

HOW TO EXPRESS YOUR COMPETENCIES

Taking time to analyze the competencies you've developed through your experiences (work, education, volunteer and personal pursuits) will help you understand what you have learned, identify gaps in your competency development and plan your next steps. Being able to clearly express your competencies will help you express yourself to others.

Complete the [COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET](#) by following these 5 steps:

1. IDENTIFY AN EXPERIENCE

Choose one experience at a time to work on. You may not want to complete a worksheet for every experience. Instead, pick experiences that have allowed you to develop your competencies. Complete the top of the worksheet with relevant information about the experience.

2. IDENTIFY RELEVANT COMPETENCIES

Think about what you've learned from your experience. Do a quick assessment of the competencies you most strongly developed and demonstrated through this experience. Choose three or more of the 10 core competencies and consider including two or more program-specific, professional or international competencies.

3. WRITE COMPETENCY STATEMENTS

Write a set of statements that describe the competencies you've developed and demonstrated through this experience. Remember that a competency relates to your skills, knowledge and attributes. Competency statements are best expressed in terms of visible behaviours and often begin with an action verb (see the [ACTION VERB LIST](#)). Don't be vague—statements like "I'm experienced in sales", "I wrote reports", "I provided customer service", or "I was responsible for handling complaints" could be used by anyone. Instead, give specific examples and give context for your statements.

Here are some sample competency statements:

Core competencies

Communication

Listened effectively to an average of 40 technical support customers a day to better understand their needs and successfully implement solutions.

Research and Analysis

Synthesized findings from 12 research studies on organic blueberry farming to identify best agricultural practices and prepare information sheet distributed to berry farmers in British Columbia.

Project and Task Management

Used customized project management software to coordinate the recruitment and training of 32 new employees over a six-month period.

Teamwork

Collaborated effectively on a cross-functional team of five individuals in the daily operation of a small, independent insurance agency.

Cultural intelligence (CQ) competencies

CQ Drive

Demonstrated my desire to learn more about the culture of the host country by networking with people within the organization and the community.

CQ Knowledge

Enhanced my knowledge of cultural values and business systems of the host country, which resulted in effective interactions with colleagues and clients (CQ Knowledge)

CQ Strategy

Researched before each networking opportunity in order to better understand the cultural norms and customs that may be prevalent among the audience, with the goal of having effective cross-cultural interactions (CQ Strategy)

CQ Action

Recognized and adapted to cultural differences in communication by adjusting verbal and non verbal behaviors, which resulted in positive interactions (CQ Action)

4. REFLECT ON YOUR LEARNING

Review your competency statements and think about what you've learned. Which competencies did you develop the most? Where are the gaps in your competency development? Which competencies do you feel most confident and motivated to use? Which are you most interested in developing further? What other thoughts do you have about this experience?

5. COMMUNICATE YOUR COMPETENCIES TO OTHERS

Use your competency statements as you develop content for your résumés and cover letters. Also use them as 'briefing notes' to help you prepare for interviews, informational meetings, performance reviews and other conversations with people in your professional network.