COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

7 STEPS TO UNLOCKING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

AVILAR

THE COMPETENCY COMPANY

CONTENTS

Why Have a Competency Development Plan?

If your organization aims to improve the quality of your core competencies, your bottom line, and employee retention, creating a competency development plan is an essential course of action.

Not only does a competency development plan seek to bridge workforce skills gaps, it also aims to align employee training with corporate goals as well as train all employees for necessary compliance and certifications.

A competency development plan can also aid in developing existing employee skills for retirement or succession, setting up employees to have a vision for their career path and a trajectory for success.

Steps For Creating a Competency Development Plan

1. Agree on Your Company's Core Competencies

For your organization to create a competency development plan, you must first establish your core competencies. This is your harmonized combination of resources and skills that distinguish you in the marketplace.

If your existing resources and skills don't reflect the organization's long-term goals, or if you're planning on shifting direction in terms of your mission and vision, this is a discussion that needs to be had by leadership prior to implementing a competency development plan. If you're unsure of your organization's current mission or core competencies, address it first.

2. Identify Competencies to Develop

Once you agree on your organization's core competencies you can begin creating a competency development plan. Start by identifying skills gaps and decide which competencies should be developed within your organization. How do you determine what competencies are needed to carry out each job and which ones your staff needs to improve on? Here are some ways to do that:

Survey all managers and staff.

If it's possible to attain all competencies attributed to each job type through a self-evaluation, that's a huge time saver. However, if your organization is more complex, face-to-face meetings may be in order.

Meet with all managers and staff individually or in small groups.

This is a great way to really get to know your workforce as well as what it takes to complete the tasks assigned to each job type.

For larger organizations or organizations that don't have the means to meet with all staff individually, a facilitation and workshop may be the solution. A seminar plus a workshop allows everyone in the organization to understand the changes that you're trying to enact and why, and then staff can break into their teams to plan how to meet those goals.

Use an outside consultant.

For organizations that aren't sure, hiring an outside consultant may be the best course of action.

Every organization is different. To best understand your workforce, you may require a mixture of the suggestions above or even something different and specific to your needs. Don't hesitate to explore your options. To learn more about developing competencies, read Avilar's white paper – Conquering the Hidden Hazards of Competency Management Implementation.

3. Align Competency Development Initiatives With Company Goals

Once you identify which competencies need improvement, it's time to take action. Remember to make decisions about competency development with your company goals in mind. Then create and share a plan company-wide that emphasizes consistency.

Bridge skills gaps by creating timelines for each team or individual which include continued training, certifications and/or learning. Outline leadership's role and teach managers how to motivate staff.

For key staff who you intend to incorporate in succession planning, let them know your goals and make sure you're all on the same page. Share best practices company-wide. Plan for initial weekly meetings, then monthly meetings, quarterly meetings, etc.

4. Agree on Competency Management Techniques

For those in leadership positions, one important key to progressing with an overall competency management program is having effective competency management techniques to follow.

Consider how best to introduce techniques and set goals that teams are accountable for so that everyone is involved. Make this process easy for your company's leaders by creating guidelines for bridging skills gaps, employee assessments, training strategies, individual career development planning, and more.
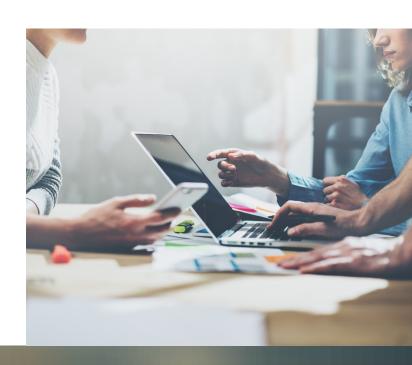
Some examples of skills development techniques include:

- E-learning
- Training
- Certifications
- Workshops
- Facilitations
- Coaching

In order to be successful in your skills development efforts, you need to have company-wide buy-in. Both leadership and staff need to be motivated to commit time and energy to skills development as well as give feedback for improvement.

5. Begin Skills Development Activities

Your organization is only as effective as the core competencies you have. Your core competencies are only as strong as your employees' skill sets. Bridging skills gaps and strengthening existing skills are important steps toward a strong competency management plan.

6. Career Development and Succession Planning

In addition to skills development, a robust competency management plan also includes career development and succession planning. These efforts are essential to new talent acquisition and employee retention.

Focus on individual career paths. Whether it's through e-learning, certifications, training, workshops, or other continued learning avenues, focusing on honing the skills needed for employees to advance should be a high priority.

Succession planning initiatives. Communicate with employees and let them know that you're considering them to take over key leadership roles in the near future. The more preparation time, the better.

7. Understand and Evaluate Processes

Once the foundational elements of a competency development program are in place, assess what worked and what didn't. Collect feedback from staff and collaborate to make the program even better. By evaluating your plan frequently, you can make the best use of you and your employees' time.

A Sustainable Competency Development Plan

With these seven steps, your organization can create a sustainable competency development program which will allow you to gain a more valuable workforce through sharpening key skill sets and increased employee retention. For an even more organized and streamlined competency development plan, learn more about WebMentor Skills™ - Avilar's skills management software – that offers the essential features companies need to implement a successful competency management program.

By identifying the strengths and weaknesses of your workforce, you can take action to improve your training programs, develop your workforce's skills and improve their performance.

Identifying skill gaps with competency-based skills assessments, a skills database and skills tracking to identify skills gaps is a critical first step to making improvements in your organization's competencies.

If you're looking for a competency management system to support your organization, contact Avilar or schedule a demo.

About Avilar

What's Next?

Implementing a competency management method with Avilar – The Competency Company – can help move your organization from ordinary to extraordinary. Contact us today at info@avilar.com for a complimentary consultation or visit our website www.avilar.com 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 competency management challenges you're facing.

About Avilar

Founded in 1997, Avilar is a leader in competency management and workforce optimization. We believe that a competency management method is one of the most effective ways to develop a workforce and deliver results in an organization. Our flagship WebMentor product line, introduced in 1998, includes a complete suite of affordable, easy-to-use, and full-featured competency development and management tools. Avilar is a recipient of the Excellence in E-Learning for Customer Satisfaction Award from Brandon Hall Group and eLearning Magazine, and has been cited by Training Magazine as a top "price-to-value" provider. Avilar blends leading human capital management and business intelligence professionals with our state-of-the-art workforce management system to solve the complex issues facing managers in the globalized business arena.

AVILAR TECHNOLOGIES, INC. • 6760 ALEXANDER BELL DRIVE, SUITE 105 • COLUMBIA, MD 21046 • (888) 759-7053 • (410) 290-0008 • AVILAR.COM

© Avilar Technologies, Inc. All Rights Reserved.   7