Supervisor Guide for Creating the Career Progression Framework

The purpose of this guide is to provide Supervisors with information on how to create the Career Progression Framework that accurately reflects the behaviors, capabilities, understanding and/or expertise for an employee's position that is essential to determine an employee's Career Progression Rank.

An effective Career Progression Framework will:

1. List all competencies that are required for the employee's position.
2. Provide a competency statement for each rank within each competency, detailing what is required to achieve that rank.
3. Provide a clear and defined path of progression from Proficient, to Advanced, to Expert within that position.

It is important to understand that the Career Progression Framework should NOT be:

- *A performance evaluation*. Career Progression is not a means to formally assess the employee's performance. In this regard, it does not replace the performance evaluation process.
- *A way to clarify or revise a job specification or template*. If a job specification or template does not accurately describe the duties performed, this is a matter for the manager and Human Resources to discuss.
- *A guarantee of a reclassification to a higher job template*. Career Progression can help prepare an employee to become qualified for a higher job template but does not guarantee advancement.

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SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF RANKS

Career Progression is a process by which employees can progress, with approval from their supervisor, within their current position, due to increased job proficiency and/or relevant professional development.

Employees can be nominated to progress through three ranks:

Proficient → Advanced → Expert

In order for Supervisors to determine if an employee has achieve the next rank, it is important to understand how each rank can apply to an employee and to a competency.

Proficient is an employee that:

- Able to perform the duties of the position effectively.
- May need assistance in developing the competencies to advance to next rank.
- Applies the competency in routine situations and requires guidance in unique and difficult situations.
- Focuses on development through on-the-job experience.
- Understands and can discuss terminology, concepts, principles, and issues related to the competency.

Advanced is an employee that:

- Can usually develop the competency independently.
- Applies the competency in unique and difficult situations.
- Focuses on broad unit/department issues.
- Understands and can discuss the competency and implication of changes to processes, policies, and procedures in the unit/department.
- Provides practical/relevant ideas and perspectives on process or policy improvements which may easily be implemented.

Expert is an employee that:

- Has developed and demonstrated all the actions associated with this competency.
- Applies the competency in considerably unique and difficult situations.
- Has a strategic focus.
- Is considered the subject matter expert in the unit/department for that competency.
- Provides guidance, troubleshooting, and answers questions related to their area of expertise and/or the field where the competency is used.

SECTION 2: OVERVIEW OF COMPETENCIES

Competencies are the behaviors, capabilities, understanding, and expertise that contribute to growth within a position.

- **Behavior** is the observable reaction of an individual to a certain situation.
- **Capability** is an innate potential to perform mental and physical actions or tasks.
- **Understanding** is information developed or learned through experience, study, or investigation.
- **Expertise** is the result of repeatedly applying understanding or capability.

Examples of competencies include: Critical Thinking, Teamwork or Time Management. A full list of all required and available competencies can be found on in the Competency Library on the Career Progression website.

Why are competencies used to evaluate an employee's progression within their position?

Employees are hired with a clear understanding of the minimum qualifications to perform their position but may not know how or what actions can be taken to increase their proficiency in their current position.

Competencies are tangible and enable and encourage employees to have a clear roadmap for progression.

Competencies help employees to:

1. *Reflect -* They empower employees to discuss with their supervisors their strengths, areas for growth, and goals for their position.
2. *Discover -* They give employees a clear understanding of what is expected of them in their position at each rank.
3. *Assess -* They help employees identify their competency gaps and the steps needed to remove the gaps to increase their proficiency.
4. *Develop -* They enable employees to determine what specific training, knowledge or development activities are needed for their progression.
5. *Evaluate -* They give the employee an opportunity to review their behaviors, capabilities, understanding and expertise to determine if they have closed the gaps or to pursue additional development activities.

Competencies help Supervisors to:

1. Distribute work more efficiently by using the knowledge of employee' career progression rank.
2. Acquire training and development opportunities systematically and efficiently.
3. Set goals and planning for Career Progression to meet the needs of the department.

Competencies additionally empower employees to clearly visualize the skills and experience they currently hold against those behaviors, capabilities, understandings, and expertise required to meet their career progression objectives. In turn, employees and Supervisors can now clearly observe any gaps, training, and development they may require to advance professionally.

SECTION 3: DETERMINING COMPETENCIES

The Career Progression Framework will consist **five (5) competencies**, chosen by the Supervisor. These competencies are to be selected from the Professional Competencies and should relate to the position's job specification and/or specific discipline for the position.

For job templates that are in a Manager Category (M5-M8), Supervisors are required to select one (1) Manager Competencies for one of the five competencies. Manager Competencies should be related to the position's role of providing a combination of supervision/management over a department charged with providing a variety of cross-disciplinary services.

A list of all competencies can be found in the Competency Library on the Career Progression website.

Type	New Competency Name	Previous Competency Name(s)
Professional Competencies	Collaborative Leadership	*Leadership *Teamwork/Collaboration
	Critical Thinking	*Analytical/Critical Thinking *Strategic Thinking
	Customer Services and Relationship Building	*Customer Service *Interpersonal Interaction
	Ethical Practice	No change
	Flexibility, Innovation and Problem Solving	*Adaptability/Flexibility *Innovation/Creativity *Problem Solving
	Influential Communication	*Communication *Persuasiveness/Facilitation
	Planning and Organization	*Attention to Detail *Planning and Organization *Time Management
	Reliability and Initiative	*Initiative *Reliability/Dependability
	Valuing Diversity	No change
Manager Competencies	Change Management and Adaptability	*Change Management *Vision
	Conflict Management	No change
	Developing & Leading Others	No change
	Diplomacy	No change

When determining what competencies to select, Supervisor should:

- Review the job template and job specification for the position. The job template and job specification provide an indication of skills necessary for an employee to be effective in a position. Look first at the most critical duties and functions of a position. In addition to the tasks performed on the job, the qualifications give an indication of the competencies required.
- Ask what are the specific competencies needed for an employee to achieve each rank? What would a Manager look for in a new hire; or what competencies do current employees in this position possess?

- Select competencies that are effective and align with the mission, vision and goals of the position as well as the unit/department.
- Ensure the employee can demonstrate all of the competencies determined in their day-to-day tasks and job responsibilities.
- Keep the framework manageable. While it can be easy to include many Professional or Manager Competencies, only include the ones that are essential to describing what success looks like in the position.
- Ensure the competency can be verified and assessed through observable and measurable behaviors, capabilities, understanding, and/or expertise.

SECTION 4: WRITING COMPETENCY STATEMENTS

One of the most important parts of the Career Progression Framework is the competency statement. Competency statements detail the specific behaviors, capabilities, expertise and/or understanding that is required to achieve the designated rank of Proficient, Advanced and Expert for each competency. Each competency statement should provide a clear and defined path of progression from Proficient, to Advanced, to Expert for each rank.

How to Write a Competency Statement:

1. ***Determine the scope of the position that the competency pertains to***. Focus on the behaviors, capabilities, understanding, and/or expertise rather than tasks, which can change frequently over time.
2. ***Build from the lowest rank of Proficient up to the highest rank of Expert***. Ensure that each rank is distinguishable and demonstrates a clear progression from Proficient to Advanced to Expert.
3. ***Use specific and active verbs.*** Describe what the employee is doing to achieve this rank. Each action requires an object. Do not use vague, inactive verbs like "responsible for procedures"; instead, use specific and active verbs like "writes procedures."
4. ***Ensure the competency can be verified and assessed through observable and/or measurable behaviors***. Use words like "perform, identify, or list". Not words like "familiar with, appreciate, or learn" as these are difficult to observe or measure.
5. ***Remove unnecessary qualifiers*** (e.g. "considerable" or "basic"). These types of qualifiers do not help clearly distinguish examples of behaviors, capabilities, understanding and/or expertise; instead, they often cause employees to second-guess their rank.
6. ***Be clear and direct.*** Give specific tasks or examples and give context for your statements, rather than vague descriptions. The statement should say why the behavior, capabilities, expertise and/or understanding is done, or what is supposed to be accomplished by the completion. (e.g. "writes procedures on how to maintain and calibrate laboratory equipment").

Remember, you will be reviewing the Framework with the employee so that they understand what each competency "looks like" on a regular basis and how it is being assessed at each rank. It is important the competency statements are obtainable within the employee's current position.

SECTION 5: COMPETENCY STATEMENT EXAMPLES

Human Resources has developed broad definitions of each competency and measurable and observable competency statements for each competency across all three ranks assist with the development of the competency statements. These should be used to aid in the development of drafting the competency statements, to generate thought about how the competency can be displayed within a position and/or assist in describing the desired behaviors, capabilities, understanding and/or expertise required for the position.

EXAMPLE OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPED COMPETENCY STATEMENTS

Collaborative Leadership

Definition: Leads, encourages, inspires, and works collaboratively with others to reach a shared goal, solve common problems, and deliver business objectives; understands everyone has contributions to make and puts the success of the team over personal interests; creates an atmosphere of respect, helpfulness, and cooperation with others to build supportive, responsive relationships.

Previously: Teamwork/Collaboration and Leadership

Proficient	Advanced	Expert
- Works towards position, unit/department and team goals and objectives. - Demonstrates professionalism and displays a positive approach to working with others. - Encourages other team members. - Cooperates with and supports others. - Weighs alternatives and consequences to make informed decisions on current operational or team issues. - Completes team project responsibilities independently and effectively. - Supports strategic direction of the unit/department, program, or team.	- Recognizes that all teams do not operate in the same way and adapts working style/method to achieve results. - Nurtures strong unit/department, program, or team identity and pride. - Relies on experience and judgment to plan and accomplish goals. - Participates and takes initiative in developing solutions with team projects and daily work. - Develops and implements short-term strategies consistent with unit/department, team, or position goals.	- Encourages teamwork across units/departments and locations. - Serves as a role model and coaches others in building strong working relationships. - Creates an environment where everyone feels safe to actively participate. - Communicates and fosters team commitment to a vision of what is to be achieved and instills a sense of passion in people about the work within their own unit/department or program. - Weighs alternatives and consequences when acting on and impacting long-term operational issues. - Proactively plans, implements, and forecasts for own position, unit/department, or program success.

EXAMPLE OF COMPETENCY STATEMENTS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR

Below provides an example of what competency statements could look like for Collaborative Leadership competency for the position of an Educational Program Administrator.

Proficient	Advanced	Expert
Learns issues to better understand program; shares key messages with students, faculty, the community and partners. Establishes rapport with students, groups, colleagues, and others that acknowledges differences in lived experiences.	Works with others to create and implement advocacy plans that advance the program's core values and supports student learning; identifies and sets collective goals. Encourages colleagues and students to engage in team and community building activities. Recognizes the interdependence of members within units and throughout the institution.	Organizes collaboratively with community partners around shared interests of the program and communities. Analyzes and strengthens alliances with a diverse and inclusive set of stakeholders to implement, support, evaluate, communicate and sustain program objectives. Creates a culture of feedback to improve individual and team leadership.

These are intended to be useful as a reference and are not an exhaustive list and are not inclusive of all behaviors, capabilities, understanding or expertise that can be demonstrated. The competency statements are intended to be tailored to individual positions.

The full competency list with competency statements can be found in the Competency Library on the Career Progression website. In addition, Human Resources has created sample Frameworks to use as guidance in creating your own.

Appendix 1: Action Verbs

Below is a list of measurable or observable action verbs that can be used when writing a competency statement to describe the behaviors, capabilities, understanding and/or expertise for an employee's position at each rank.

add	convert	discuss	interpret	prepare	rewrite
analyze	count	distinguish	judge	prescribe	select
apply	create	divide	justify	produce	selects
appraise	criticize	draw	labels	propose	separate
arrange	critique	estimate	list	quote	show
assess	defend	examine	manipulate	rank	solve
associate	define	explain	match	rate	specify
breakdown	demonstrate	extend	measure	read	state
calculate	derive	extrapolate	modify	rearrange	subdivide
categorize	describe	generalize	name	recall	subtract
change	design	generate	operate	recite	summarize
classify	design	give examples	order	recognize	support
combine	detect	grade	organize	reconstruct	test
compare	determine	graph	outline	record	transform
compile	develop	group	outlines	relate	translate
complete	devise	identify	paraphrase	reorganize	use
compose	diagram	illustrate	plan	repeat	utilize
compute	differentiate	infer	point	reproduces	write
conclude	discover	integrate	point out	revise	
contrast	discriminate	interpolate	predict		

Appendix 2: Verbs and Phrases to Avoid

Watch Out for Verbs that are not Observable and Measurable!

In order for a competency statement to be observable and measurable, it should be free of vague or ambiguous words or phrases. The following lists ambiguous words or phrases which should be avoided so that the statement is clear and direct.

Words to Avoid	**Phrases to Avoid**
• Believe	• Appreciation for
• Hear	• Acquainted with
• Realize	• Capable of
• Capacity	• Comprehension of
• Intelligence	• Cognizant of
• Comprehend	• Conscious of
• Know	• Familiar with
• Conceptualize	• Interest in
• Memorize	• Interested in
• Perceive	• Knowledge of
• Feel	• Knowledgeable about