Get Started Competency Mapping In Your Organization



Competency mapping may be applied generally or specifically for a team, department or individual employee. Your organization may also use skills mapping to identify future leaders or employees on track for promotion or generally to help identify areas of future development.

Top Competencies

Most organizations will require a common set of competencies across the organization and then variations within roles or teams. Moreover, the competencies your organization requires may be very similar to other organizations in your industry. However, based on your organizations culture and focus there may be significant variations in some of the competencies you value and seek to develop.

Competencies can include both Hard skills (technical skills, knowledge of procedures, techniques and theories, administrative skills and so on) and soft skills (communication and relationship building skills and more).

Frequently organizations focus on assessing, identifying and developing competencies related to leadership, but competencies can be identified for any role or need.

In one recent organizational psychology research project 2000 leaders were assessed between 2012-2014 and the top competencies for leaders were identified. Titled ‘Competencies in Demand’, the author identified the following competencies as frequently sought after by clients for all leadership roles:

	Overall for Leaders	Front Line Managers	Middle Managers	Senior Managers
1	Focus on Results	Coordinating Results	Motivating others	Stress Management
2	Stress Management	Collaboration	Agility	Agility
3	Motivating others	Focus on Results	Focus on results	Focus on results
4	Agility	Monitoring actions	Decision-making ability	Judgement

5	Collaboration	Stress Management	Courage to act	Developing Strategy

Many professional organizations have developed competency models for positions within their industry. The Society for Human Resource Management has identified 9 competencies they believe represent the core competencies for their HR professional members.

1. HR Expertise	2. Relationship Management	3. Consultation
4. Leadership and Navigation	5. Communication	6. Global and Cultural Effectiveness
7. Ethical Practice	8. Critical Evaluation	9. Business Acumen

The Process of Competency Assessment and Building

A competency assessment requires understanding the competency you seek or need and their application and purpose.

1) Organizational assessment: A first step in this process involves assessing your organizational culture, values and goals. To help build a competency model you can look at the competencies you believe you need and/or assess the competencies of successful people in your organization or industry. Try targeting 6-8 core organizational competencies (each competency will include sub-competencies to 6-8 should be more than sufficient).

2) Selection and Prioritizing: Once you understand your organization identify the roles, departments and teams from whom you want to develop a competency models. You may choose to develop a leadership competency model first as you are going to ask your leaders to roll out the competency models.

You should be able to identify common organizational competencies and then identify additional one relevant to the team/department. Once again try to keep the number of competencies to a manageable number.

3) Define and Measure the Competencies: Once you identify a competency you need to:

- Select a name (this is not always straight forward as the name of the competency may reflect your company culture so thing carefully).
- Clarify your definition
- Identify sub-competencies that comprise the competency (for example a competency of stress management may have sub-competencies that include work-life balance, time management, ability to delegate)
- Map the behaviours associated by people who used these competencies effectively
- Establish levels of proficiency related to the phases of development for these competencies (for example entry level, early, established, experienced, executive)

4) Roll Out and Training: Once you have identified the competencies you need to develop a process for rolling out the competencies that involved education and training. One useful tip in competency mapping roll out can include creating a visual tool, such as an infographic, to showcase the competencies of the organization and then for the various roles or teams. A graphic that lists the competency and sub competencies can be an engaging way to remind people of the competencies you wish them to develop and demonstrate.

Competency mapping can be a useful tool for your organization. One of the best ways to keep employees engaged and retained is to help them understand how they fit into the organization and let them see the skills they need to develop to continue to grow their careers. By clearly communicating to them the competencies your organization values they can identify how they fit today and how they can fit in the future.