Using a LMS to Support
Your Competency Management Program

At Avilar, nothing excites us more than to see competency-focused organizations use competency management to identify and fix workforce issues. Every day, we get to see technology – in the form of a competency management system – streamline processes and crystalize data that inform strategic workforce and business decisions.

Most of our clients have learning management systems (LMS), too. And those organizations with the strongest programs also use their LMS to inform and support their competency management. Here are 7 ways a LMS can strengthen your competency management program.

What is Competency Management?

First, to level-set this discussion, we define competency management as the process of:

- **Defining** the jobs that need to be done and the skills that people need to do those jobs, to create a "competency model."
- **Assessing** employees' skills to determine how well their skills match their job requirements.
- **Creating** development plans to close the most critical skills gaps.

Organizations use competency management systems (such as our WebMentor Skills™) to identify, analyze, and manage skills and skills gaps across their workforce. A good competency management system lets you drill down to see the strengths and weaknesses of individual employees, as well as to review the skills profile of an entire department or company. And, though there are hundreds of LMSs on the market today, at their core every LMS is a tool to deliver and track employee learning.

How a LMS Supports Competency Management?

Certainly, a competency management system and LMS can be used independently. But your competency management program will be much more powerful when your LMS is aligned to your competency management program's goals and processes. Here's how.

ONE: Individual Learning Plans

Skills assessments and competency management systems help to pinpoint individual, team, and workforce strengths – and critical skills gaps. Armed with that essential information, employees and managers can (and should) build Individual Learning Plans, outlining the training and development opportunities to address the specific strengths, gaps, and preferences for each person. A LMS is where each Individual Learning Plan lives, providing a unique and clear path to develop the skills that each person needs and wants to build.

TWO: eLearning Delivery

Some skills and competencies can be developed using eLearning. And, for decades, the LMS has been the go-to system to deliver eLearning. Whether

developed in-house or from a third party, online courses need to be hosted, accessible to employees, and tracked – ideally in a centralized system. A LMS will be configured to manage and present AICC- and SCORM-compliant eLearning, to ensure effective, consistent delivery and tracking of the content for all learners.

THREE: Tracking

eLearning, though, is not the best fit for every skill and competency. To become a better leader, for example, employees will need to practice speaking in front of groups, giving and receiving feedback, or managing "stretch" projects. Fortunately, a LMS isn't limited to eLearning. It can track all learning – online courses, in-person classroom courses, synchronous and asynchronous eLearning and video, and even conferences, mentoring, and apprenticeships. When used to its full purpose, your LMS can be THE place for employees to go to discover the many learning opportunities offered by your organization. Ideally, the opportunity descriptions include which skills, behaviors and experiences it is designed to support. In the LMS, employees and managers should also be able to track additional development activities not included in the company's learning catalog – again, with the skills and competencies associated with each.

FOUR: Reporting

A LMS can provide reports on who completed which learning activity. And that information is helpful when evaluating what an individual is doing to build the skills they need and want. But the LMS reports can realize their full potential for a competency management program when looking at the bigger picture. By overlaying the LMS report data onto a workforce skills assessment,

you can discover, for example, which training is most (and least) effective in building the individual, team, and workforce skills you care about most. Armed with such insights, you can tweak your learning program to better align with your competency management goals.

FIVE: Proactive Learning

We love it when companies lean into their competency management programs to announce to their workforce which skills are needed for all jobs and career paths. Especially in today's extremely tight labor market, employers are looking for ways to engage employees and build their future workforce from within. When employees can easily see jobs that they're interested in but not (yet) qualified for, they can make note of the skills and competency list in the job description. Then, they can use your LMS to identify relevant courses and proactively start to develop skills and knowledge they need, beyond their current role, to help close the gaps. It's a win-win. Employees get to build skills they care about that are valued by the organization and (hopefully) get the new job they want. Employers get to build a transparent

learning culture and (hopefully) find future workers who are already on their payroll.

SIX: Certifications

For some competencies, certifications are important credentials to prove that the employee is keeping current with industry requirements. Especially in government services and technology roles, up-to-date certifications may be a job requirement. A robust LMS can track certifications, flagging upcoming expiration dates so employees (and companies) stay in compliance. Certifications may be associated with courses in the LMS, too, making it easier for employees to complete required training on time.

SEVEN: Continuous Learning

Skill development is not a one-and-done exercise. Over time, you'll want employees to become more proficient in certain skills, so they can perform better in their jobs and/or step into leadership roles. You'll also want them to develop new skills and competencies, to ensure that your organization keeps up with industry changes and market conditions. They want that, too. They want to do – and be recognized for doing – work that matters. If aligned with your competency management program, your LMS will facilitate continuous learning and development for your future workforce.

How well is your LMS aligned with your competency management program? Contact us to discuss your initiative and find out how Avilar's WebMentor LMS™ and Avilar's competency management system may be able to support your next steps.

About Avilar

Avilar – The Competency Company™ is a leader in workforce development and planning with web-based competency management and learning solutions for corporations, government, and non-profit organizations. In 1997, Avilar pioneered its award-winning WebMentor™ product line and has built itself on the basis of superior customer service and highly adaptable product design.

Avilar consultants are recognized as industry thought leaders and have decades of experience in implementation and analysis. Let Avilar help you transform your organization from ordinary to extraordinary.