

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, Oxford County developed a competency-based framework to provide employees with an understanding of the behaviours and skills required to do their job successfully, and to support the organization's Strategic Plan. Since then, Human Resources has continued to incorporate the use of competencies in various ways contributing to our efforts to employ people who make a positive difference. With two years of experience utilizing these competencies, it was time to revisit the framework and make some amendments to better suit our needs. By updating the competencies, Oxford County will continue to grow in a positive direction, making progress along the way.

What is a competency?

Competencies are the knowledge, skills, judgment and behaviours needed to effectively perform in a **role/job**.

Core competencies versus leadership competencies

Oxford County's competency model consists of two components:

1. **Core competencies** - those that the County has identified as contributing the most towards achieving strategic results and are behavioural expectations of all positions; and
2. **Leadership competencies** - the skills and behaviours that contribute to superior performance in leadership roles.

It is understood that at each level in the competency model, the employee would exhibit the behaviours for the levels below their own job as well. For instance, if you are currently in a Manager/Supervisor role, you should demonstrate the behaviours for your own job as well as those of a Professional and Individual Contributor.

Why a competency model for Oxford County?

Having a competency framework helps Oxford County:

- Hire people who have high potential to succeed;
- Ensure they receive the training and development necessary to realize that potential; and
- Provide an appraisal system that gives the feedback and coaching that employees need to perform well.

INTRODUCTION

FIGURE 1: How competencies affect various human resources practices



Our competency model is more than a list of expected skills and behaviours. By identifying the necessary competencies to be successful within the organization, employees are provided with a target and a clearly articulated set of expectations. In combination with the “Our People, Our Strength” plan, it creates a focus and framework for initiatives and gives employees a clear description of what behaviours are required across the organization.

The competency model has been designed with the expectation that employees would exhibit the appropriate behaviours for their level of position as well as those below their own job. For instance, if you are currently in a Manager/Supervisor role, you should be demonstrating the behaviours for your own job as well as those of a Professional and Individual Contributor.

A competency framework must not only identify and define the competencies necessary for effective job performance, but also provide the behavioural examples that show how employees successfully exhibit particular competencies on the job. These examples are called behavioural anchors.

Behavioural anchors must be based on specific, observable behaviours and day-to-day performance, not isolated incidents. Behavioural anchors articulate the specific actions that have the most direct impact on successful performance and are invaluable in gauging how effectively a competency is being demonstrated.