SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES WORKGROUP 2024

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WORKBOOK

Skills and Competencies Workbook

Disclaimer

The resources in this guide are merely suggestions and in no way reflect the state standard or requirements.

USAGE

This workbook and related appendices were developed as the result of a 2024 multi-departmental workgroup centered around Skills and Competencies. The tools, tips, and scenarios are intended to guide your efforts in developing, assessing, and applying Skills and Competencies within your organization.

Part 1

What are skills and competencies?

The term "competence" first appeared in performance reviews in the 1950's. In 1971 and 1975, the Griggs v Duke Power Co. and Albemarle Paper Co. v Moody represented who court cases that set the basis that "**to be sufficiently job-related**, the [employment] tests must accurately measure the **ability** of applicants to perform the job in question." In 1973, McClelland wrote a paper titled "Testing for Competence Rather Than for Intelligence."

The Upward Mobility Act of 2022 defined competencies as "the particular education, experience, knowledge, and abilities that each applicant is required to have in order to be considered eligible for a particular group of classifications."

Today we understand that competencies are tied to job performance and in 2020 and 2023 the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) released the Core Competencies and Leadership Competencies.

There are many competency models, however, CalHR utilizes the one below.[1]

[1] (2024) Competencies. Available at: https://www.calhr.ca.gov/Training/Pages/competencies.aspx (Accessed: 28 August 2024).

Part 2
How to apply skills and competencies?

Applying skills and competencies to your organization is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
• Develop competencies	• Assess competencies	• Apply competencies
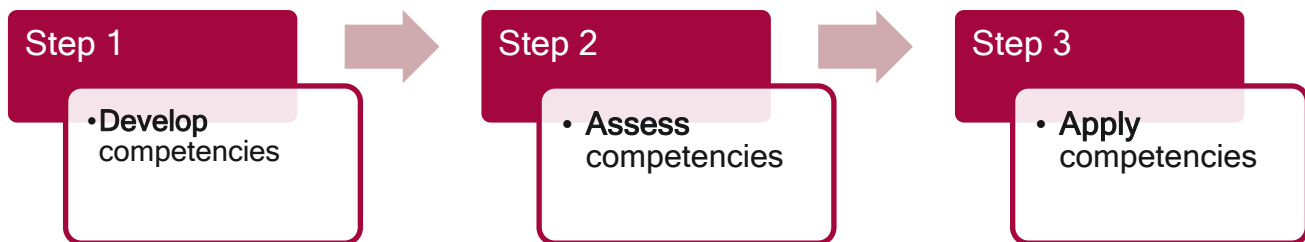
Step 1: Develop Competencies

The levels of competencies can be categorized as follows:

- **Core** - Competencies identified by the CalHR Core Competency Model that are foundational for all California civil service state employees regardless of their classification.
- **Leadership** - Competencies identified by the CalHR Leadership Competency Model that are necessary to be an effective leader and required of all California civil state service supervisors, managers, and executives. These competencies can also be relevant to civil service state employees who want to build and develop leadership skills.
- **Organizational** - Competencies similar to core but support the mission, vision, and values of the organization that sets the context in which work is carried out.
- **Occupational** - Competencies for like-occupations (i.e. Finance, Information Technology).
- **Job Specific** - Competencies needed for effective performance in a specific position or to produce a set of work outputs within the organization.[2]

CalHR established Core and Leadership competencies, therefore, you will want to focus on Organizational, Occupational, and Job Specific competencies.

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[2] *Phase 2 - Gather and analyze organizational data for the workforce plan*. (n.d.). https://www.calhr.ca.gov/state-hr-professionals

How are competencies developed?
- Surveys
- Research
- Workshops
- Interviews
- Job Analysis
- Desk Audits

Organizational
- Identify the competencies necessary to successfully achieve the mission and critical functions of the organization.
- These competencies should be determined with the assistance of executive level staff.
- These are competencies every employee is expected to possess.
- It is recommended that your organization choose no more than five organizational competencies.

💡	Quick tip: If you are struggling to determine what your organizational competencies should be, ask yourself: *What* does our organization do? *How* do we do it? What *skills* are required to do it? Example: **The WHAT** The Department of Water Resources Mission Statement is: *To sustainably manage the water resources of California, in cooperation with other agencies, to benefit the state's people and protect, restore, and enhance the natural and human environments.* **The HOW** • Overseeing the statewide process of developing and updating the California Water Plan (Bulletin 160 series) • Planning, designing, constructing, operating, and maintaining the State Water Project • Protecting and restoring the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta • Regulating dams, providing flood protection, and assisting in emergency management

- Working to preserve the natural environment and wildlife
- Educating the public about the importance of water, water conservation, and water safety
- Providing grants and technical assistance to service local water needs
- Collecting, analyzing, and reporting data in support of our mission to manage and protect California's water resource

The SKILLS
The Department of Water Resources incorporates the following values into all that we do:
- World-Class Safety Organization
- Partnership Development & Transparency
- Science Drives our Decision Making
- Environmental Stewardship
- Professionalism & Respect

Through Executive Level interviews, these would be our **organizational competencies**, as they are intended to guide every position at every level:

- Safety/Risk Assessment
- Partnership/Collaboration
- Strategic Analysis/Decision-Making
- External Awareness/Public Speaking
- Change Management

Occupational
- Can follow the state's classification system. Examples include Legal, Information Technology, Crafts and Trades, Law Enforcement, Safety, but can also align with functions such as Human Resources Professional, Grant Manager, or Apprentice.
- Are best determined via surveys, desk audits, discussions, job analyses, and various allocation factors.

Quick tip:
How do you determine Occupational groups or "families?" You may ask yourself:
- Why does this unit/section/office/division exist?

	- What is it they are trying to accomplish? - Do they have the same unique funding source? - What is their mission or purpose? Example 1: A Human Resources office may exist to administer the State civil service personnel system by providing recruitment, workforce planning, testing and selection, learning and development, hiring, payroll, employee health and wellness, labor relations, and performance management services. Therefore, it follows that these are all **Human Resources Professionals** who may require the same competencies such as: - Knowledge of the civil service system - Tact and Professionalism - Written and Verbal Communication Example 2: A Department might be tasked with awarding grant funds. Different state classifications across multiple state departments might be the best suited for this task, such as Engineers, Air Pollution Specialists, Environmental Scientists, and Engineering Geologist, however, they all require the same competencies such as: - Thoroughness - Relationship Building - Ethics and Integrity These are just a few examples of how **occupational competencies** are developed and assigned.

Job Specific
- Although not completely necessary, job specific competencies can help devise training and performance plans.
- Can help with successful succession planning.
- Are best determined via desk audits, surveys, job analysis, and duty statement reviews.

💡 Quick tip:
How do you determine Job Specific competencies? You may ask yourself:
- What does success in this position look like?
- What knowledge, skills, and abilities should a successful employee possess?

Example 1:

The Department of Water Resources employes 20+ Hydroelectric Plant Mechanic Apprentices. They all perform the same function throughout the state meaning their duties do not change regardless of where they are located geographically, therefore, it might be worthwhile to have job specific competencies developed for this job.

Successful apprentices are expected to:
- Pay attention
- Listen
- Learn
- Follow directions
- Ask good questions
- Take good notes
- Be studious
- Participate in training
- Work safety
- Exercise good judgement
- Be reliable, dependable and responsible
- Acuity for mechanical systems

Therefore, some job specific competencies might be:
- Learning
- Listening
- Mechanics
- Security and Safety

These can also be garnered through the job analysis process.[3]

[3] Analysis, J. (n.d.). *Selection Analyst Cohort*. Retrieved September 5, 2024, from https://www.calhr.ca.gov/Documents/10%206%2020%20Job%20Analysis%20accessible%20version.pdf#:~:text=California%20Code%20of%20Regulations%20%28CCR%29%20section%2079%20defines

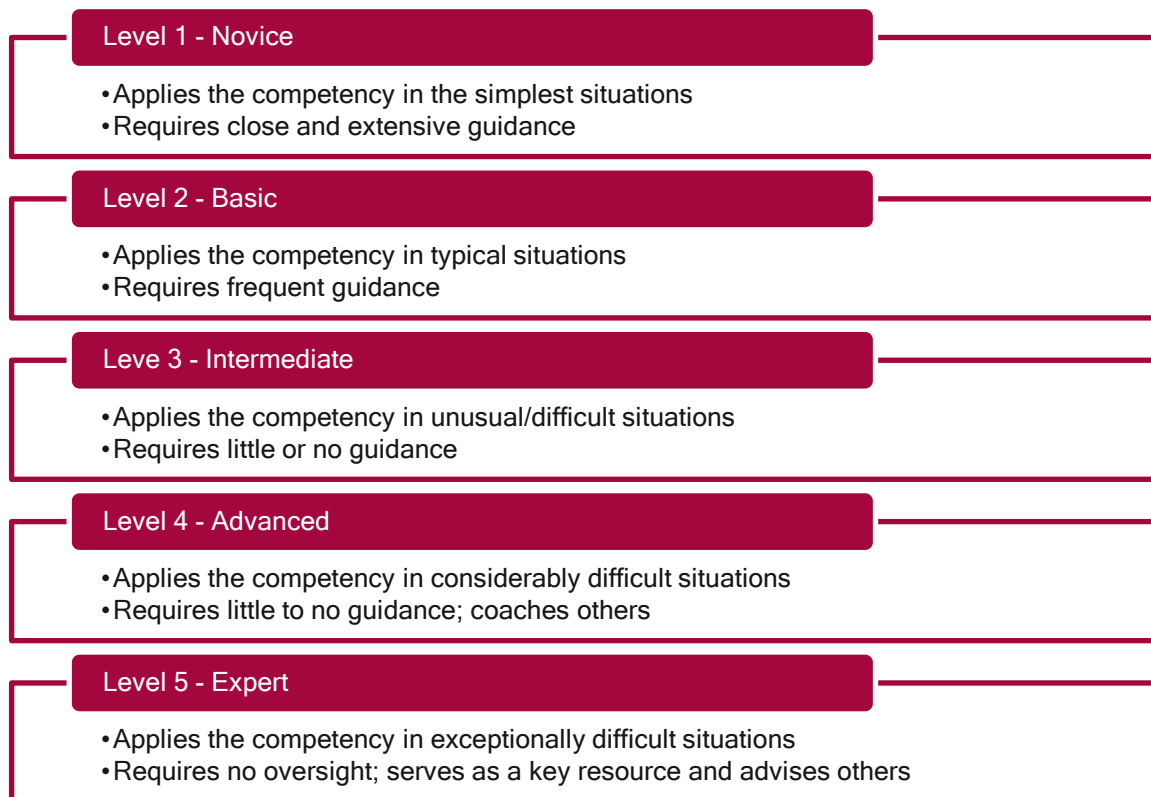|	Example 2:
	Your department has a CEA that oversees a program under the Nutrition Services Division of the California Department of Education. This position sets up systems to connect local food growers and distributers to local schools to provide accessible nutritious meals for children. Through succession planning you realize the incumbent will retire in roughly the next two years. Now would be a good time to develop job specific competencies! By evaluating the position through interviews, top-down surveys, desk audits, and job analysis, you find the following competencies to be critical for this position: • Knowledge of the CA Education System laws, rules, and regulations • Capacity Building • Upscaling • Accountability • Partnership • Communication • Evaluation • Improvement • Vision • Planning

See Appendix 1 for sample competencies.

Step 2: Assess Competencies

Now that you have determined your organizational, occupational, and job specific competencies, you can determine the levels of proficiency at the organization and individual level. This can be done through:

- Self-Assessments
- Managerial Assessments
- Peer Assessments
- 360-Degree Assessments
- Role-Based Assessments
- Skill Tests
- Job Knowledge Assessments[4]
- Position and Employee Evaluations and Appraisals
- Desk Audits
- Job Analysis

The CalHR Model defines five distinct levels of proficiency as seen below, however, departments are free to adopt different models.

Level 1 - Novice
- Applies the competency in the simplest situations
- Requires close and extensive guidance

Level 2 - Basic
- Applies the competency in typical situations
- Requires frequent guidance

Leve 3 - Intermediate
- Applies the competency in unusual/difficult situations
- Requires little or no guidance

Level 4 - Advanced
- Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations
- Requires little to no guidance; coaches others

Level 5 - Expert
- Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations
- Requires no oversight; serves as a key resource and advises others

[4] Mastering Competency Assessment: A Comprehensive Guide | HireQuotient. (n.d.). Hirequotient.com. https://www.hirequotient.com/blog/competency-assessment-guide

	Quick tip:
	The way you write assessments makes a difference! When developing competency and skills assessments, it is essential to provide clear direction on how the ratings are to be applied.
	For example, one assessment may ask:
	On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Novice and 5 being Expert, please rate your level of proficiency for this behavior.
	However, if the levels of proficiency are not clearly defined, one rater may indicate they are an "Expert" even if they only performed at expert level one time.
	A better question might be:
	On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being Novice and 5 being Expert, please select the level that best describes your <u>consistent</u> behavior and ability.

Standard State individual assessment forms include:
- Report of Performance for Probationary Employee (STD 636)
- Performance Appraisal Summary of Past Job Performance of Permanent Employees (STD. 638)

These may not align with your organization's competencies. It is possible to tailor these forms for your organization with union and CalHR approval.

See Appendix 2 for sample assessments.

Step 3: Apply Competencies

Now that you have determined your organizational, occupational, and job specific competencies and determined the levels of proficiency within your organization, you can use this information to guide recruitment and employee development efforts.

Recruit → **Workforce and Succession Planning** ← **Train**
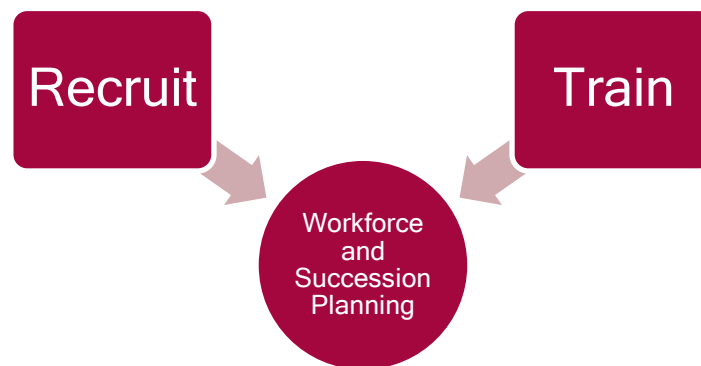
Recruit

Once you know the gaps within your organization, you can guide recruitment efforts to fill those gaps and develop better screening criteria to evaluate candidates based on competencies.

See the example below for how a department might incorporate competencies into a job ad for an Information Technology Specialist I position:

> **Desirable Qualifications**
>
> In addition to evaluating each candidate's relative ability, as demonstrated by quality and breadth of experience, the following factors will provide the basis for competitively evaluating each candidate:
>
> - Competency in Oracle APEX platform, Oracle DB 19, and BI Publishing Servers
> - Competency in developing and maintaining JAVA web systems
> - Competency in working as an individually motivated team member through full cycle of system implementation
> - Ability to effectively communicate with team members and business users
> - Ability to engage customers in thoughtful dialog to conduct business analysis and associated requirements
> - Ability to break down abstract concepts into components
> - Ability to communicate complex technical processes to business users

Train

Knowing where the deficiencies are can better guide where you invest time and resources in employee training and development. Your department may conduct surveys to determine which competencies employees want to be developed in and then develop training related to those areas or conduct performance evaluations to determine where your employees are deficient and then develop training to increase proficiency. Feedback whether through self, peer, or supervisor assessment is one way to glean which competencies to further develop.

Standard State development forms include:

- Individual Development Plan for Future Job Performance of Permanent Employees (STD 637)

See Appendix 3 for sample development tools.

Part 3
Business Cases
CalSTRS

CalSTRS has a robust and mature competency development, assessment, and application program.

In 2007 and 2009, CalSTRS established:

1) CalSTRS Core Competencies
2) Class Family Competencies
3) CalSTRS Competency Library

This was accomplished by:

- Securing an Executive sponsor
- Utilizing consultants
- Using an HR Modernization Competency Library as a starting point
- Making it an organization wide effort
- Developing focus groups
- Working with Subject Matter Experts at all levels

Then in 2012, CalSTRS then refined their model by identifying Executive Key Drivers via one-on-one interviews, prioritized drivers, mapped drivers to the CalSTRS Competency Library, and identified Leadership Competency by level. In 2015, CalSTRS developed more investment classification specific competencies to align with department specific compensation and incentive plans.

Further, CalSTRS applied their competency modeling to performance evaluations, annual performance reviews, probation reports, and training and development needs.

CalSTRS even developed a Competency Guide complete with their Competency Model and Library, Core Competencies, Competency Pipeline, Training recommendations, "My Development Journey," and Class Family Competencies.
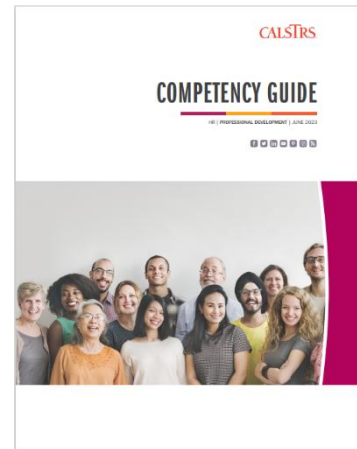
California Department of Public Health

Not only does the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) follow CalHR Workforce and Succession Planning requirements but they also have to comply with requirements from the Public Health accreditation Board (PHAB) to conduct an organization-wide assessment of current staff capabilities against an accepted set of core competencies.

CDPH accomplishes this by conducting surveys and assessments and developing trainings to address deficiencies.

CDPH conducts surveys to measure competency strengths and gaps. These surveys include:
- Core & Leadership Competency Self-Assessment
- Leadership Survey
- Deputy Director Survey
- Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey
- Competency & Training Needs Assessment

CDPH then addresses competency gaps by conducting competency-based trainings.

Internal

- Building a Comptency Based Culture
- Sucession Planning Cohort: Comptency Strategies Course
- CDPH's Leadership Development Program
- IDP Course - Developing Individual Performance & Development Goals
- IDP Course - Building a Path to Success
- IDP Course - Planning for Professional Growth

External

Leadership for the Government Executive

CDPH applies competencies via Behavioral Interview Guides, CDPH Succession Profiles, and Core and Leadership Competency Self-Assessment Tools.

CDPH continues to refine the development and application of competencies by developing Core Competencies for Public Health Framework, online trainings, competency mapping for CDPH classifications, and creating new and improved surveys and assessments.

Franchise Tax Board

Franchise Tax Board (FTB) leverages competency models to align recruiting messaging, inform behavioral interviewing, and measure gaps to identify training and development needs.

In 2021, FTB calibrated competencies in a phased approach to establish proficiency benchmarks via a series of surveys. These surveys were distributed to all managers, supervisors, and key leadership. The results were calculated to also consider workload influences throughout the organization, tailoring competencies to the unique needs of the business areas. This resulted in a Skills Matrix, or "proficiency key" for leaders to reference when recruiting, interviewing, and developing their workforce.

Competency	Key Skills	CEA	Information Technology Manager II	Information Technology Manager I	Information Technology Supervisor II
Collaboration	Building Relationships	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
	Teamwork	Expert	Expert	Expert	Expert
Communication	Writing	Expert	Expert	Advanced	Advanced
	Speaking	Expert	Expert	Advanced	Expert
	Listening	Expert	Expert	Expert	Expert
Customer Engagement	Service Centric	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
Diversity and Inclusion	Respectful	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
Innovative Mindset	Problem Solving	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
	Leverage Opportunities	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
	Creativity	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
	Intelligent Risk Taking	Expert	Expert	Expert	Advanced
	Continuous Improvement	Expert	Expert	Expert	Expert

Part 4
Lessons Learned

FTB Competency Model Approach Lessons Learned
Applying Competencies to Workforce Planning

1. Simplification of Competency Application
   a. Recommendation: Keep the competency model straightforward. Complexity can hinder implementation and understanding.
      i. A pitfall can be trying to make competencies fit down to the classification used per business area. This can create so much granularity it defeats the purpose of an organizational approach.
2. Early and Frequent Communication

     a. Key Point: Communicate the purpose and use of the competency model early and consistently to all stakeholders, especially leadership.

3. Leadership Involvement
   a. Best Practice: Engage leadership in the development and application of the competency model. Their input is crucial for alignment with organizational goals.
4. Practical Application
   a. Focus: Ensure the competency model is designed for practical use across various HR functions, include:
      i. Recruitment
      ii. Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
      iii. Succession Planning
5. Tool Utilization
   a. Importance of Systems: Use a Learning Management System (LMS) or People Management System to track competencies, conduct gap assessment and baseline skill levels to align training with identified needs. This prevents disorganization and maintains scalability.
6. Sustainable Competency Model
   a. Structure: Develop a competency model that is simple yet specific, ensuring it is sustainable for everyday use.
      i. A pitfall is creating overly detailed competencies that lose meaning and adaptability to the overall organization.
7. Focus on Key Skills
   a. Communication Strategy: emphasize key skills over competencies in communications. Key skills represent the behaviors that drive business results.
      i. As behavioral indicators are tied to key skills, focusing primarily on communication competencies at too high a level create confusion when it comes time for gap assessments or measures in development.
8. Collaborative Baseline Assessment
   a. Alignment: Involve leadership in baseline assessments over self-assessment to ensure alignment of competency demonstration for organizational business needs.
   b. Start with what is needed during day-one on the job as this helps with the practical application of competencies for recruitment and

career path development, and a secondary baseline for seasoned staff.
9. Developmental versus Performative
    a. Clarification: Communicate that competencies are intended for development, rather than performance evaluation, which can mitigate potential conflicts with bargaining units.
10. Organizational Competencies
    a. Global Perspective: Begin with broad competencies applicable organization-wide, then identify any gaps that could drive business results that are needed for dynamic workloads.

Conclusion: Final Takeaway - Maintain simplicity in your competency model. Focus on engaging leadership, using practical applications, and leveraging tools to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

See Appendix 4 for a Sample Franchise Tax Board Organizational Change Management Communication Strategy.