




How to Unleash the Power of Competencies



With unemployment at historically low rates, baby boomers retiring from corporate and government organizations, and artificial intelligence becoming increasingly popular, many employers are struggling to fill the talent gap. What they do next, though, may be closely tied to how well that organization is tapping into the potential of competencies.

Here's how to unleash the power of competencies in your organization, building on a strong foundation to boost strategic impact.

Develop Competency-Based Individual Training Plans

Putting a competency management program in place is a project. It takes time, discipline, tools, and stakeholder buy-in for the long haul. ***Success of any competency project is closely tied to the expectations of results.***

Align your team on what's involved and when to expect your return on effort; then identify one set of employees where you can quickly address an important skills gap. You'll start to see results when your individual training plans address essential competency deficits. Once the program is implemented across your organization, individuals will systematically close their competency gaps, improving overall workforce performance.

Align Competencies Within and Across Groups

Don't stop with individual training plans. Too many organizations put in the effort to implement a successful competency project but fail to build on the foundation once the initial hard work is done.

When you know which individuals have which competencies – and those that are building new ones – you can do so much more! Arm your managers with data and insight about their teams. Encourage them to look across their teams and align resources to address the business needs for which that team is responsible.

A savvy manager will incorporate cross-training and succession planning to build up the depth of skills on a team and optimize long-term performance. If a team member leaves or is moved to another part of the organization, a competency-aligned team will continue performing without missing a beat. By aligning competencies with business goals, you'll see an impact on your bottom line.

Hire Today for Tomorrow's Competencies

When your competency “machine” is humming across the organization, you can start looking ahead 12 to 18 months. Use the data from your competency program to help project your organization’s future needs.

Be sure to update your job descriptions to reflect the skills and competencies that will be required over the next year to 18 months. Using competency-based job descriptions, your new hires will fit the company’s needs today and transition into your future workforce. At this level, competencies are supporting your organization’s future success.

Rely on Competencies to Guide Workforce Decisions

Once your organization is routinely using, updating, and analyzing the competencies of your workforce, you’ll notice that competencies naturally support many planning efforts and strategic decisions. Just about any workforce decision is improved by the use of competencies.

- **Working on your emergency response or pandemic plan?** Make a note of how you’ll rely on competency data to continue serving customers despite a sudden disruption of your workforce.
- **Facing a merger or acquisition?** Review your competency data to evaluate how well the combined organization will be positioned to succeed as one entity. You’ll know where you have strengths and where you will have gaps to fill.
- **Entering a new market?** Anticipating a significant loss in your workforce due to retirement? Worried about continued low unemployment? Mine the analytics from your competencies to help inform what to do next. You’ll quickly get a sense of whether you’ll need to build up the competencies of your existing workforce, recruit new workers with important skills, and/or work with others in your industry or community to shape the competencies you’ll need in three, five, or 10 years from now.

COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT

Unleash the Power of Competencies:

- Develop Competency-based Individual Training Plans.
- Align Competencies Within and Across Groups.
- Hire Today for Tomorrow’s Competencies.
- Rely on Competencies to Guide Workforce Decisions.

A Case in Point

Is your organization facing a talent shortage or finding it difficult to fill certain positions with a very specific skill? If so, how will you address the situation?

The U.S. Air Force has found themselves in a similar situation with a pilot shortage. How have they been addressing it? They are adjusting job descriptions to make the work more appealing – in hopes of reducing the number of pilots who retire. They plan to build out a training program, encouraging current pilots to stay on and share their skills with those who are just starting out. Furthermore, they are coordinating with civilian airlines, cross training, and extending home leave.

“Just about any workforce decision is improved by the use of competencies.”

There are quite a few options on the table – all designed to preserve, extend, and build the pilot competencies required by the Air Force and civilian airlines for years to come. In short, they have analyzed their pilot competencies against their strategic needs and are making competency-based workforce decisions. It’s just one example of unleashing the power of competencies for strategic decisions.

Ready to start a conversation about your company’s competency or talent management needs?

Avilar – The Competency Company – can help you transform your organization from ordinary to extraordinary. Request a complimentary consultation or [visit our website](#) to schedule a demo.

You can be confident that we will listen to your organization’s specific needs and help you find the best solutions to the talent management challenges you’re facing.

