Creating a Competency Framework

Need support developing or implementing competency frameworks that will drive success for your organization?

At Michael Mauro, we know the process can be extremely laborious without a professional guiding hand steering you in the right direction.

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Creating a Competency Framework

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Designed for Human Resource Practitioners

This document is designed for Human Resources practitioners to provide a high-level summary involved in the creation of a competency framework. It will provide:

✓ A definition of competencies

✓ A summary of the process required to design a competency framework

✓ An overview of the high-level actions involved in each step of the framework design

How to Use This Document

This document is intended to:

✓ Introduce a framework for competency development

✓ Summarise key actions required to develop a successful competency framework

✓ Provide a starting point for considering what gaps exist within the organization to be able to create and implement a competency framework

How Not to Use this Document

This document is not intended to:

x Provide comprehensive instruction on competency architecture design

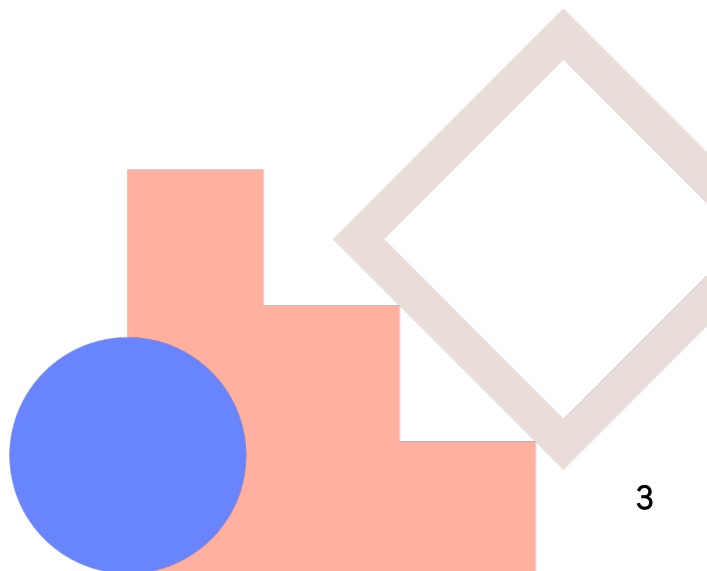x Impart instruction tailored to organizational context

Ongoing Support

For further support and any queries you might have about the design and implementation of competency frameworks, please contact:

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Creating a Competency Framework

Competency frameworks are an important part of many HR functions. They are often linked to multiple parts of the talent lifecycle, including recruitment, performance reviews, development and succession planning. The following overview is designed to support you in identifying the major steps towards building a competency framework.

Because designing a competency framework can be extremely laborious, understanding where to prioritize your efforts and when to partner with an outside organization with the capability to support you along the journey is imperative to the successful development and implementation of your competency framework.

Step 1: **Foundational Steps**

Environmental Scan

Conduct a stock take of what is currently available within your organisation, as well as outside of it. Researching existing competency models and dictionaries will help you to visualise what the final product may look like. Ensure you gather all strategic documents and information related to the mission / vision of the organisation to support in aligning any competency work with your company's future vision and mandate.
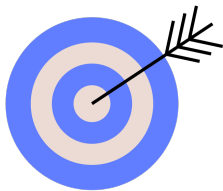
Define the Purpose

Clearly outline how you intend to use the proposed competency framework. It's purpose will impact the project scope as well as whom you involve. Potential uses for a competency framework include training and learning, assessing performance, workforce development (e.g. succession planning), and selection.
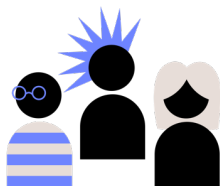
Create a Working Group

Identify a broad cross section of potential users of the proposed framework from across the business. Bring these individuals together into a working group with a defined mission, charter and objectives. Leading practice in competency modelling recommends thinking about the future requirements of the role / organisation and starting the development process at the top of the organisation to safeguard your framework against instability in the short to medium-term.

# Step 2: **Information Gathering**

Analyse Available Information

Review gathered business documents including strategies, plans, job descriptions, mandates or regulatory requirements and predictions for the future of the organization to understand what behaviours are, or will be, used to perform the jobs covered by the framework.

Inquire Widely

Choose between administering a survey to employees with a list of preliminary competencies you've drafted for the organisation, starting interviews / focus groups to identify the competencies they believe are crucial for the organisation or using your literature review to independently develop a list of proposed competencies tailored to the organisation and present it to your stakeholder group for review.
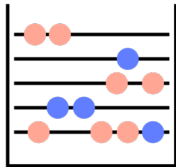
Quantify

Support qualitative information with a quantitative foundation. Any surveys or focus groups should try to understand proposed competencies in terms of their frequency of use and future importance. This will help you to narrow your options.
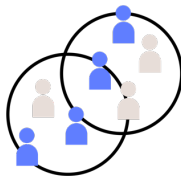
Step 3: **Framework Development**
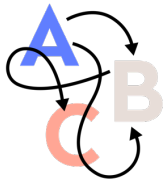
Group Statements

Sort through the data gathered during your inquiries, grouping it into thematic piles such as, decision-making skills, interpersonal skills, etc.

Identify & Name Competencies

Provide preliminary names to competencies to represent each smaller subgroup of behaviour.
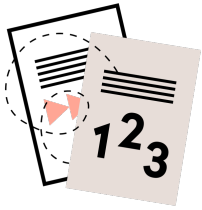
Create & Redefine Subgroups

Define further subgroups for each thematic pile by interrogating how identified behaviours are related and revising your groupings.

Validate

Validate the face value of the draft framework with your working group.
This can be done via survey, focus group consensus sessions or both.

Step 4: **Framework Implementation**

Link to Business Objectives

Connect competencies to organizational goals, values and business objectives to underscore the practical relevance of the framework within the organisational landscape.

Reward Competencies

Create policies and practices that support and reward the demonstration of crucial competencies.

Provide Coaching & Training

Provide adequate coaching and training to those impacted by the framework. This may require change leadership or change management techniques to minimise resistance and increase support for the greater accountability a competency framework may provide.

Keep it Simple

Simplify the final product. Simple frameworks are more likely to be used within the organisation. Use catchy acronyms, limit the number of core competencies and provide succinct explanations to ensure you continue to holding the attention and interest of your target audience.
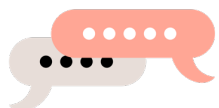
Communicate

Conduct a thorough roll-out of the framework, anticipating anxiety around the meaning of the framework. Keep communication open and honest and obtain the ongoing endorsement by executive leaders to ensure the framework's longer term adoption.

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