



Chart Your Career

Core Competency Framework Guide



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COMMUNICATION

CORE BEHAVIORS

Information shared is sometimes in an unstructured manner that misses key points.

Conveys information with clarity

Shares thoughts and ideas in a way that is organized, concise, and easy to understand.

Communicates patiently or clearly and helps others grasp key points or feel confident about next steps.

Gives instructions once and assumes everyone understands without checking for clarity.

Seeks confirmation of understanding rather than assuming it

Checks that others truly understand what has been communicated by asking questions or inviting feedback.

Proactively invites questions or summarizes key points to ensure alignment and clarity.

Dismisses or ignores ideas that conflict with their own; becomes defensive in disagreement.

Demonstrates openness and curiosity toward differing viewpoints

Checks for understanding at key moments, often toward the end of a conversation, by asking questions or inviting feedback.

Proactively ensures shared understanding throughout by inviting questions early, summarizing key points, and adjusting communication in real-time.

Does not leave space for others to join the conversation and infrequently allows others to engage in dialogue and collaboration.

Balances speaking with active listening

Avoids dominating conversations and listens attentively without interrupting, signaling understanding and engagement.

Listens carefully, reflects back key points, or invites quieter voices into the conversation.

COMMUNICATION

CORE BEHAVIORS

Speaks in a dismissive, harsh, or sarcastic tone; disregards emotional cues.

Demonstrates empathy and respect in communication

Acknowledges others' emotions and perspectives with sensitivity and maintains professionalism in all interactions.

Recognizes signs of discomfort, hesitation, or underlying concerns that haven't been explicitly stated, and responds with compassion and professionalism.

Uses jargon or overly complex language with those unfamiliar with the topic.

Tailors communication style to the audience

Adjusts language, tone, and level or detail based on the listener's needs, roles, or background.

Proactively seeks to understand the audience's needs and adapts communication style to enhance clarity and impact.

Gives vague or overly critical feedback without guidance on how to improve.

Delivers feedback constructively and supportively

Offers feedback in a way that is actionable, respectful, and focused on growth.

Shares feedback in a thoughtful, respectful tone; highlights specific behaviors and offers clear suggestions for improvement while reinforcing the other person's potential to grow.

KNOWLEDGE

- Types of modalities
- Questioning framework (open v. closed)
- Conflict resolution
- Barriers to communication (bias, assumptions, language) and strategies to overcome

SKILLS

- Clarity and consciousness
- Persuasiveness
- Active listening
- Paraphrasing
- Note-taking
- Reading non-verbal cues
- Using plain language
- Giving and receiving feedback

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TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

CORE BEHAVIORS

Misses deadlines or drops tasks without informing teammates, causing delays.

Keeps the team moving by following through on commitments

Builds trust and team momentum by delivering on tasks that others depend on.

Reliably meets deadlines or communicates proactively if timelines shift.

Withholds information or does not share critical updates.

Shares information and resources to support others

Passes along key updates and resources that help others do their work better.

Ensures others stay informed or equipped by proactively sharing relevant updates, tools, or insights.

In team discussions, contributions/participation does not consistently help move the group toward shared decisions or next steps.

Participates in team actively

Engages in team discussions, collaboration, and activities offering ideas or support.

Takes initiative in meetings, asks questions, or seeks perspectives and feedback as needed to move the team forward.

Resists changes when team direction needs to shift.

Adapts to shifting team priorities and needs

Changes work and mindset in response to shifting plans, new information, or evolving team needs.

Pivots when priorities change, maintains composure, or remains solution oriented.

TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

CORE BEHAVIORS

Makes decisions in isolation without consideration for team plans or values.

Makes decisions with team goals in mind

Selects approaches that benefit the team.

Regularly chooses solutions that advance team objectives, even when they require extra effort or compromise, demonstrating commitment to shared success over personal ease.

Interrupts others, reacts harshly to feedback or different perspectives, or dismisses team input. Takes full or sole credit for shared success or rarely acknowledges others' efforts.

Contributes to a productive and collaborative team environment

Values different perspectives or recognizes and appreciates the efforts of teammates helping to maintain a productive motivating team environment.

Listens intently, invites input or affirms perspectives. Actively highlights team achievements and expresses genuine appreciation for others' contributions.

Does not consistently demonstrate responsiveness to clearly communicated team concerns or requests.

Offers support to teammates as needed

Offers help when asked and able even if it is outside of usual scope.

Notifies when others need support, inquires how someone would like to be supported or volunteers to help a teammate with tasks.

Disregards team processes, such as when to give updates or meet deadlines.

Aligns with team processes and guidelines

Adheres to agreed-upon team practices, behaviors, and expectations to maintain consistency and cohesion.

Actively seeks out, clarifies, and reinforces team processes and expectations to support alignment and shared accountability.

TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION

KNOWLEDGE

- Group dynamics
- Roles and responsibilities
- Collaboration tools
- Conflict resolution techniques
- Psychological safety
- Prioritization
- Time and task management

SKILLS

- Active listening
- Facilitation
- Conflict resolution
- Building trust
- Delegation

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CUSTOMER SERVICE

CORE BEHAVIORS

Delays responses, ignores requests, or responds in an unhelpful manner.

Responds to requests

Responds to requests in a timely manner in accordance with team guidelines.

Adapts response time and manner based on context and situation even when the request falls outside their usual role.

Becomes irritated, defensive, or dismissive in the face of emotional or challenging behavior.

Maintains composure and workplace appropriate interactions

Remains composed, calm, and patient when interacting with individuals who are upset, confused, or frustrated.

Actively acknowledges others' emotions, listens and responds without defensiveness, or is helpful.

Does not follow up or does so inconsistently, leaving issues unresolved or partially addressed.

Follows through to resolution

Takes ownership of service issues and sees them through to completion.

Follows up with relevant departments and confirms resolution with the customer.

Focuses on limitations or barriers without offering alternative options or support.

Identifies and shares solutions

Offers clear next steps or options or focuses on what can be done to move forward or assist others.

Proactively finds alternatives when the original solution or request cannot be met or anticipates obstacles and adjusts to support resolution.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

CORE BEHAVIORS

Uses a 'one-size-fits-all' approach or fails to recognize differences in customer needs or expectations.

Adapts to the needs and context of the customer

Adjusts approach or communication style based on customer needs and context.

Delivers personalized and effective support tailored to the customer's specific needs, context, or preferences.

Speaks in a condescending or dismissive tone, or shows favoritism in how customers are treated.

Presents in a manner consistent with the organization's or department's values

Demonstrates fairness and consistency in all customer interactions, irrespective of role or status.

Greets others warmly, uses respectful tone and language, or shows equal regard for all individuals.

Relies on outdated information, guesses at answers, or does not stay current on key processes.

Stays informed to provide accurate and effective service

Uses accurate and current information, or applies relevant policies, procedures or knowledge to provide effective service.

Actively seeks out updated information or applies context to support others or improve service quality.

KNOWLEDGE

- Expertise in products, services, policies, and procedures
- Familiarity with common issues and solutions
- Understanding of customer needs or styles
- Knowledge of organizational culture, norms, or lexicon

SKILLS

- Learning, notetaking, memorizing
- Time management
- Emotional intelligence
- Active listening, writing and speaking skills
- Problem-solving
- Analytical skills
- Adaptability

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ACCOUNTABILITY

CORE BEHAVIORS

Starts tasks without seeking clarity on expectations or details.

Establishes details of tasks and responsibilities

Seeks clarity on tasks as they relate to timing, process, or intended outcomes.

Takes initiative to provide timing, process, or intended outcomes; breaks down complex tasks into clear actionable steps and seeks agreement.

Does not acknowledge issues, shifts responsibility for mistakes, or does not take steps to rectify issues.

Takes full responsibility for mistakes

Acknowledges issues, claims responsibility, or offers solutions to rectify.

Takes ownership by recognizing issues early, communicates transparently, or implements timely, comprehensive solutions.

Misses deadlines due to lack of planning or is unable to flex to adjusting priorities.

Delivers work on time

Meets deadlines or adjusts priorities as needed.

Plans work in advance or sets realistic timelines to accommodate shifting demands or unforeseen obstacles.

Does not provide relevant information about progress or waits until a problem is escalated before informing others.

Keeps others informed of progress and potential issues

Shares relevant information about progress on tasks when asked.

Proactively provides updates on progress, detailed information, or potential barriers.

ACCOUNTABILITY

CORE BEHAVIORS

Maintains incomplete, outdated, or disorganized records that hinder collaboration and continuity. Relies on memory or informal communication instead of maintaining reliable records.

Maintains accurate records of their work (processes, decisions, outcomes)

Documents and organizes key details of work activities in shared spaces, ensuring others can reference or follow processes, decisions, and results as needed.

Proactively creates or maintains systems, files, or shared tools promptly and accurately or reflects on what could be improved and incorporates lessons into future work.

Does not comply with procedures and commitments or waivers on ethical judgement as related to workplace tasks.

Maintaining integrity by adhering to standards, policies, procedures

Follows organizational and professional guidelines, demonstrating reliability and ethical conduct in the completion of workplace tasks.

Upholds or models organizational and professional standards or demonstrates ethical judgment in workplace tasks.

KNOWLEDGE

- Documentation standards
- Time management principles
- Communication protocols
- Goal-setting framework
- Organizational policies

SKILLS

- Problem solving
- Managing time and tasks
- Communication
- Using the SMART framework to set goals
- Documentation
- Building and maintaining trust

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PROBLEM SOLVING

CORE BEHAVIORS

Misses signs of emerging issues, obstacles, or difficulties. Is quick to present subjective expressions, dissatisfaction using hyperboles; attributes issues to individuals rather than describing impact or outcomes.

Identifies issues, obstacles, or difficulties with accuracy

Identifies and describes known issues, obstacles, or difficulties using facts or observed impact.

Anticipates emerging issues, obstacles, difficulties or patterns early; uses objective observations to describe potential risks, likely impacts, and interconnected factors.

Does not recognize or reflect on their role in the problem-solving process. Avoids responsibility. Does not consider whether they are contributing to the problem, biased toward a solution, or rigid about approaches.

Self-awareness of role within the problem-solving process

Reflects on their role in the problem-solving process or takes responsibility. Acknowledges when they may be contributing to the problem, favoring a solution, or resistant to alternatives.

Continuously reflects on and adjusts their approach during problem-solving; recognizes when personal bias or rigidity is impacting progress and redirects behavior to support better outcomes.

Ignores recurring problems or patterns or doesn't identify root causes. Assumes causes without checking or focuses only on surface-level symptoms or relies on assumptions instead of verifying with facts or asking questions.

Analyzes issues, obstacles, or difficulties to find root cause

Observes patterns, gathers relevant input or asks clarifying questions to understand the full context of the issue, obstacle, or difficulty.

Breaks down the issue into smaller parts, consults multiple perspectives, explores alternative interpretations, looks for patterns, or actively works to identify root causes.

Reaches for known solutions, does not weigh the benefits and limitations before proposing action, or moves forward without testing assumptions.

Selects optimal solutions

Considers a variety of solutions by seeking input, expertise, and insights before proposing action.

Proactively provides updates on progress, detailed information, or potential barriers.

PROBLEM SOLVING

CORE BEHAVIORS

Disengages before a problem is fully resolved. Does not communicate updates or confirm that resolution occurred.

Follows through and ensures resolution

Follows through on problems until resolved; clearly explains what will happen as a result of the proposed action.

Actively keeps all stakeholders informed on progress of the proposed actions or risks. Finds alternatives if problem has no immediate solution.

KNOWLEDGE

- Subject matter expertise
- Knowledge of decision making processes
- Ethical decision making

SKILLS

- Analytical
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Communication

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LEARNING & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

CORE BEHAVIORS

Does not reflect on personal performance, distinguish their contributions from the team's contributions or fails to acknowledge areas of improvement.

Articulates personal contributions and limitations

Accepts and describes their role, acknowledging both strengths and areas for improvement.

Identifies their strengths and describes how they were strategically applied or contributed to team success; addresses specific areas for growth with intention.

Does not prioritize learning, set goals, or seek new information or remains rigid in thinking.

Pursues learning

Sets aside time to learn by considering new perspectives or begins identifying development goals.

Actively pursues learning opportunities or plans growth with clear goals and relevant input.

Work does not consistently incorporate updated information, tools, or methods when they are introduced.

Applies and adapts learning

Uses new information, skills, or experience to complete tasks or is open to updating practices when needed.

Proactively integrates new learning by adjusting approaches or replaces outdated methods with more effective, evidence- informed strategies.

Dismisses feedback or repeats unproductive patterns; overlooks opportunities for improvement.

Uses feedback to make improvements

Acknowledges feedback and past outcomes or reflects to identify strengths and areas for growth or begins applying insights.

Actively seeks feedback, documents lessons learned or consistently updates practices to improve performance.

LEARNING & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of learning styles
- Awareness of resources
- Awareness of needs
- Knowledge of self

SKILLS

- Self-awareness
- Reflection
- Experimentation
- Documentation
- Planning and goal setting
- Organization and time management
- Monitoring and evaluating
- Seeking and receiving feedback
- Adaptability and flexibility

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Scenarios

In this section, there are three scenarios to illustrate how and when to use the competency framework.

For illustration, these scenarios only focus on the competency framework. It is important to note that the competency framework should be used in conjunction with expected outcomes, goals, and tasks.

Scenario 1: Introducing the Competency Framework to a New Employee

A manager is meeting with a new employee who started one month ago for their first one-on-one focused on tasks and responsibilities. Ahead of the meeting, the manager reviews the new competency framework to prepare. During the conversation, they offer the framework to the employee and walk through it together to build shared understanding of core behaviors to support the employee's early success.

Manager: How have your first few weeks been?

Staff: Good, I am settling in, and everyone has been very helpful.

Manager: That's great to hear. I wanted to take some time today to walk through this competency framework. It's something we put together to help clarify expectations and support your success. *(hands over the guide)* This outlines core competency behaviors with examples. It includes language for areas such as communication, accountability, and customer service, which are crucial to how we work together as a team.

Staff: Oh, that's helpful—thank you.

Manager: Of course. We don't expect you to demonstrate all these behaviors immediately. The framework serves as a reference, not a checklist. We'll use it to help structure our one-on-ones and reflect on our progress over time. I also view it as a two-way conversation—if anything feels unclear or amiss, let's discuss it.

Staff: That makes sense. I appreciate having something concrete to look at as I get more comfortable in the role.

Manager: Absolutely. So, let's walk through it together—I'll highlight a few areas I think are especially relevant right now, and we can make space for any questions or thoughts that come up.

Scenario 2: Introducing the Framework to an Existing Employee

A manager is meeting with an employee who has been with the organization for five years. They are introducing a new competency framework to support clarity, alignment, and growth across all roles. The manager has reviewed the framework in advance and wants to use their regular one-on-ones to walk through it together.

Manager: I appreciate you taking the time to go over something new with me today. As you know, we've been working on updating some of our performance processes to better support how we work and grow together as a team. We've developed this framework to help bring more clarity to expectations and to support everyone's development in a consistent and transparent manner. I thought it would be helpful for us to walk through it together and discuss how it connects to your current role.

Staff: Sounds good. I'm curious to see how it fits with the way I've been doing things.

Manager: (hands over the guide) You've been doing this work for a long time, and I want to emphasize—this guide isn't about starting from scratch, invalidating your experience, or providing a scorecard. The framework outlines core behaviors, examples of how we're thinking about competencies such as communication, customer service, and accountability. It's meant to provide shared language across the team and support more meaningful check-ins and feedback conversations.

Staff: Got it. I'll be honest—sometimes I wonder how these kinds of tools apply when you've already been doing the work for a while.

Manager: I appreciate you naming it. I hope that this can help us sharpen some of what's already working well and also surface areas where you might want more stretching, support, or recognition.

Staff: Okay, I can get behind that. I'd like to see where I can grow without feeling like I'm being micromanaged.

Manager: Absolutely. Let's start by looking at the accountability section. Then we can identify anything that feels like a mismatch or an opportunity to evolve.

Staff: Yeah, most of these tracks. The language is a little more specific than what we've had in the past, which I think could be helpful. Like this part about "Keeps others informed of progress and potential issues"—that's something I do, but it's never been written down like this.

Manager: I'm glad to hear that. And I want to make sure we use this framework to support your growth, not just check boxes. So, as we go forward, I'd love to use it as a touchpoint in our regular one-on-ones—not every time, but to check in on how things are going, surface any challenges, and reflect on growth over time.

Scenario 3: Using the Framework On an Ongoing Basis

Manager and staff discuss assigned tasks during their one-on-one [GB1] conversation. Both the manager and staff have used the framework to prepare for the conversations as they relate to staff tasks and goals.

Manager: How is the project going?

Staff: Going well, thank you. I have enjoyed working with a cross-functional team, and the task load is quite manageable.

Manager: That is good to hear. Yes, I must say that you have been meeting the deadlines we agreed to, and the client appreciated your follow-through to confirm everything was working well for them. I did observe that you did not document and provide information about your progress to me. This impacted my ability to relay information to the leadership group.

Staff: Thank you. I am glad that the client was happy.” Thank you for letting me know about progress updates.” “I wanted to get everything done before sharing with you, but I am happy to share updates more frequently. How often would you like updates, and what is the best way for me to get them to you?

Manager: Thank you. I trust that you are working diligently to meet the deadlines, but getting periodic updates helps me to inform senior leadership. This helps me give visibility to your work. Let us add this to our one-on-one agenda for the duration of the project. And of course, if you need immediate guidance, please reach out as needed.” “How does that sound? Would that work for you?”

Staff: Yes, it does. I will add this as a standing topic until the project is complete.