Building Competencies for the Future
Core and Leadership Competency Framework

November 7, 2005
COMPETENCIES

A competency is the term used to describe a cluster of related knowledge, skills, and attributes that contributes to successful job performance and, ultimately, to the goals and priorities of the University of Victoria. Competencies are typically expressed in terms of visible on-the-job behaviours. Competencies can usually be developed by participating in training, utilizing individual coaching, and through on-the-job opportunities such as project and task team involvement.

Competencies are not meant to be all-inclusive or prescriptive but, rather, the basis for dialogue regarding performance expectations. This dialogue may occur between supervisor and employee, among project team members, within departments, and/or among staff across the University and, if of value, with the University’s stakeholders.

PURPOSE

Ultimately, the goal of the University of Victoria is to deliver to the members of the university community and the community at large what they need and want. The identification of competencies, and the application of the competency framework, will assist the University in ensuring we have the capacity to deliver future programs by:

- Providing staff with clear expectations about what is required to be successful in their jobs,
- Providing a foundation for professional development planning,
- Providing the foundation for university-wide human resource practices,
- Enabling staff to meet commitments to stakeholders more effectively,
- Identifying opportunities for students, staff, faculty and others in relation to current and future career options.
BENEFITS

Some of the benefits of competency application include:

- Strengthening our desired organizational culture,
- Aligning individual effort with University strategies and direction,
- Clarifying job expectations for staff,
- Providing a clear direction for professional development,
- Promoting a focus on continuous improvement within the workplace,
- Providing common work-related language within the University,
- Providing a basis for an integrated framework for key human resource practices.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

While the competency framework describes key desired behaviours, it does not necessarily specify an expected standard of performance for a given behaviour. Standards of performance are situation-specific and guided by professional standards. The behaviour descriptions appearing in the competency framework are a starting point for dialogue regarding expected standards of performance.

SUPPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY’S STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND OPERATING PRIORITIES

The core and leadership competencies support the University’s vision, mission, key goals and objectives. They also help strengthen staff commitment to the University’s core values and principles as defined in its strategic plan. The University’s strategic plan is available at: http://web.uvic.ca-strategicplan/
CORE COMPETENCIES – OVERVIEW

The Core Competencies represent the key competencies that are desired of all staff within the University.

There are eight competencies in this framework:

A. Personal Effectiveness
B. Commitment to Quality
C. Navigating Change
D. Communication
E. Building Equitable Relationships
F. Teamwork
G. Service Focus
H. University Community
DESIGN

Each core competency is described by a definition that indicates the general intent of the competency. Listed immediately below the definition are a number of key behaviours relevant to the competency. The behaviours are in no particular order of importance and they are not intended to represent all possible behaviours for each competency. They are, instead, intended as a guideline to the key behaviours that are desired of all University staff for a given competency.

For example:

A. Personal Effectiveness

Demonstrates self-awareness and personal capability.

1. Identifies own strengths and limitations

Behaviour that describes the competency

Definition Statement

Competency Title
### A. Personal Effectiveness

Demonstrates self-awareness and personal capability.

1. Identifies own strengths and limitations.
2. Seeks opportunities for self-development.
3. Takes initiative to clarify own responsibilities and accountabilities with others.
4. Takes on different responsibilities to enhance learning.
5. Applies ‘lessons learned’ to new situations.
6. Seeks feedback about their impact on others.
7. Maintains confidentiality.
8. Maintains wellness by balancing work demands with personal priorities.
9. Manages stressors to remain engaged and productive.
10. Demonstrates effective time management skills.

### B. Commitment to Quality

Improves work practices to achieve desired results and support productivity.

1. Seeks opportunities to improve work practices.
2. Generate ideas for improvement.
3. Actively participates in implementing improvement initiatives.
4. Pays attention to the quality of his/her work.
5. Maintains quality standards of his/her work.
6. Monitors work results.
7. Evaluates work results to determine productivity.
### C. Navigating Change

*Demonstrates adaptability and resilience in response to changing work environment and demands.*

1. Seeks information about impacts of change to the work environment.
2. Demonstrates a willingness to view change from a positive perspective.
3. Manages personal reactions in the face of changing circumstances.
4. Is flexible in adopting changes to work priorities and practices when the need arises.
5. Learns relevant knowledge and skills to meet changing requirements.
6. Maintains effective working relationships during change.

### D. Communication

*Communicates effectively in conversation and writing with a broad range of people.*

1. Uses a communication style and method that is most effective for the situation.
2. Communicates in a tone and manner that demonstrates respect.
3. Listens without interrupting.
4. Asks questions to clarify understanding.
5. Speaks using clear language that is appropriate to the audience.
6. Writes clearly and concisely.
7. Communicates issues in a timely fashion.
8. Demonstrates awareness of, and responsiveness to, verbal and non-verbal differences across cultures.
### E. Building Equitable Relationships

*Builds and maintains equitable relationships.*

1. Welcomes different perspectives to expand understanding of others.
2. Seeks areas of common interest to strengthen relationships.
3. Demonstrates respect and courtesy to others.
4. Follows through on commitments.
5. Acknowledges the unique needs of others.
6. Gives others the “benefit of the doubt.”

### F. Teamwork

*Actively collaborates with others to produce desired results in a supportive environment.*

1. Shares knowledge, expertise and encouragement to strengthen team performance.
2. Supports the team by “pitching in” to help when necessary.
3. Shares accountability for team results.
4. Supports the constructive resolution of conflict.
5. Collaborates with team members to solve problems.
6. Stands behind team decisions even if it is not his/her choice.
7. Recognizes accomplishments of others.
8. Appreciates the different strengths of team members.
### G. Service Focus\(^1\)

Effectively assists and serves members of the University community to meet their needs.

1. Acknowledges stakeholders’ concerns and issues.
2. Clarifies stakeholder expectations.
3. Provides feedback on the status of request.
4. Takes appropriate steps to resolve problems.
5. Balances stakeholder expectations with practical realities.
6. Provides alternative solutions when original request cannot be met.
7. Reports on barriers to effective delivery.

### H. University Community

Values the diversity of the University’s people and their cultures. Demonstrates an understanding of the University’s vision, mission and goals.

1. Respects the practices, customs, values and norms of persons of unique cultures and backgrounds.
2. Respects the significant role of Aboriginal and Indigenous people in our community.
3. Uses formal and informal networks to achieve results.
4. Responds to diversity as an opportunity to learn new perspectives.
5. Seeks opportunities to make connections to develop an understanding of the university community.

\(^1\) All those who work in the University community have a responsibility to serve others.

CYGNUS Management Consultants Inc.
LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES – OVERVIEW

The Leadership Competencies represent the key competencies that are desired of all leaders within staff functions at the University of Victoria.

There are eight competencies in this framework:

A. Personal Insight and Impact  
B. Strategic Focus  
C. Investing in Our People  
D. Building Our Culture  
E. Creativity and Innovation  
F. Problem Solving and Decision Making  
G. Change Management  
H. Achieving Results
DESIGN

Like the core competencies, each leadership competency is described by a definition that indicates the general intent of the competency. Unlike the core competencies, however, the leadership competencies are described by a number of key behaviours categorized into three proficiency levels. The behaviours identified are not intended to represent all possible behaviours for each competency. They are, instead, intended as a guideline to the key behaviours that are desired of leaders for a given competency.

For example:

A. Personal Insight and Impact

Strives to improve personal performance and achieve work goals through awareness of own attributes. Takes account of and accepts responsibility for the impact of own decisions and actions on others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Title</th>
<th>Definition Statement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Personal Insight and Impact</td>
<td>Strives to improve personal performance and achieve work goals through awareness of own attributes. Takes account of and accepts responsibility for the impact of own decisions and actions on others.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Demonstrates personal accountability for meeting work commitments and objectives.</td>
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PROFICIENCY LEVELS

The behaviours across the three proficiency levels of each competency are generally cumulative. However, they are not meant to be prescriptive. Depending on the role of the leader, a leader can display behaviours from any of the levels. It is not necessary to display all of the behaviours in any one level. Consultation between the leader and their immediate supervisor will be helpful in clarifying the most appropriate behaviours.

It is presumed that a person in a position requiring Level 2 behaviour is capable of Level 1 behaviours. Following this approach, a person in a position requiring a Level 3 behaviour is presumed to be capable of Level 1 and Level 2 behaviours.

While a certain behaviour may appear in a given level, it may not appear again at an increased level of proficiency since other behaviours may be considered more critical.

The proficiency levels represent increasing degrees of complexity and sophistication of behaviour. Sample roles for each level are as follows (the following list is not all inclusive):

- **Level 1:** Typically at the Work Unit level and includes, for example, Supervisors, Team Leaders, Coordinators
- **Level 2:** Typically at the Department level and includes, for example, Managers
- **Level 3:** Typically at the Division level and includes, for example, Directors, Executive Directors, Vice Presidents and Deans
A. Personal Insight and Impact

*Strives to improve personal performance and achieve work goals through awareness of own attributes. Takes account of, and accepts responsibility for, the impact of own decisions and actions on others.*

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<tr>
<td>1.1 Inspires others through own positive attitude and energy at work.</td>
<td>2.1 Demonstrates flexibility and responsiveness to changing stakeholder and workplace requirements.</td>
<td>3.1 Clarifies with others, when appropriate, how their own personal values influence their behaviour and their expectations of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Demonstrates accountability for own actions and decisions.</td>
<td>2.2 Fulfills commitments, even under difficult or challenging circumstances (e.g., when taking on activities or projects that are difficult or unpopular).</td>
<td>3.2 Models behaviours that align with the University’s core values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Demonstrates self-assurance and confidence.</td>
<td>2.3 Communicates the University’s core values(^2) and policies.</td>
<td>3.3 Demonstrates integrity by taking action to support programs that are good for the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Builds trust by being honest, reliable, and consistent.</td>
<td>2.4 Addresses behaviours that contravene the University’s core values and policies.</td>
<td>3.4 Makes principled and ethical University decisions, even if they are sensitive or controversial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Addresses work issues as they emerge.</td>
<td>3.5 Engages others to remain focused and productive during challenging and demanding situations.</td>
<td>3.6 Applies an understanding of power, influence and relationships inside and outside the University to accomplish goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Approaches challenges as opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.7 Accepts criticism/critique of ideas and decisions as part of the University culture of debate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.8 Admits own mistakes and encourages others to learn from the experience.</td>
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\(^2\) Refer to the University’s website for details about core values at: [http://web.uvic.ca/strategicplan/](http://web.uvic.ca/strategicplan/).
## B. Strategic Focus

*Cultivates an environment in which sharing the University’s vision is practiced by staff, faculty and others. Aligns work priorities, processes, and practices to achieve the desired vision.*

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<tr>
<td>1.1 Communicates the importance of the University’s vision and mission to the unit.</td>
<td>2.1 Promotes the University’s vision, mission and values.</td>
<td>3.1 Engages others in developing a common understanding of future direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Implements strategies to realize the University’s vision and mission.</td>
<td>2.2 Develops strategies and actions to realize the University’s goals.</td>
<td>3.2 Engages external stakeholders to support the University’s strategic direction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Helps staff connect their work with the University’s vision and mission.</td>
<td>2.3 Aligns the department’s goals with the University’s strategic direction.</td>
<td>3.3 Builds support in the University community for the University’s vision, mission and values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Identifies trends and issues that could impact the unit.</td>
<td>2.4 Promotes to external community the University’s unique characteristics, programs, services and institutional strengths to create a distinctive advantage for the University.</td>
<td>3.4 Champions initiatives that build community and support society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Prioritizes urgent and important tasks in relation to the unit’s goals and objectives.</td>
<td>2.5 Ensures that initiatives are matched with appropriate resources.</td>
<td>3.5 Identifies key goals and strategies for accomplishing the vision.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6 Finds common ground between mandates of different units.</td>
<td>3.6 Balances short-term needs of the University and its people with the achievement of long-term goals and strategies.</td>
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<td>3.7 Makes decisions based on what is best for the University as a whole.</td>
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## C. Investing in Our People

*Demonstrates a commitment to developing, influencing and guiding others toward a high standard of performance. Creates an environment where professional growth and development is valued.*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Provides timely and objective performance feedback.</td>
<td>2.1 Plans succession requirements to support the department’s strategies.</td>
<td>3.1 Engages in succession planning so that the University is well positioned to meet future needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Coaches staff to meet performance expectations.</td>
<td>2.2 Uses the performance planning process to clarify development needs.</td>
<td>3.2 Inspires people to reach their highest potential.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Encourages staff to take initiative and ownership for their learning.</td>
<td>2.3 Identifies opportunities for professional development and career growth for staff.</td>
<td>3.3 Champions professional growth as a University resource.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Encourages staff to apply their new learning to the job.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4 Mentors future leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Delegates assignments to help staff build skills and knowledge.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.5 Communicates the University’s requirements for staff development and training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Establishes work and learning plans with staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.7 Supports learning and development activities.</td>
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</table>
D. Building Our Culture

*Fosters an environment where excellence is encouraged and supported. Creates a positive, dynamic, productive, and open-minded institution that values fairness, inclusiveness and diversity.*

**Level 1**

1.1 Creates a workplace in which people feel respected and valued.

1.2 Encourages the expression of differing perspectives.

1.3 Encourages staff to maintain healthy working relationships.

1.4 Encourages clear and respectful communication.

1.5 Acknowledges individual and team accomplishments.

**Level 2**

2.1 Consults with others to strengthen and inform decision-making.

2.2 Encourages staff to support others through collaboration and cooperation.

2.3 Demonstrates a commitment to the University’s overall success.

2.4 Ensures that operations reflect the University’s commitment to workplace fairness, inclusiveness and diversity.

2.5 Resolves issues when consensus cannot be found.

2.6 Celebrates individual and/or team success.

**Level 3**

3.1 Advocates, when appropriate, a consultative and inclusive approach to develop a collective sense of ownership and engagement.

3.2 Promotes the alignment of academic roles/functions and support roles/functions.

3.3 Fosters a University culture that values fairness, inclusiveness and diversity.

3.4 Advocates for employee recognition.

3.5 Recognizes significant achievements of members of the University community.
# E. Creativity and Innovation

*Encourages and supports innovative ideas and appropriate solutions to enhance results.*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Shares best practices information with staff.</td>
<td>2.1 Collaborates with staff and others to develop innovative solutions.</td>
<td>3.1 Fosters an environment where creative ideas and innovative approaches are welcomed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Promotes improvement ideas to higher levels of management.</td>
<td>2.2 Encourages others to question traditional assumptions that may restrict achievement.</td>
<td>3.2 Assesses, when appropriate, the University’s capacity to adopt and implement innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Makes improvements to existing processes or practices.</td>
<td>2.3 Uses knowledge of what works well to guide innovation and creativity.</td>
<td>3.3 Assesses, when appropriate, opportunities and risks associated with University innovation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Encourages staff to incorporate continuous improvement as a way of approaching work.</td>
<td>2.4 Evaluates processes against best practices in order to make improvements.</td>
<td>3.4 Commits resources to support appropriate innovation and creativity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Encourages team members to share and combine diverse perspectives and approaches to generate new ideas.</td>
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<td>3.5 Detects emerging opportunities or challenges that the University will be facing.</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3.6 Pursues emerging opportunities or challenges facing the University.</td>
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# F. Problem Solving and Decision Making

*Takes a broad (“big picture”) approach when making decisions and solving problems. Makes connections between current actions and future consequences.*

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<tr>
<td>1.1 Uses policies and standards, within assigned authority, as guidelines for decision making.</td>
<td>2.1 Considers the impacts of decisions on University departments, stakeholders and others.</td>
<td>3.1 Collaborates on emerging issues across the University and with stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Identifies the scope and nature of problems.</td>
<td>2.2 Evaluates the results of past decisions to guide future decision making.</td>
<td>3.2 Assesses problems and decisions based on short and long-term impacts on the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Supports staff to make evidence-based decisions.</td>
<td>2.3 Uses the University’s core values to influence decisions within the department.</td>
<td>3.3 Uses the University’s established strategic direction as a framework for decisions and actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Encourages staff to learn from their previous experiences.</td>
<td>2.4 Explores the root causes of the issue or challenge.</td>
<td>3.4 Assesses the impact of the external environment on the University when making decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 Generates alternative solutions by collaborating with people who are impacted by, or have knowledge of, the problem, issue or challenge.</td>
<td>3.5 Communicates strategic and high-impact decisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6 Takes risks in line with mitigation strategies.</td>
<td>3.6 Evaluates risks, opportunities and mitigation strategies to achieve the University’s goals and objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.7 Clearly assigns authority, responsibility and accountability so that decisions and actions are taken by the appropriate people.</td>
<td>3.7 Uses defendable judgment to make decisions when faced with ambiguity and limited information.</td>
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G. Change Management

Engages the university community to build understanding of and support for necessary change. Leads staff through change and transition.

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<tr>
<td>1.1 Identifies opportunities for change that are beneficial to the University.</td>
<td>2.1 Involves the department in the decision making process related to change.</td>
<td>3.1 Assesses if change is necessary based on internal and external factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Encourages dialogue and discussion with staff regarding the anticipated impact of change.</td>
<td>2.2 Works to eliminate barriers between individuals, teams and departments.</td>
<td>3.2 Assesses the University’s capacity and readiness for change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Inspires others to effect the desired change.</td>
<td>2.3 Supports change by realigning existing or adding new resources.</td>
<td>3.3 Collaborates with key stakeholders to promote major change initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Balances current work priorities with change priorities.</td>
<td>2.4 Provides staff with development opportunities to successfully manage change and transition.</td>
<td>3.4 Communicates a clear, compelling vision of what the change will accomplish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 Helps others deal with their reactions to change.</td>
<td>2.5 Translates change strategies into specific and practical goals, processes, and timeframes.</td>
<td>3.5 Commits resources to implement and sustain desired change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 Recognizes staff for their contributions during the change process.</td>
<td>2.6 Builds on past experience to support change initiatives.</td>
<td>3.6 Prioritizes change initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.7 Aligns incremental changes to match the University’s strategic direction.</td>
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H. Achieving Results

*Demonstrates initiative and resourcefulness to achieve desired goals and objectives. Strives for excellence.*

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Identifies unit strategies based on the University's goals and objectives.</td>
<td>2.1 Communicates expected standards and results.</td>
<td>3.1 Fosters an environment where people feel personally committed to achieve results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Collaborates with staff to determine how best to achieve results.</td>
<td>2.2 Builds commitment to achieve desired results.</td>
<td>3.2 Communicates key standards to achieve University goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Holds staff accountable to achieve desired results.</td>
<td>2.3 Supports staff in meeting goals and objectives.</td>
<td>3.3 Establishes challenging and relevant targets for the University.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Evaluates results against goals and objectives.</td>
<td>2.4 Manages resources to achieve expected results.</td>
<td>3.4 Seeks feedback from the University community to improve results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 Encourages staff to exceed “expected” standards.</td>
<td>3.5 Allocates appropriate resources to achieve desired results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6 Provides feedback on results to key stakeholders.</td>
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