- Make regular personal visits within area of responsibility.
- Show genuine concern for the needs and wants of internal partners.

Notes

Do not use *Building Positive Working Relationships* and *Building Partnerships* together.

Building Positive Working Relationships and Building Partnerships emphasize strategic behaviors initiated to accomplish work goals through interdependencies with others. These behaviors are initiated to improve one's own or one's team's performance.

Use Building Positive Working Relationships when developing alliances with other individuals as necessary for one's own effectiveness. It is associated with interdependent situations in which individuals need to rely on others as a matter of structure and process to accomplish their work.

Use Building Partnerships for jobs/roles in which the incumbent is accountable for building relationships between teams, between major areas in the organization, or between the organization and external groups. Building Partnerships is usually used for jobs at higher levels where there is direct accountability for business relationships.

Building Trust

Interacting with others in a way that gives them confidence in one's intentions and those of the organization.

Key Actions

- **Operates with integrity**—Demonstrates honesty; keeps commitments; behaves in a consistent manner.
- **Discloses own positions**—Shares thoughts, feelings, and rationale so that others understand personal positions.
- **Remains open to ideas**—Listens to others and objectively considers others' ideas and opinions, even when they conflict with one's own.
- **Supports others**—Treats people with dignity, respect, and fairness; gives proper credit to others; stands up for deserving others and their ideas even in the face of resistance or challenge.

Sample Job Activities

- Strictly follow organization's policies.
- Accurately communicate the strengths and limitations of a product/service and of the organization.
- Handle confidential personnel records appropriately and do not share confidential information.
- Process confidential correspondence.
- Participate in confidential business meetings or discussions.
- Treat individuals fairly and equally.
- Invite all employees to meetings and share information freely.
- Maintain an open-door policy and listen to others' comments, suggestions, and complaints.
- Keep promises and commitments.
- Show genuine interest in the success of others, and promote and showcase their abilities.
- Allow people to learn from mistakes and thereby encourage new, innovative thinking.

Notes

Building Trust has become a particularly important competency for positions in organizations that are undergoing change efforts. Building Trust also plays a critical role in supporting an empowering organization culture.

Coaching

Providing timely guidance and feedback to help others strengthen specific knowledge/skill areas needed to accomplish a task or solve a problem.

Key Actions

- **Clarifies the current situation**—Clarifies expected behaviors, knowledge, and level of proficiency by seeking and giving information and checking for understanding.
- **Explains and demonstrates**—Provides instruction, positive models, and opportunities for observation in order to help others develop skills; encourages questions to ensure understanding.
- **Provides feedback and reinforcement**—Gives timely, appropriate feedback on performance; reinforces efforts and progress.
- **Uses effective interpersonal skills**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

Sample Job Activities

- Instruct others and closely guide their activities.
- Work with others to strengthen their performance and improve their skills in a particular area.
- Divide complicated tasks into activities that others can perform easily.
- Teach people to complete new tasks/procedures successfully.
- Determine how much guidance an individual needs to complete a task successfully.
- Help people look for new ways to solve old problems.
- Listen to others' concerns about their ability to improve.
- Provide feedback about performance on a task or activity that is specific and objective.
- Reinforce others' successful performance.
- Give others clear and concise instructions on how to complete a task or process.
- Diagnose problems and share solutions to create learning experiences.
- Involve others in solutions with a goal of improving processes so that they can solve future problems independently.
- Demonstrate effective problem-solving approaches.
- Provide suggestions to others on how to serve customers better.

Compare to:

- **Gaining Commitment.** This competency focuses on getting others to commit to goals, whereas Coaching focuses on helping others develop the skills they need to achieve goals. A person can be skilled in influencing others toward goal achievement but poor at coaching them on how to achieve those goals.
- **Aligning Performance for Success.** This competency focuses on implementing a formal performance management system that includes setting specific and measurable objectives and evaluating direct reports' performance. While this process can involve Coaching as part of helping an individual to accomplish goals, Coaching has a much broader application and should be considered separately.

Communication

Clearly conveying information and ideas through a variety of media to individuals or groups in a manner that engages the audience and helps them understand and retain the message.

Key Actions

- **Organizes the communication**—Clarifies purpose and importance; stresses major points; follows a logical sequence.
- **Maintains audience attention**—Keeps the audience engaged through use of techniques such as analogies, illustrations, humor, an appealing style, body language, and voice inflection.
- **Adjusts to the audience**—Frames message in line with audience experience, background, and expectations; uses terms, examples, and analogies that are meaningful to the audience.
- **Ensures understanding**—Seeks input from audience; checks understanding; presents message in different ways to enhance understanding.
- **Adheres to accepted conventions**—Uses syntax, pace, volume, diction, and mechanics appropriate to the media being used.
- **Comprehends communication from others**—Attends to messages from others; correctly interprets messages and responds appropriately.

Sample Job Activities

- Ask clear questions using oral and/or other methods of communication.
- Communicate information effectively by telephone, videoconferencing, or other devices.
- Provide clear instructions or information to peers/team members/others orally or through other methods of communication.
- Receive instructions, orders, or assignments.
- Communicate ideas clearly and effectively in a group setting.
- Address work problems with people individually.
- Convey complex ideas in a logical sequence that others can understand.
- Explain complex ideas at a level appropriate to the audience using ideas/terminology to ensure understanding.
- Use appropriate conventions (e.g., grammar and syntax) when communicating.
- Keep audience's attention.

- Be receptive to ideas or suggestions from others.
- Use appropriate nonverbal communication (eye contact, gestures, posture) when communicating with others.
- Pay attention to communication from others.
- Communicate effectively with individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds.
- Keep clear, accurate written documentation (e.g., letters to customers).
- Put highly technical information into simple terms for customers.
- Prepare written instructions for vendors, direct reports, team members, peers, employees, and/or others.
- Prepare written summaries of meeting outcomes or telephone conversations.
- Proofread letters or reports for grammar, punctuation, style, and spelling.
- Prepare documents that require presentation of complex ideas (e.g., proposals, contracts, etc.).
- Convey complex ideas in writing at a level appropriate to the audience.
- Prepare project plans, specifications, outlines, or progress reports.
- Prepare user manuals for policies or procedures.
- Draft ads for newspapers, magazines, or brochures.

Notes

The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gave a clear message that the most important factor to consider when assessing candidates is *whether* one could perform a task (outcome based) as opposed to *how* one performed a task. Thus, this definition emphasizes achieving communication goals regardless of the media used. Therefore, the former competencies Oral Communication or Written Communication usually would be replaced with Communication. When evaluating communication skills, the medium most appropriate for the person's capability should be used during the assessment process.

However, in some jobs oral or written communication might be deemed an Essential Function based on an Essential Functions Analysis. In these cases include either Oral Communication or Written Communication as a competency. These can be defined by modifying the key actions of Communication.

The focus of this competency is on the form of communication, while the content of communication is dealt with in competencies such as Meeting Leadership, Gaining Commitment, or Negotiation.

Compare to:

- **Formal Presentation.** This competency focuses on effective preparation and delivery of a talk or the facilitation of a workshop in a structured manner. Communication skills are an important part of Formal Presentation, but Formal Presentation also includes effective preparation and structured delivery. One key difference between Communication and Formal Presentation is that the latter allows time to prepare for a presentation.
- **Impact.** This competency focuses on creating a good first impression, showing an air of confidence, and speaking and acting appropriately. While it would be difficult for someone with poor communication skills to have high impact (at least beyond the first minute or two of an encounter), a person with effective communication skills could have poor impact due to inappropriate dress or lack of confidence.

Continuous Learning

Actively identifying new areas for learning; regularly creating and taking advantage of learning opportunities; using newly gained knowledge and skill on the job and learning through their application.

Key Actions

- **Targets learning needs**—Seeks and uses feedback and other sources of information to identify appropriate areas for learning.
- **Seeks learning activities**—Identifies and participates in appropriate learning activities (e.g., courses, reading, self-study, coaching, experiential learning) that help fulfill learning needs.
- **Maximizes learning**—Actively participates in learning activities in a way that makes the most of the learning experience (e.g., takes notes, asks questions, critically analyzes information, keeps on-the-job application in mind, does required tasks).
- **Applies knowledge or skill**—Puts new knowledge, understanding, or skill to practical use on the job; furthers learning through trial and error.
- **Takes risks in learning**—Puts self in unfamiliar or uncomfortable situation in order to learn; asks questions at the risk of appearing foolish; takes on challenging or unfamiliar assignments.

Sample Job Activities

- Make efforts to improve managerial/supervisory/team leadership skill.
- Make specific efforts to improve skills in one's own technical/professional area.
- Take initiative to discover information about new products when technical information is minimal or unavailable.
- Seek pertinent learning opportunities to enhance job performance (e.g., coaching/mentoring skills, computer skills, technical training, dealing with difficult people, negotiating skills).
- Maintain technical library and database to access pertinent information.
- Stay informed of industry trends, competition, and changing technology.
- Actively seek out new learning opportunities.
- Target learning activities to meet required job skills.
- Take on responsibilities or tasks to develop oneself.
- Enroll in optional courses or workshops.

- Try new approaches to performing work in order to develop a better way.
- Gather information from trade publications, newspapers, and magazines to further the understanding and resolution of business issues.

Notes

Do not use *Continuous Learning* and *Applied Learning* together.

Continuous Learning and Applied Learning share a number of key actions and should not be used in the same set of competencies to describe a job.

Continuous Learning is more appropriate where an ongoing quest for learning and new knowledge is expected; Applied Learning does not involve this proactive seeking to acquire knowledge. Applied Learning is more appropriate in jobs/roles where the information to be learned is prescribed for the individual.

Contributing to Team Success

Actively participating as a member of a team to move the team toward the completion of goals.

Key Actions

- **Facilitates goal accomplishment**—Makes procedural or process suggestions for achieving team goals or performing team functions; provides necessary resources or helps to remove obstacles to help the team accomplish its goals.
- **Involves others**—Listens to and fully involves others in team decisions and actions; values and uses individual differences and talents.
- **Informs others on team**—Shares important or relevant information with the team.
- **Models commitment**—Adheres to the team's expectations and guidelines; fulfills team responsibilities; demonstrates personal commitment to the team.

Sample Job Activities

- Display personal commitment to team.
- Demonstrate good team spirit by living within the formal or informal guidelines and expectations of the team.
- Make procedural or process suggestions to perform team functions and achieve team goals.
- Provide resources or help remove obstacles to help team accomplish goals.
- Involve oneself and others in team decisions and actions.
- Demonstrate a personal commitment to team.
- Help the team develop and maintain a clear purpose and direction.
- Help the team keep roles and responsibilities clear.

Notes

Much of team development takes place in team meetings. Meeting facilitation behaviors in team meetings relate to the competencies Meeting Leadership or Meeting Participation as opposed to Contributing to Team Success. Contributing to Team Success includes the activities outside of formal meetings and the content of team meetings.

Do not use *Contributing to Team Success* and *Building a Successful Team* together.

Contributing to Team Success is closely related to Building a Successful Team; they share a number of key actions. Contributing to Team Success does not contain the leadership behaviors of developing team direction and developing team structure, so it is more commonly used with non-leader positions. Keep in mind, though, that one does not need to be a formal

leader for Building a Successful Team to be the more appropriate competency.

Customer Focus

Making customers and their needs a primary focus of one's actions; developing and sustaining productive customer relationships.

Key Actions

- **Seeks to understand customers**—Actively seeks information to understand customers' circumstances, problems, expectations, and needs.
- **Educates customers**—Shares information with customers to build their understanding of issues and capabilities.
- **Builds collaborative relationships**—Builds rapport and cooperative relationships with customers.
- **Takes action to meet customer needs and concerns**—Considers how actions or plans will affect customers; responds quickly to meet customer needs and resolve problems; avoids overcommitments.
- **Sets up customer feedback systems**—Implements effective ways to monitor and evaluate customer concerns, issues, and satisfaction and to anticipate customer needs.

Sample Job Activities

- Examine decisions from the perspective of the customer before acting.
- Examine policy implementation issues of the customer before acting.
- Approach customers knowing that they have other options in the market.
- Share information with others on the direction of the organization.
- Effectively address customer issues or complaints.
- Communicate customer needs and suggestions for addressing them to appropriate others to bring about changes that will better meet customer needs.
- Encourage others to be highly responsive to customer needs.
- Seek information to understand customers' needs and develop appropriate solutions.
- Plan on how to meet needs quickly and effectively.
- Consider customer needs when developing products or services to ensure that needs are met.
- Stay in close touch with customers to gather and share information.
- Follow up with customers to make sure needs are being met.

- Invite customers to participate in social activities to establish better relationships.
- Seek input from customers at key project, product, or decision points.

Notes

Do not use *Customer Focus* and *Building Customer Loyalty* together.

Customer Focus emphasizes the achievement of business results through structuring and executing work with the customer in mind (the typical customer or a specific one). Building Customer Loyalty emphasizes effectively meeting specific customer needs and developing and maintaining productive relationships with individual customers.

Decision Making

Identifying and understanding issues, problems, and opportunities; comparing data from different sources to draw conclusions; using effective approaches for choosing a course of action or developing appropriate solutions; taking action that is consistent with available facts, constraints, and probable consequences.

Key Actions

- **Identifies issues, problems, and opportunities**—Recognizes issues, problems, or opportunities and determines whether action is needed.
- **Gathers information**—Identifies the need for and collects information to better understand issues, problems, and opportunities.
- **Interprets information**—Integrates information from a variety of sources; detects trends, associations, and cause-effect relationships.
- **Generates alternatives**—Creates relevant options for addressing problems/opportunities and achieving desired outcomes.
- **Chooses appropriate action**—Formulates clear decision criteria; evaluates options by considering implications and consequences; chooses an effective option.
- **Commits to action**—Makes decisions within a reasonable time.
- **Involves others**—Includes others in the decision-making process as warranted to obtain good information, make the most appropriate decisions, and ensure buy-in and understanding of the resulting decisions.

Sample Job Activities

- Select new products, materials, vendors, or consultants.
- Make decisions about customers' complaints.
- Make decisions not directly covered by organizational policies or procedures.
- Inform manager/supervisor/team leader of important issues or problems.
- Inform manager/supervisor/team leader or others in the organization of decisions.
- Anticipate the consequences of decisions.
- Take action or generate alternative solutions to resolve problems or situations.
- Consider multiple factors (e.g., customers' needs, feasibility, due dates, costs, etc.) when making decisions.

- Consider the impact of decisions on other departments or areas.
- Recommend changes in policies, processes, procedures, or operations.
- Determine the true cause of an issue/problem before applying a solution.
- Gather information from several sources to understand problems, trends, or opportunities.
- Interpret financial information from sources such as balance sheets, profit and loss statements, etc.

Notes

This competency can be divided into two parts called *Analysis* and *Judgment* (or *Problem Assessment* and *Problem Solution*). *Analysis* (Problem Assessment) comprises the first three key actions of Decision Making; *Judgment* (Problem Solution) comprises the last four key actions. Decision Making can be very interconnected with Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills competencies in some professional and technical positions. The quality of someone's decision-making skills can be difficult to evaluate unless the assessor has an expert background in the kind of work the person does, especially for technically complex situations.

Interacting with others at work involves making many small decisions, but few of these interpersonal judgments are good examples of Decision Making. Decision Making should be used only to classify a complex process in decision-making. For example, someone might say, "She used bad judgment by asking the group to vote." This isn't Decision Making. It's a behavior that would be more appropriately classified under the competency Meeting Leadership.

Delegation

Allocating decision-making authority and/or task responsibility to appropriate others to maximize the organization's and individuals' effectiveness.

Key Actions

- **Shares appropriate responsibilities**—Allocates decision-making authority and/or task responsibility in appropriate areas to appropriate individuals (considering positive and negative impact, organizational values and structures, and enhancement of the individual's knowledge/skills).
- **Defines parameters**—Clearly communicates the parameters of the delegated responsibility, including decision-making authority and any required actions, constraints, or deadlines.
- **Provides support without removing responsibility**—Suggests resources and provides assistance or coaching as needed; expresses confidence in the individual.
- **Stays informed**—Establishes appropriate procedures to keep informed of issues and results in areas of shared responsibility.

Sample Job Activities

- Give a direct report the authority to gather information and make decisions.
- Delegate assignments to the appropriate individuals based on their skills, roles, and interests (such as research special projects).
- Provide guidance and instruction when delegating.
- If absent or unable to attend a meeting, appoint a direct report to be in charge.
- Assign a direct report to resolve problems that typically would be beyond that person's authority.
- Authorize a direct report to train a new employee.
- Discuss with direct reports the need for them to make independent decisions.
- Request that direct reports think through issues and reach a tentative decision before asking for help.
- Give each direct report as much responsibility as they can handle; expand areas of responsibility as warranted by performance.
- Support direct reports' decisions if at all possible and coach them if necessary; do not second-guess them.
- Respect areas of decision making that have been delegated.

- Provide all relevant information to direct reports so they can perform their jobs effectively.

Notes

Delegation means transferring responsibility and/or decision making to another person. Asking others to complete tasks that are a normal part of their jobs or that do not offer latitude in the course of action taken is not considered delegation.

Developing Others

Planning and supporting the development of individuals' skills and abilities so that they can fulfill current or future job/role responsibilities more effectively.

Key Actions

- **Collaboratively establishes development goals**—Works with individuals to identify areas for development, understand need for improvement, and set specific development goals.
- **Collaboratively establishes development plans**—Works with individuals to identify options for meeting development goals; explores environmental supports and barriers to development; jointly determines appropriate developmental activities.
- **Creates a learning environment**—Secures resources required to support development efforts; ensures that opportunities for development are available; offers assistance to help individuals overcome obstacles to learning.
- **Monitors progress**—Gives individuals specific feedback on their performance related to established goals; highlights key positive and negative performance issues; adjusts plans to ensure development.

Sample Job Activities

- Involve others in determining developmental goals and actions.
- Help and encourage others to determine and develop the skills necessary for current and future jobs.
- Design a formal plan for career development of others.
- Consider others' motivations, interests, and current situations in planning long-range developmental activities.
- Assign tasks to help others meet career development plans.
- Design or locate appropriate developmental projects or training programs for others.
- Create opportunities for on-the-job application of new skills.
- Cross-train others to broaden experience and develop potential.
- Diagnose and provide feedback on developmental progress.
- Design or locate appropriate training programs for others.

Notes

Do not use *Developing Others* and *Aligning Performance for Success* together.

In *Developing Others* the focus is on planning and supporting effective development activities related to current or future job responsibilities.

Aligning Performance for Success shares key actions with *Developing Others*. The difference is that *Aligning Performance for Success* focuses on implementing a formal performance management system that includes setting specific and measurable objectives and evaluating performance of direct reports. *Developing Others* is less formal and typically more appropriate outside of the formal manager/direct report relationship.

Energy

Consistently maintaining high levels of activity or productivity; sustaining long working hours when necessary; operating with vigor, effectiveness, and determination over extended periods of time.

Key Actions

- **Maintains stamina**—Keeps a strong work pace over time; exhibits intensity in completing work objectives.
- **Maintains effectiveness**—Performs mentally or physically taxing work effectively; retains the capacity for effective action or accomplishment over long periods of time.

Sample Job Activities

- Work long hours without losing effectiveness.
- Meet demanding productivity goals.
- Keep up with high-speed equipment or production demands.
- Maintain effectiveness while working swing shifts.
- Complete many tasks or activities with little or no opportunity to rest.
- Work frequent overtime or extra hours without losing effectiveness.
- Respond quickly to problems as they arise.
- Perform repetitive work without losing effectiveness.
- Perform mentally demanding work without losing effectiveness.
- Demonstrate a consistent rate of speed to accomplish activities.

Notes

Initiating Action. Initiating Action focuses on the propensity to act, not the quality or duration of the action. Energy focuses on performing effectively over time, regardless of whether the action is independent or goes beyond expectations.

Facilitating Change

Encouraging others to seek opportunities for different and innovative approaches to addressing problems and opportunities; facilitating the implementation and acceptance of change within the workplace.

Key Actions

- **Encourages boundary breaking**—Encourages employees to question established work processes or assumptions; challenges employees to ask “why” until underlying cause is discovered; involves stakeholders in continuous improvement actions and alternatives.
- **Values sound approaches**—Consistently remains open to ideas offered by others; supports and uses good ideas to solve problems or address issues.
- **Rewards change**—Recognizes and rewards employees who make useful changes.
- **Addresses change resistance**—Helps individuals overcome resistance to change; shows empathy with people who feel loss as a result of change.
- **Manages complexity and contradictions**—Tries to minimize complexities, contradictions, and paradoxes or reduce their impact; clarifies direction and smoothes the process of change.

Sample Job Activities

- Provide opportunities for others to ask questions and make suggestions about a change effort.
- Actively become involved in continuous improvement actions and alternatives.
- Remain open and supportive of new ideas to solve problems and address issues.
- Recognize and reward employees who try to facilitate change.
- Clarify direction and smooth the change process.
- Support employees who are experiencing difficulty with change.
- Meet individually with employees to provide support and encouragement in effectively managing change.
- Clearly explain the effects of changes.
- Focus on the long-term good of the change, not short-term inconveniences.
- Adapt the suggestions of others when transitioning into the future.

Follow-Up

Monitoring the results of delegations, assignments, or projects, considering the skills, knowledge, and experience of the assigned individual and the characteristics of the assignment or project.

Key Actions

- **Communicates time frames**—Builds due dates into assignments and task delegations; effectively communicates milestones and expected results.
- **Gathers appropriate information**—Asks questions to obtain relevant information; convenes meetings to review progress and share information; gets feedback on results from those directly involved.
- **Evaluates results**—Meets formally with peers, employees, and others to review the results of an assignment, project, or delegated task.

Sample Job Activities

- Establish a system to follow up on projects/tasks/assignments.
- Schedule follow-up meetings to review progress on assigned tasks.
- Use tickler files to follow up on projects/tasks/assignments, deadlines, and due dates.
- Follow up with internal/external customers after handling their problems or requests.
- Contact others in the organization to ensure the timely completion of tasks.
- Follow up with vendors or consultants to determine the status of materials, products, or services.
- Follow up on tasks and activities within specified timelines.
- Meet with others to discuss the status of projects/assignments.
- Receive feedback from internal/external customers on the progress of projects/tasks/assignments, etc.

Notes

If follow-up occurs only in association with delegating tasks or responsibilities, the “Stays informed” Key Action in Delegation might be adequate in representing the follow-up activities in a job. If follow-up is required in other situations, or if a special focus on follow-up is desired, the competency Follow-Up can be used in conjunction with Delegation. In such cases the “Stays informed” Key Action can be deleted.

Formal Presentation

Presenting ideas effectively to individuals or groups when given time to prepare; delivering presentations suited to the characteristics and needs of the audience.

Key Actions

- **Defines clear goals**—Establishes an objective that clearly reflects the needs of the audience.
- **Follows a logical sequence**—Presents main ideas that support the objective of the presentation, and presents facts, evidence, and details that support the main ideas; delivers information in a logical order to aid understanding.
- **Uses nonverbal communication**—Uses body language (e.g., eye contact and gestures) that is consistent with verbal communication and aids understanding.
- **Uses learning aids**—Uses audio and visual aids to enhance the audience's understanding of content.
- **Listens and responds to questions and objections**—Involves the audience by soliciting questions and input; clarifies as needed to help achieve the goals of the session.
- **Summarizes the presentation**—Summarizes the main ideas; calls the audience to take action or make decisions, where appropriate.
- **Maintains audience attention**—Keeps the audience engaged through use of techniques such as analogies, illustrations, humor, an appealing style, body language, and voice inflection.

Sample Job Activities

- Make formal presentations to peers, team members, or others.
- Make formal presentations to senior managers in the organization.
- Make formal presentations to internal/external customers.
- Make formal presentations using audiovisual equipment.
- Use vocabulary appropriate to the audience.

- Make formal presentations of complex ideas in a logical sequence.
- Conduct training in a classroom or workshop format.
- Make formal presentations of technical information to a technical audience.
- Make formal presentations of technical information to a non-technical audience.
- Make formal presentations to suggest new products or services and to introduce or explain new procedures.
- Make formal presentations to share project results.

Compare to:

- **Communication.** This competency focuses on the form of communication, not the content. Communication skills are an important part of Formal Presentation, but Formal Presentation goes further than Communication to include effective preparation and structured delivery. One key difference between these two competencies is that Formal Presentation allows time to prepare for a presentation; it focuses on the effective preparation and delivery of a talk or the facilitation of a workshop in a structured manner.

Gaining Commitment

Using appropriate interpersonal styles and techniques to gain acceptance of ideas or plans; modifying one's own behavior to accommodate tasks, situations, and individuals involved.

Key Actions

- **Opens discussions effectively**—Describes expectations, goals, requests, or future states in a way that provides clarity and excites interest.
- **Clarifies the current situation**—Seeks, gives, and summarizes information; ensures that the situation/issue at hand is understood.
- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Presents own ideas; seeks and develops suggestions of others; makes procedural suggestions
- **Facilitates agreement**—Uses appropriate influence strategies (such as demonstrating benefits or giving rewards) to gain genuine agreement; persists by using different approaches as needed to gain commitment.
- **Closes discussions with clear summaries**—Summarizes outcomes of discussions and establishes next steps if needed.
- **Uses effective interpersonal skills**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

Sample Job Activities

- Guide a peer, team member, or other to accept an idea or course of action.
- Gain commitment from a peer, team member, or other to try new ways to do the job or process.
- Encourage a peer, team member, or other to meet deadlines and product goals.
- Get cooperation from a peer, team member, or other.
- Guide a direct report or others to accept an idea or course of action.
- Convince peers to support an idea or plan.
- Convince others of the value of a product, service, or idea.

- Win over others who are resistant to an approach you support.
- Clearly describe to others the reasons that they should approach an issue in a different manner.
- Position topics of discussion from the other person's point of view to show what is in it for him/her.
- Influence management to support and/or fund initiatives.
- Explain how conclusions were reached so others will understand decisions and support them.

Compare to:

- **Sales Ability/Persuasiveness.** This competency is substituted for Gaining Commitment for many sales positions because it more accurately describes the nature of the relationship and the interaction with others. In positions where Sales Ability/Persuasiveness is appropriate, individuals sell ideas, things, or services as opposed to gaining acceptance to an idea or plan.
- **Coaching.** This competency focuses on helping others to develop the skills they need to achieve goals. Gaining Commitment focuses on getting others to commit to goals. A person could be effective in convincing others to accept a goal but ineffective in coaching them on how to achieve that goal.
- **Managing Conflict.** Some key actions do overlap between Gaining Commitment and Managing Conflict. Unique aspects of Managing Conflict include keeping the discussion issue oriented and not letting it become personalized, dissipating emotions and not exacerbating them, and dealing with heavy tension, which is not usually present in other leadership situations.

Impact

Creating a good first impression, commanding attention and respect, showing an air of confidence.

Key Actions

- **Dresses appropriately**—Maintains professional, businesslike image.
- **Displays professional demeanor**—Exhibits a calm appearance; does not appear nervous or overly anxious; responds openly and warmly when appropriate.
- **Speaks confidently**—Speaks with a self-assured tone of voice.

Sample Job Activities

- Make a professional first impression on internal/external customers.
- Represent the department or organization in initial dealings with internal/external customers or other organizations.
- Meet with people from the community, government, or other organizations for business purposes.
- Host visitors and make a good impression.
- Interact with external customers or representatives of other organizations.
- Make initial contact with customers or others in which creating a positive impression on others is important.
- Attend business social functions in which creating a positive impression on others is important.
- Greet visitors from outside the department or organization.

Information Monitoring

Setting up ongoing procedures to collect and review information needed to manage an organization or ongoing activities within it.

Key Actions

- **Identifies monitoring needs**—Determines which systems, processes, or areas need to be monitored; identifies what information needs to be obtained.
- **Develops monitoring systems**—Establishes systems to monitor activities or outputs that are easy to use and that provide timely and pertinent information.
- **Implements tracking systems**—Effectively puts in place monitoring systems with minimal interruption for other organizational processes.
- **Reviews data**—Collects and reviews data on a regular basis to determine progress, anticipate needs, and make necessary adjustments to employees or processes.

Sample Job Activities

- Establish systems to monitor performance in one's area of responsibility.
- Meet informally with peers, team members, or others to check on progress, problems, etc.
- Convene meetings to review progress or share information.
- Monitor equipment, instruments, or products to make sure the process or production is correct.
- Review reports to keep track of work progress.
- Maintain records of meetings, discussions, or phone calls.
- Monitor phone mail and/or electronic mail system for updates and messages.
- Review organization reports or documents to stay informed of new developments or strategies.
- Monitor regulations that affect the industry (e.g., legislative or environmental).
- Monitor the progress of team or group projects, goals, assignments, etc.
- Set up systems to examine work outputs to ensure processes are functioning properly.

Notes

Information Monitoring should not be confused with Follow-Up, which focuses on specific individuals, assignments, or projects—not the establishment of systems to monitor ongoing activities or processes within an organization.

Initiating Action (Initiative)

Taking prompt action to accomplish objectives; taking action to achieve goals beyond what is required; being proactive.

Key Actions

- **Responds quickly**—Takes immediate action when confronted with a problem or when made aware of a situation.
- **Takes independent action**—Implements new ideas or potential solutions without prompting; does not wait for others to take action or to request action.
- **Goes above and beyond**—Takes action that goes beyond job requirements in order to achieve objectives.

Sample Job Activities

- Perform tasks outside one's area of responsibility to help the department or organization.
- Volunteer for committees or task force assignments that are beyond the normal limits of the job.
- Identify ways to make a job easier or more productive.
- Take action on a project without being asked by one's manager/supervisor/team leader.
- Collect extra information that might be useful for reports or meetings.
- Try a new way to do the job because it might be more productive.
- Question the way administrative processes are done and suggest changes.
- Question methods for ensuring quality and make suggestions to improve processes.
- Volunteer to help peers when own workload is small.
- Initiate new methods for keeping customers informed.
- Volunteer to serve on employee-level committees.
- Suggest ways to solve problems, improve workflow, etc., without being asked.

Notes

Initiating Action can be separated from most other competencies by keeping in mind that it focuses on the propensity to act, not on the quality of the action. An individual can take independent action and go beyond expectations while demonstrating numerous other competencies (e.g.,

Decision Making, Customer Focus, or Innovation). The fact that he or she takes independent action and goes above and beyond is the Initiating Action competency. The content of the Initiating Action shown (e.g., the quality of the decision made, the value of the steps taken to meet customer needs, or the originality and usefulness of the ideas) relates to the other competencies.

Compare to:

- **Energy.** This competency focuses on maintaining effectiveness while sustaining long work hours or performing mentally or physically taxing work.
- **Tenacity.** This competency focuses on the frequency of attempts to meet an objective. A person who makes repeated attempts to overcome obstacles is demonstrating effective Tenacity.

Innovation

Generating innovative solutions in work situations; trying different and novel ways to deal with work problems and opportunities.

Key Actions

- **Challenges paradigms**—Identifies implicit assumptions in the way problems or situations are defined or presented; sees alternative ways to view or define problems; is not constrained by the thoughts or approaches of others.
- **Leverages diverse resources**—Draws upon multiple and diverse sources (individuals, disciplines, bodies of knowledge) for ideas and inspiration.
- **Thinks expansively**—Combines ideas in unique ways or makes connections between disparate ideas; explores different lines of thought; views situations from multiple perspectives; brainstorms multiple approaches/solutions.
- **Evaluates multiple solutions**—Examines numerous potential solutions and evaluates each before accepting any.
- **Ensures relevance**—Targets important areas for innovation and develops solutions that address meaningful work issues.

Sample Job Activities

- Generate novel solutions to business problems.
- Suggest new ways to apply existing knowledge.
- Develop creative improvements to the organization's products/services.
- Create novel combinations of existing products/services to meet new opportunities.
- Look beyond tried-and-true methods of solving problems.
- Recognize opportunities to use new/unusual ideas.
- Develop creative improvements to organization's processes/procedures.
- Create novel combinations of existing processes/procedures to solve business problems.
- Seek ongoing improvements to organization's processes/procedures.
- Solve a new problem with little background information.

Notes

Innovation is related to Decision Making because it involves multiple and unique responses to a problem, which overlaps with the generation of options found in Decision Making. A person who demonstrates a high level of innovation generates more novel or unique options than someone who does not exhibit much innovative behavior. The competency Innovation can be used in combination with Decision Making if generating novel solutions is an important part of the job/role.

Compare to:

- **Initiating Action.** This competency focuses on taking action regardless of its novelty or uniqueness; Innovation focuses on generating novel and creative solutions.

Leading/Living The Vision And Values

Keeping the organization's vision and values at the forefront of decision-making and action.

Harvard University Statement of Values

- Respect for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- Honesty and integrity in all dealings
- Conscientious pursuit of excellence in one's work
- Accountability for actions and conduct in the workplace

Key Actions

- **Communicates the importance of the vision and values**—Helps others understand the organization's vision and values and their importance.
- **Moves others to action**—Translates the vision and values into day-to-day activities and behaviors; guides and motivates others to take actions that support the vision and values.
- **Models the vision and values**—Takes actions, makes decisions, and shapes team or group priorities to reflect the organization's vision and values.
- **Rewards living the vision and values**—Recognizes and rewards employees whose actions support the organization's vision and values.

Sample Job Activities

- Set the tone through own actions in creating an environment where ideas can be shared, questions can be asked, and individuals are accountable for their own actions.
- Highlight the organization's purpose and future direction to all staff so they can do their jobs more effectively.
- Encourage open discussion of plans for future action and the reasons behind the plans.
- Show passion for organization's products or services.
- Ensure that individual's goals and performance are aligned with organization's vision and values.
- Compare own decisions and actions to the vision to ensure alignment.
- Clarify for others what they can do to demonstrate the organization's vision and values.

- Paint a vivid picture in words and actions to show what the vision and values mean to all employees.
- Convey business directions for the organization.

Compare to:

- **Strategic Decision Making.** This competency focuses on moving the organization from the current state to the desired state by translating the vision into an action plan and measurable results. Strategic leaders align systems with the vision, bridge skill and system gaps, and eliminate barriers to achieving the desired state. A strategic leader fills in the details, makes things happen, and measures results, while a visionary leader paints in broad strokes. One who leads through vision and values makes the vision and values meaningful and concrete to others.

Managing Conflict

Dealing effectively with others in an antagonistic situation; using appropriate inter-personal styles and methods to reduce tension or conflict between two or more people.

Key Actions

- **Opens discussions effectively**—Establishes a clear and compelling rationale for resolving the conflict.
- **Clarifies the current situation**—Collects information from relevant sources to understand the conflict.
- **Remains open to all sides**—Objectively views the conflict from all sides.
- **Stays focused on resolution**—Stays focused on resolving the conflict and avoids personal issues and attacks.
- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Presents and seeks potential solutions or positive courses of action.
- **Initiates action**—Takes positive action to resolve the conflict in a way that addresses the issue, dissipates the conflict, and maintains the relationship.
- **Closes discussions with clear summaries**—Summarizes to ensure that all are aware of agreements and required actions.

Sample Job Activities

- Settle disputes between employees.
- Settle disputes between groups within the organization.
- Settle disputes as quickly and effectively as possible.
- Watch for conflicts to prevent them from growing.
- Keep working relationships smooth even during stressful times.
- Mediate disagreements between others within the organization.
- Diffuse disagreements that are impacting performance.
- Educate others on how to deal effectively with conflict.

Notes

Managing Conflict can be used to describe the behaviors used in conflicts in which one is personally involved as well as when mediating others' conflict.

Compare to:

- **Gaining Commitment.** Some key actions do overlap between Gaining Commitment and Managing Conflict. Unique aspects of Managing Conflict include keeping the discussion issue oriented and not letting it become personalized, dissipating emotions and not exacerbating them, and dealing with heavy tension, which is not usually present in other leadership situations.

Managing Work (Includes Time Management)

Effectively managing one's time and resources to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

Key Actions

- **Prioritizes**—Identifies more critical and less critical activities and tasks; adjusts priorities when appropriate.
- **Makes preparations**—Ensures that required equipment and/or materials are in appropriate locations so that own and others' work can be done effectively.
- **Schedules**—Effectively allocates own time to complete work; coordinates own and others' schedules to avoid conflicts.
- **Leverages resources**—Takes advantage of available resources (individuals, processes, departments, and tools) to complete work efficiently.
- **Stays focused**—Uses time effectively and prevents irrelevant issues or distractions from interfering with work completion.

Sample Job Activities

- Plan to have materials ready "just in time" to complete a job.
- Maintain a log of work, production, or maintenance.
- Schedule meetings or appointments for others.
- Keeps files organized.
- Make contingency plans in case an appointment is canceled.
- Know and rely on the "experts" in various departments who can address and solve special problems.
- Maintain a calendar or schedule for another person.
- Make travel arrangements.
- Coordinate and schedule meetings for others.
- Ensure that high-priority work is accomplished within required timelines.

Notes

Do not use *Managing Work (Includes Time Management)* and *Planning and Organizing* together. Managing Work (Includes Time Management) is closely related to Planning and Organizing; they share a number of key actions. Use Managing Work (Includes Time Management) when the focus within the job/role is on the incumbent's planning of his or her own time and work, not determining the schedules or activities of others.

Meeting Leadership

Ensuring that a meeting serves its business objectives while using appropriate interpersonal styles and methods and considering the needs and potential contributions of others.

Key Actions

- **Opens discussions effectively**—Helps to establish the purpose and importance of the meeting.
- **Clarifies the current situation**—Seeks, gives, and summarizes information; checks for understanding.
- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Seeks, makes, and develops suggestions; makes procedural suggestions.
- **Facilitates agreement**—Tries to build agreement on outcomes and actions.
- **Closes discussions with clear summaries**—Helps to summarize meeting outcomes and establish follow-up.
- **Uses effective interpersonal skills**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

Sample Job Activities

- State purpose and agenda for meetings (e.g., staff meetings, task force meetings, business strategy meetings).
- Solicit others' ideas or suggestions in meetings.
- Follow an established agenda for meetings.
- Make procedural suggestions in meetings.
- Maintain the self-esteem of people in meetings.
- Summarize agreements reached on issues or concerns.
- Intervene during meetings to settle arguments or interpersonal problems among direct reports, team members, or peers.
- Set date during meetings for follow-up sessions if appropriate.
- Obtain all necessary information to resolve issues in meetings.
- Ensure that all opinions are solicited and understood in meetings.
- Exhibit appropriate interpersonal style in responding to participants in meetings.
- Check for own and/or others' understanding during meetings.
- Conduct meetings.

- Conduct problem-solving or information-sharing meetings.

Notes

Do not use *Meeting Leadership* and *Meeting Participation* together.

Use Meeting Leadership for jobs/roles in which the incumbent is responsible for facilitating meetings; use Meeting Participation when only contribution is expected.

Leadership does not have to come from the highest-ranking individual at a meeting, although that is the most common source. Shared leadership—when various people lead various parts of a meeting—is becoming more common. Meeting Leadership skills are advanced skills for members of empowered work groups (self-directed teams). After a team has been functioning for a while, leadership begins to be shared and this competency becomes important for all team members.

Although Gaining Commitment can be an important competency demonstrated during meetings, this competency is distinct from Meeting Leadership and should be treated separately.

Meeting Participation

Using appropriate interpersonal styles and methods to help reach a meeting's goals while considering the needs and potential contributions of others.

Key Actions

- **Clarifies the current situation**—Seeks, gives, and summarizes information; checks for understanding.
- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Seeks, makes, and develops suggestions; makes procedural suggestions.
- **Facilitates agreement**—Tries to build agreement on outcomes and actions.
- **Uses effective interpersonal skills**—Establishes good interpersonal relationships by helping people feel valued, appreciated, and included in discussions (enhances self-esteem, empathizes, involves, discloses, supports).

Sample Job Activities

- Ask questions in a meeting to clarify technical issues.
- React to others' ideas in a meeting.
- Expand on others' ideas in a meeting.
- Express opinions or ideas in a meeting.
- Provide professional expertise in a meeting.
- Take a stand in a meeting on potentially unpopular issues.
- Participate actively and effectively in meetings.
- Present information or arguments effectively in a meeting.
- Encourage others to contribute their ideas in a meeting.
- Participate in problem-solving or information-sharing meetings.

Notes

Do not use *Meeting Participation* and *Meeting Leadership* together.

Use Meeting Leadership for jobs/roles in which the incumbent is responsible for facilitating meetings; use Meeting Participation when only contribution is expected.

Negotiation

Effectively exploring alternatives and positions to reach outcomes that gain the support and acceptance of all parties.

Key Actions

- **Clarifies the current situation**—Explores all parties' needs, concerns, and initial positions, including own.
- **Identifies points of agreement/disagreement**—Builds common ground by highlighting areas of agreement; focuses efforts by pointing out areas of disagreement.
- **Keeps discussion issue oriented**—Manages the interpersonal process to stay focused on the task; constructively addresses emotions and conflict.
- **Develops others' and own ideas**—Engages in mutual problem solving by brainstorming alternative positions or approaches and evaluating them openly and fairly.
- **Builds support for preferred alternatives**—Builds value of preferred alternatives by relating them to the other party's needs; responds to objections by emphasizing value; exposes problems with undesirable alternatives.
- **Facilitates agreement**—Seeks a win-win solution through a give-and-take process that recognizes each party's core needs.

Sample Job Activities

- Negotiate terms, agreements, and understandings with others (e.g., customers, senior management, vendors, departments, regulatory bodies, special-interest groups).
- Negotiate schedules and deliverables with customers.
- Negotiate financial terms with external customers.
- Arbitrate policy or procedural disagreements.
- Engage in problem solving by offering alternative positions and evaluating them openly and fairly.
- Negotiate terms of contracts or agreements.
- Negotiate labor contracts.
- Negotiate business partnerships.

Notes

The competency Negotiation should be used only when negotiating terms, conditions, and agreements (such as legal contracts, labor contracts,

vendor agreements, or business partnerships) is a major part of the job/role. Clear negotiation situations are characterized by a perceived conflict with a difference in objectives, significant outcomes at stake that will have impact over an extended period of time, and an unknown win-lose outcome.

Planning and Organizing

Establishing courses of action for self and others to ensure that work is completed efficiently.

Key Actions

- **Prioritizes**—Identifies more critical and less critical activities and assignments; adjusts priorities when appropriate.
- **Determines tasks and resources**—Determines project/assignment requirements by breaking them down into tasks; identifying equipment, materials, and people needed; and coordinating with internal and external partners.
- **Schedules**—Allocates appropriate amounts of time for completing own and others' work; avoids scheduling conflicts; develops timelines and milestones.
- **Leverages resources**—Takes advantage of available resources (individuals, processes, departments, and tools) to complete work efficiently.
- **Stays focused**—Uses time effectively and prevents irrelevant issues or distractions from interfering with work completion.

Sample Job Activities

- Plan use of own time to accomplish a variety of tasks.
- Schedule own work so that the most important work gets done.
- Use a calendar or tickler file to schedule meetings, work, etc.
- Schedule work with other departments or areas.
- Prepare plans for projects or major assignments (including tasks, resources, and time frames).
- Develop timetables or milestone charts for projects.
- Schedule meetings with peers, employees, internal/external customers, vendors, or others.
- Prepare materials for projects or presentations.
- Adjust schedule based on priority situations that occur throughout the week.
- Advise others and coordinate their schedules to address priority customer issues.
- Coordinate own time and priorities with the needs of customers and others.
- Know and rely on the "experts" in various departments who can solve and address special problems.
- Plan own work schedule with little or no supervision or guidance.
- Prioritize time and financial (corporate) resources.

- Put together and execute project plans.

Notes

Do not use *Planning and Organizing* and *Managing Work (Includes Time Management)* together.

Planning and Organizing is closely related to Managing Work (Includes Time Management); they share a number of key actions. Use Planning and Organizing when the job/role requires incumbents to plan their own and others' time and activities.

Merely maintaining a written schedule or arranging meetings for others does not qualify as planning others' time and activities. Additional planning and organizing behaviors must be present within a job/role to justify using the Planning and Organizing competency.

Quality Orientation (Attention to Detail)

Accomplishing tasks by considering all areas involved, no matter how small; showing concern for all aspects of the job; accurately checking processes and tasks; being watchful over a period of time.

Key Actions

- **Follows procedures**—Accurately and carefully follows established procedures for completing work tasks.
- **Ensures high-quality output**—Vigilantly watches over job processes, tasks, and work products to ensure freedom from errors, omissions, or defects.
- **Takes action**—Initiates action to correct quality problems or notifies others of quality issues as appropriate.

Sample Job Activities

- Review all parts of a job to ensure quality.
- Complete reports, orders, or other documentation accurately.
- Proof own work to identify errors or omissions.
- Review and edit where necessary all documents to ensure accuracy and completeness.
- Inform affected internal/external customers of changes in a timely manner.
- Ensure that all details of a task are accomplished.
- Keep track of many small details without forgetting any.
- Notice errors in work before it is distributed.
- Check to see that all details in each step of a procedure have been completed.
- Make sure that correspondence is error free.

Compare to:

- **Work Standards.** This competency focuses on setting high standards, working hard, and taking responsibility for shortcomings. Quality Orientation focuses on paying attention to all details and aspects of a job or process to avoid substandard outputs. It does not involve taking personal responsibility or accountability; its focus is on results.

Risk Taking

Initiating action that tries to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage when potential negative consequences are understood.

Key Actions

- **Actively seeks opportunities**—Pursues situations or opportunities that can lead to either substantial benefit or significant negative consequence.
- **Calculates risk**—Gathers information to understand probability of success, benefits of success, and consequences of failure.
- **Commits to action**—Initiates action despite uncertainty of outcome; is willing to accept the consequences of failure.

Sample Job Activities

- Make decisions when the probability of success is unclear.
- Make decisions that involve risk.
- Try new but unproved approaches to solving problems.

Safety Awareness

Identifying and correcting conditions that affect employee safety; upholding safety standards.

Key Actions

- **Identifies safety issues and problems**—Detects hazardous working conditions and safety problems; checks equipment and/or work area regularly.
- **Takes corrective action**—Reports or corrects unsafe working conditions; makes recommendations and/or improves safety and security procedures; enforces safety regulations and procedures.
- **Monitors the corrective action**—Monitors safety or security issues after taking corrective action and ensures continued compliance.

Sample Job Activities

- Display knowledge of all related safety or security regulations.
- Document and/or monitor safety or security violations.
- Recommend and/or improve safety or security procedures.
- Enforce safety and/or security procedures.
- Review safety training materials.
- Demonstrate and/or explain safety equipment and/or procedures.
- Be aware of coworkers' safety while performing maintenance.
- Understand how to use and operate safety equipment.
- Confront others about safety or security violations.
- Follow safety and/or security procedures on the job.
- Be aware of the hazards of working with dangerous materials.
- Be alert to unsafe work conditions.
- Report and/or correct unsafe work conditions.
- Take action to correct unsafe work habits.

Sales Ability/Persuasiveness

Using appropriate interpersonal styles and communication methods to gain acceptance of a product, service, or idea from prospects and clients.

Key Actions

- **Questions and probes**—Seeks information to understand situations, needs, and desired potential benefits.
- **Establishes strategy**—Develops approaches that best position products, services, or ideas; leverages supportive factors, overcomes or minimizes barriers, and addresses unique needs and preferences of key decision makers.
- **Builds rapport**—Makes favorable impressions by interacting with prospects/clients in a manner that builds effective relationships.
- **Demonstrates capability**—Presents products, services, or ideas in a manner that clearly shows how they would meet needs and provide benefits; builds confidence in the products, services, or ideas.
- **Gains commitment**—Uses appropriate techniques to move others to action or to gain agreement.

Sample Job Activities

- Determine customers' needs and interests.
- Present compelling arguments to support positions.
- Highlight advantages or benefits of products or services to individuals and the organization.
- Respond to objections.
- Demonstrate flexibility in dealing with the personal/stylistic differences of customers.
- Understand a customer's buying motive (economic, technical, etc.).
- Establish credibility/positive intent with prospective customers.
- Use effective questioning techniques to explicitly understand customer needs.
- Differentiate products or services in the eyes of the customer.
- Demonstrate advantages or benefits of an idea or plan to the organization.
- Choose an appropriate approach to gain agreement to an idea or course of action.
- Relate the benefits of ideas or recommendations to the needs and interests of individuals.

Notes

Overlap exists between the skills that make a person an effective leader and the skills that make a person an effective persuader (or salesperson), but there are also important differences. The key actions of this competency focus on the differences.

Do not use this competency to describe a leader's influence on direct reports. It has an outward orientation and is used for sales-related positions and some management positions instead of Gaining Commitment.

Strategic Decision Making

Obtaining information and identifying key issues and relationships relevant to achieving a long-range goal or vision; committing to a course of action to accomplish a long-range goal or vision after developing alternatives based on logical assumptions, facts, available resources, constraints, and organizational values.

Key Actions

- **Gathers information**—Identifies and fills gaps in information required to understand strategic issues.
- **Organizes information**—Organizes information and data to identify/explain major trends, problems, and causes; compares and combines information to identify underlying issues.
- **Evaluates/Selects strategies**—Generates and considers options for actions to achieve a long-range goal or vision; develops decision criteria considering factors such as cost, benefits, risks, timing, and buy-in; selects the strategy most likely to succeed.
- **Establishes implementation plan**—Identifies the key tasks and resources needed to achieve objectives.
- **Executes plan**—Makes sure strategies are carried out; monitors results and makes adjustments as needed.

Sample Job Activities

- Modify department or group activities and procedures to be consistent with major new directives.
- Modify team or unit activities and procedures to be consistent with major new directives.
- Translate major new directives into individual performance expectations.
- Establish reward structures or incentives for accomplishing major new directives.

- Establish strategies or methods for accomplishing major new directives.
- Ensure that organizational systems are in place to support the accomplishment of major new directives.
- Establish department or group priorities in implementing major new directives.
- Translate organizational goals into practical goals and a strategy for own department.

- Ensure consistency among the individual managers' strategies so that they move the entire area in the appropriate direction.
- Adjust plans quickly when issues arise and make sure that priority issues are handled effectively.
- Recognize alternative technologies or methods for delivering or producing services or products.
- Take a broad or long-term view of business or technical opportunities.

Compare to:

- **Leading/Living The Vision and Values.** This competency focuses on making the vision/values come alive by supporting and reinforcing the importance of the vision/values created by senior management. One who leads through vision and values makes the vision and values meaningful and concrete to others.

Stress Tolerance

Maintaining stable performance under pressure or opposition (such as time pressure or job ambiguity); handling stress in a manner that is acceptable to others and to the organization.

Key Actions

- **Maintains focus**—Stays focused on work tasks and productively uses time and energy when under stress.
- **Maintains relationships**—Presents a positive disposition and maintains constructive interpersonal relationships when under stress.
- **Copes effectively**—Develops appropriate strategies as needed to alter conditions that create stress and to sustain physical and mental health.

Sample Job Activities

- Be responsible for organizational or business outcomes.
- Effectively deal with unclear job responsibilities.
- Effectively handle a heavy workload.
- Cope appropriately with conflicting work demands.
- Cope appropriately with uncertain career or future work conditions.
- Effectively handle distractions or interruptions to work.
- Face sudden new or unfamiliar situations.
- Effectively deal with rush situations (e.g., deadlines, emergencies, extremely busy periods).
- Spend time away from home.
- Face interpersonal conflicts or arguments.
- Effectively balance outside obligations (e.g., social or civic) with work.
- Deal with internal/external customer complaints or resistance.
- Be available (on call) to work as needed.
- Remain flexible, open, and positive in the face of changing needs and customer demands.
- Maintain effectiveness while not being able to get away from the job (even when officially on vacation).
- Work very long days, often with extensive travel.
- Remain a positive voice for the organization while dealing primarily with dissatisfied customers.
- Balance personal life with a highly demanding workload.
- Put in a full day and still have to complete reports, voice mail/e-mail messages, and administrative work at home at night.

Notes

The types of stress to which one is exposed might change as one moves up the organizational ladder. Frontline leaders are exposed most frequently to time stress and stress resulting from the opposition of ideas. In middle-management positions, more subtle stresses come into play, such as being in an ambiguous situation without clear job responsibilities and goals. Peer competition also becomes more intense.

High-level managers experience many of the same stress-provoking factors encountered by mid-level managers, but these factors may be exacerbated by the greater importance of the decisions that high-level managers make. In addition, high-level managers more often find themselves in situations where the facts of the situation are unclear and change rapidly. Job, task, and relationship ambiguity are all common. Also, high-level managers might feel stress because they lack control when outside events affect the appropriateness of their decisions.

Compare to:

- **Adaptability.** This competency focuses on maintaining effectiveness when faced with novel or changing situations. However, stress can be a constant in a job. A person might be able to maintain performance under pressure (Stress Tolerance) but might not be able to adapt well to change (Adaptability).

Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills

Having achieved a satisfactory level of technical and professional skill or knowledge in position-related areas; keeping up with current developments and trends in areas of expertise.

Notes

For many jobs/roles it is most appropriate to use this standard competency with customized Key Knowledge Areas (rather than key actions) to define knowledge/skills required for the industry, technology, and function of the job/role being analyzed. (See Sample Key Knowledge Areas below.)

These areas should be determined through the competency identification process (job analysis).

More technically complex jobs/roles might need a number of separate, customized Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills competencies to provide more precise definitions of knowledge/skill areas

Compare to:

- **Applied Learning and Continuous Learning.** These competencies focus on acquiring knowledge. This focus is also a part of Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills. Use Applied Learning and Continuous Learning with Technical/Professional Knowledge and Skills only if the expectation for acquiring knowledge goes beyond the arena of technical and professional skills and knowledge.

Sample Key Knowledge Areas

- **Marketing knowledge**—Understands and uses effective marketing techniques to support the region's and the individual's objectives and maximize the return on its marketing dollars.
- **Financial management knowledge**—Understands basic finance (e.g., financial analysis, accounting, budgeting) and can use financial data to accurately diagnose business conditions, identify key issues, and develop strategies and plans.
- **Industry knowledge**—Understands the industry and the factors that can affect regional and corporate goals; uses industry knowledge in planning and decision-making.
- **Keeps up to date**—Stays abreast of current developments and trends in all relevant technical/professional knowledge areas.

Sample Job Activities

- Understand the technical language of the job.
- Understand technical components of the job (e.g., knowledge of tax laws or semiconductors).
- Use technical knowledge or skills not easily or quickly learned on the job.
- Understand technical materials.
- Accomplish complex tasks without asking for guidance or instruction.
- Proficiency in computer skills.
- Review technical information to keep aware of developments in the field.
- Attend professional seminars or meetings to stay current.
- Stay aware of current developments and trends in all relevant technical/professional knowledge areas.

Tenacity

Staying with a position or plan of action until the desired objective is obtained or is no longer reasonably attainable.

Key Actions

- **Persists in efforts**—Works to achieve goal in spite of barriers or difficulties; actively works to overcome obstacles by changing strategies, doubling efforts, using multiple approaches, etc.
- **Redirects focus**—Adjusts focus when it becomes obvious that a goal cannot be achieved; redirects energy into related achievable goals if appropriate.

Sample Job Activities

- Continue to call on prospective customers despite initial resistance.
- Make repeated contacts with prospective customers.
- Keep trying to achieve goals despite obstacles.
- Stay with a strategy or plan of action until the desired objective is achieved or no longer attainable.
- Repeatedly present an idea to a manager for review or action.
- Continue with a sales prospect even when decisions take more than six months.

Notes

Tenacity is a quantitative competency. The focus is on the frequency of attempts to achieve a goal, as opposed to the quality of attempts. (The quality of the attempt might demonstrate Sales Ability/Persuasiveness or Quality Orientation, depending on the goal.) Effectiveness in Tenacity requires individuals to balance frequency of attempts with knowing when to quit.

Valuing Diversity

Appreciating and leveraging the capabilities, insights, and ideas of all individuals; working effectively with individuals of diverse style, ability, and motivation.

Key Actions

- **Leverages diversity**—Seeks out and uses ideas, opinions, and insights from diverse and various sources and individuals; maximizes effectiveness by using individuals' particular talents and abilities on tasks or assignments.
- **Seeks understanding**—Establishes relationships with and learns more about people of other cultures and backgrounds (e.g., special issues, social norms, decision-making approaches, preferences).
- **Champions diversity**—Advocates the value of diversity to others; takes actions to increase diversity in the workplace (e.g., by recruiting and developing people from varied backgrounds and cultures); confronts racist, sexist, or inappropriate behavior by others; challenges exclusionary organizational practices.
- **Takes actions that respect diversity**—Examines own biases and behaviors to avoid stereotypical actions or responses; plans and takes actions that consider the diversity of those involved or affected.

Sample Job Activities

- Attend diversity training
- Participate in local diversity efforts
- Support local diversity efforts
- Take action or seek appropriate resources when issues arise

Work Standards

Setting high standards of performance for self and others; assuming responsibility and accountability for successfully completing assignments or tasks; self-imposing standards of excellence rather than having standards imposed.

Key Actions

- **Sets standards for excellence**—Establishes criteria and/or work procedures to achieve a high level of quality, productivity, or service.
- **Ensures high quality**—Dedicates required time and energy to assignments or tasks to ensure that no aspect of the work is neglected; works to overcome obstacles to completing tasks or assignments.
- **Takes responsibility**—Accepts responsibility for outcomes (positive or negative) of one's work; admits mistakes and refocuses efforts when appropriate.
- **Encourages others to take responsibility**—Provides encouragement and support to others in accepting responsibility; does not accept others' denial of responsibility without questioning.

Sample Job Activities

- Critique own performance as a means of self-improvement.
- Set high standards of work performance for self.
- Set high standards of performance for team, group, or others.
- Complete own work on time.
- Review others' work for quality.
- Perform work that is not checked by others.
- Show pride in work that is sent to internal/external customers.
- Set examples of high-quality work for peers.
- Ensure that written correspondence is neat and professional.
- Review products or materials for quality.

