

A Context for Understanding, Interpreting, and Using

The Competency Profile for the Federal Public Service Evaluation Community

Objective

This document furnishes a context for understanding, interpreting, and using the Competency Profile for the Federal Public Service Evaluation Community by addressing the following questions:

- What are Competencies?
- What is the Competency Profile for the Federal Public Service Evaluation Community?
- What are the Potential Uses for the Competency Profile?

Information in this document is excerpted from:

- Overview of the Framework for Competency-Based Management in the Public Service of Canada, published jointly by Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) and Public Service Commission (PSC) in December 1999, http://publiservice.tbs-sct.gc.ca/HR_CONNEXIONS_RH/sigs/CBHRM/framework_cbm/siglist_e.html, and
- Wholistic Competency Profile (WCP): A Model, published by the Personnel Psychology Centre (PPC) of the PSC in June 1996, http://publiservice.gc.ca/hr/ppc/wcp/competencies_model_e.htm .

Background

The Centres of Excellence for Evaluation and Internal Audit at Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) are committed to contributing to the recruitment and professional development of evaluators and internal auditors in the Federal Public Service. As part of this commitment, the Centres contracted with the Research and Development Division of the Personnel Psychology Centre (PPC), Public Service Commission (PSC) to develop competency profiles for evaluators and internal auditors.

The project's objective was that the profiles would be "*used to support the development of strategies and plans for recruitment and professional development, under the direction of the Centres of Excellence for Evaluation (CEE) and Internal Audit (CEIA).*" The project encompassed the design, testing, conduct and analysis of a demographic and competency survey, and resulting development, testing, and confirmation of competency profiles.

A Steering Committee was formed to provide the project with strategic guidance and direction. The Committee members are Myra Conway, Director General of Review, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Mario Bot, Director of Internal Audit, Department of Foreign Affairs and

International Trade; Heather Hopwood, Manager of Performance Measurement, Canadian Food Inspection Agency; Janet Harrison, Director of Community Development, CEIA, TBS; and Nancy McMahon, Manager Capacity Building, CEE, TBS. The Committee determined that, in keeping with the project's objective, the competency profiles should not be used in performance assessment.

The PPC has modelled the Competency Profiles for the Federal Public Service Internal Audit and Evaluation Communities on the fourteen competencies that constitute the Profile of Public Service Leadership Competencies, which is a framework published by TBS and PSC for identifying key aspects of successful performance at each management level. Through in-depth consultations with executives and internal audit and evaluation professionals across the public service, the PPC has adapted the Leadership Competencies to capture the culture, values, goals, and challenges specific to the internal audit and evaluation communities.

Information on the Profile of Public Service Leadership Competencies is available at http://publiservice.srv.gc.ca/hr/ppc/profile/profile_main_e.htm.

What are Competencies?

For the purposes of the Competency Profile, "competency" is defined as those characteristics of an individual that underlie successful performance or behaviour at work. There are two significant ways in which competencies can be said to differ from "qualifications":

First, competencies are linked to the strategic objectives and capabilities of the organization.

Second, competencies can be used to track performance in all human resource areas, including training, development, performance management, and succession planning, and not simply resourcing. However, they do not have to be applied in all these areas at the same time. Most organizations have started out by first applying competency profiles in training and development initiatives and human resource planning. Only when employees have become familiar with the use of competencies to guide training and development activities have organizations introduced the profile in performance assessment.

What is the Competency Profile for the Federal Public Service Evaluation Community?

A "competency profile" is a set of competencies and associated behaviours that link directly to the work to be performed. The Competency Profile for the Federal Public Service Evaluation Community describes generic characteristics deemed important for the successful performance of evaluation work at the junior, intermediate, and senior professional levels (excluding positions at the executive or equivalent levels).

What are the Potential Uses for the Competency Profile?

The Competency Profile is a tool for departments and managers to use to rebuild evaluation human resource capacity. In general, the more human resource management areas in which the Profile is used, the greater their impact.

RECRUITMENT

The Profile is of valuable for use in recruitment initiatives, both centralized and de-centralized. A systematic, community-wide application of the Profile in recruitment helps to ensure that recruited evaluators meet a set of common standards required by evaluators across the Federal Public Service. When used in conjunction with pre-qualified pools, this approach can help achieve broader community goals (e.g., mobility needs) as well as specific departmental needs.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Profile can be used by managers and by individual staff to identify work-related competencies that need development, either at the organizational or individual level. When applied systematically across a wider Federal Public Service community, the Profile maximizes the use of resources in the development and delivery of training and learning programs that target common areas in need of development.

TEAM BUILDING

The Profile can be used in combination with a knowledge of individual strengths and developmental needs to build strong teams with the competencies required to meet project objectives, while at the same time balancing team strengths with an individual's need for development.