# The management agenda

## Building employer-responsive skills in your organisation

# Skills

# Contents

# Foreword

The further education sector understands the need to improve skills levels if business is to compete and succeed in global markets. Further education providers recognise too the key role they have to play in innovation, training and support for employers. We are keen to learn from the many examples of effective practice in the sector to build provider capacity to deliver high quality, flexible provision that responds to employers' needs.

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service's (LSIS) World Class Skills programme (WCS) provides a range of products and services that are alert to the needs of individual providers as they seek to improve the responsiveness and quality of their offer to employers.

Fully funded, it provides a free-of-charge range of interactive workshops, seminars, consultancies and structured support to take forward reform and development through thematic development projects.

This publication is one of a group of resources that have been developed to support interactive workshops and seminars offered through the programme. We believe it brings together useful information to support providers as they gear up their business with and for employers.

Roger McClure
Chief Executive, LSIS

# Welcome to World Class Skills

The *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the Global Economy, World Class Skills* (2006) investigated the UK's long-term skills needs and predicted that even if targets current at the time of the report were met, the UK's skills base would still lag behind many of its key comparators.

That's why the government has committed to ensuring that the workforce in England has world-class skills by 2020. This will call for an enormous shift in attitudes and aspirations within workplaces, schools, colleges, universities and society itself.

It will require every individual to think about updating their skills and qualifications to ensure that they are giving employers what they really need.

It will require employers to play an active role in helping to reform vocational qualifications to ensure that they are relevant and responsive to changes in the global economy.

In support of these reforms, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS), working closely with national partners, was asked by the government to lead the development of a single, integrated improvement strategy to support the drive for excellence in the further education system that would succeed in the new demand-led environment.

**""**

In the twenty-first century, our natural resource is our people – and their potential is both untapped and vast. Skills will unlock that potential. The prize for our country will be enormous – higher productivity, the creation of wealth and social justice.

Lord Leitch, *Leitch Review of Skills*, 2006

# Introduction to the programme

The **World Class Skills – developing responsive provision** is an LSIS programme providing support for improvement activities for LSC-funded providers in enhancing their employer-facing provision. This will support organisations in developing provision to meet employers' skills needs and the aspirations of the *Leitch Review of Skills*.

KPMG and its consortium partners are delivering this major support programme. Together they can bring significant expertise to you and your organisation. KPMG has an in-depth understanding of the wider education and skills sector that can help further education colleges and independent training providers deliver improved outcomes for learners and employees, as well as achieve their organisational goals. They can also draw in the sector's most innovative and effective practice to share with you.

## Programme benefits
Involvement in the programme will help LSC-funded providers of education and training to:
- develop and extend effective employer relationships
- ensure that growth and quality go hand in hand
- create fit-for-purpose organisational structures
- gain relevant accreditation, for example, Training Quality Standard (TQS) and Framework for Excellence
- access high-level support through a range of focused events
- network with peers and share effective practice.

## Programme overview
The programme is designed to support the Train to Gain Plan for Growth, the changes to demand-led funding, the rolling out of the TQS accreditation, National Skills Academies and the development of specialist networks.

The focus of the programme is to work with providers and other stakeholders to be more responsive to the needs of employers and increase the capacity of the FE system to provide high quality, flexible training and support for employers and their employees in order that they can contribute to UK productivity and competitiveness in a global economy.

The programme comprises both seminars and workshops. Seminars provide a high-level introduction and overview of the topic. Workshops are designed for smaller groups: the sessions are more interactive and practical in nature, giving participants the opportunity to work with a range of proven tools and techniques. There will be an opportunity for providers to apply for individualised consultancy support to work within their organisation in an intensive way to focus on the development of employer-responsive provision.

### Resources

HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office) (2007) *World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England*. Norwich: HMSO. Available online at:
www.dcsf.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/uploads/documents/World % 20Class % 20Skills % 20FINAL.pdf

Lord Leitch (2006) *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the Global Economy, World Class Skills*. London: HMSO. Available online at:
www.dcsf.gov.uk/furthereducation/uploads/documents/2006-12 % 20LeitchReview1.pdf

QIA (Quality Improvement Agency) (2006) *Pursuing Excellence: An Outline Improvement Strategy for Consultation*. Coventry: QIA.

Learning and Skills Council: www.lsc.gov.uk
Learning and Skills Improvement Service: www.lsis.org.uk
World Class Skills: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/wcs

# Consultancy

As part of the World Class Skills programme, there are a limited number of one-to-one consultancies available. Consultancy support may allow your organisation to explore in greater depth some of the issues you have identified in attending a seminar or workshop. For example, having attended the workshop on 'Building employer-responsive skills in your organisation' and the seminar on 'Legal advice on employment terms and conditions' you may feel that your organisation would benefit from individual support in reviewing current and future staffing profiles and how to ensure these are aligned to increase employer-responsive provision.

This consultancy support is fully subsidised by LSIS. It is a unique opportunity to gain professional consultancy to support organisational development in enhancing your employer-responsive provision. It will, of course, also require time commitment from staff in your organisation in order to bring about real change and development for the organisation. In order for these benefits to be maximised it is essential that this consultancy is supported from the top, both conceptually and with commitment and input to the process from the head of the organisation. Other members of the senior management team will also need to engage with the consultancy process, depending on the nature of this consultancy.

For each consultancy, a KPMG consultant will be assigned to your organisation to support you through the process of completing the diagnostic questionnaire and associated development plan, *A Framework to Measure and Improve Employer Responsiveness*. This development plan will be confidential to your organisation. If you have already completed this diagnostic questionnaire they will support you in updating this and validating its currency. They will then work with you to identify how additional consultancy support may help you to progress in implementing your development plan. They will take a flexible approach to ensure that this consultancy plan is customised to meet your needs but, as an indication, it may cover areas such as implementing effective labour market information (LMI) and/or customer relationship management (CRM) systems; organisational design for performance; implementing and maintaining change; or achieving the Training Quality Standard.

**If you would like further information please contact**
wcsenquiries@kpmg.co.uk

# E-learning

Alongside the workshops and seminars, a suite of five online training modules is being developed. The topics are as follows:

- Building employer-responsive skills in your organisation
- Funding and finance for maximising business
- Identifying bottom-line benefits
- Sales and gaining repeat business
- Targeting SMEs for training.

E-learning is an alternative way for providers to interact with the programme and share knowledge within their organisation.

Each module will take between 40 minutes and an hour to complete, and will include interactive material such as multiple-choice questions, quizzes, games, scenarios and case studies.

The modules will be accessed from www.excellencegateway.org.uk/wcs

**If you would like further information please contact**
Adam Caldwell
adam.caldwell@kpmg.co.uk

# Agenda

| | |
|---|---|
| Coffee and registration | **09.30** |
| Welcome and introductions | **10.00** |
| Setting the context | **10.15** |
| The recruitment process | **10.30** |
| Break | **11.30** |
| Writing job descriptions | **11.45** |
| Lunch | **12.30** |
| The performance management process | **13.30** |
| Break | **14.15** |
| Talent management | **14.30** |
| Closing session | **15.45** |

# Workshop outline

## Aim

To help providers embed the key skills and behaviours in their organisations through recruitment, role alignment and performance management.

## Objectives

- To understand how your recruitment process can be updated to look for the key skills and behaviours.
- To understand how job descriptions can be written to include the key skills and behaviours.
- To understand how the key skills and behaviours can be embedded through your performance management process.
- To understand how a talent management strategy could bring the above processes together and help to identify high performers/potentials.

## Overview

As part of the People, Skills and Behaviours area within the World Class Skills programme we undertook a number of telephone interviews with large employers. This research led to the identification of a number of key skills and behaviours that all providers should be demonstrating to employers.

This workshop follows on from the seminar 'Identifying key skills and behaviours for engaging employers' where we present the research on key skills and behaviours to the governors and senior managers of provider organisations.

## Benefits

- Developing your team's skills set to improve the way your organisation works with employers by being more effective and responsive.
- Increasing employer satisfaction through more effective working relationships.
- Ultimately, increasing business for the organisation through increased employer satisfaction.

# The behaviour change model

There are four key levers for behaviour change, all of which need to be employed to see lasting change. This course focuses particularly on the aligned systems and structure part of the model, but they are all equally important.

## Behaviour change model

Role models
"I see my leaders behaving differently."

Understanding and commitment
"I know what I need to change and I want to do it."

"I will change my behaviour if …"

Aligned systems and structures
"The systems reinforce the desired change."

Skills and competencies
"I have the skills/confidence to behave in the new way."

**Source:** Adapted from Roland McKinsey

# The competency framework methodology

Competencies and competency frameworks are a signal from the organisation to the individual of the expected areas and levels of performance. They provide the individual with a map or indication of the behaviours that will be valued, recognised and in some organisations rewarded. Competencies can be understood to represent the language of performance in an organisation, articulating both the expected outcomes of an individual's efforts and the manner in which these activities are carried out.
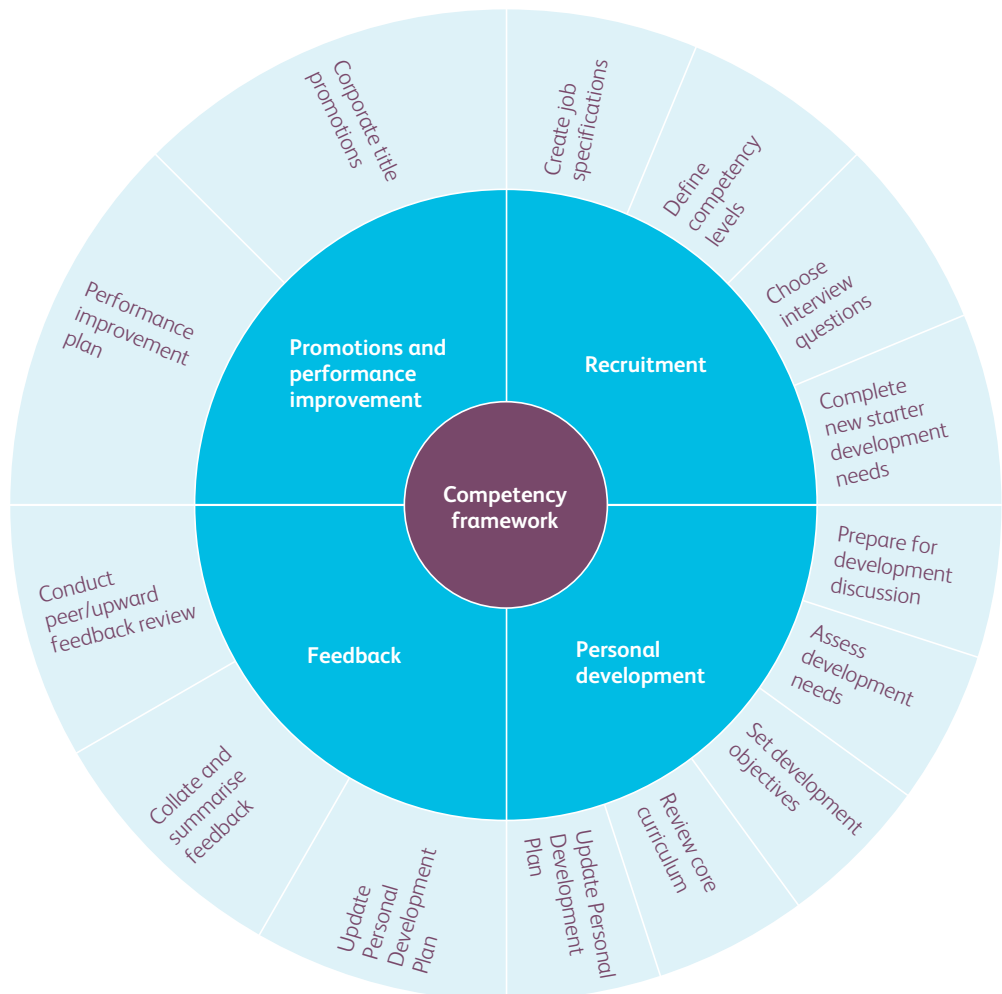
## What is a competency framework?

- It is a document that defines the core skills and capabilities that an organisation considers critical for the successful performance of each role.
- It outlines skills and capabilities that will lead to improved performance rather than those basic skills all are expected to have.
- Competency definitions should be based on clearly visible behaviours in the workplace.
- It is normally developed into tiers (eg basic, competent, expert) either to distinguish between competence levels or to set out expectations at different grades.

| Note |
| --- |
| Organisations may have different competency frameworks for different parts of their organisation, eg specialists versus generalists, leaders versus managers, etc. |

## Competency frameworks across the employee lifecycle



The role of competency frameworks is to provide:
- a simple and user-friendly explanation of the type of competencies employees need to demonstrate at various levels of the business
- a consistent approach across the whole business
- guidelines for individuals and managers to assist them with recruitment, job descriptions and performance management.

The framework can help businesses
- recruit the best
- promote the best
- plan for succession
- develop appropriate learning and development courses
- drive organisational change.

## Building key employer skills into competency frameworks

| Competency frameworks |

**Being a responsive provider**
- Responding in a timely and succinct manner
- Being flexible in style and approach
- Demonstrating a can-do attitude

**Understanding the employer's needs and business**
- Asking effective questions
- Active listening
- Handling employer concerns

**Establishing and maintaining a good relationship**
- Building rapport
- Demonstrating trust and credibility
- Effective communication

There are five key considerations to take into account when developing a competency framework:

1  **Orientation.** Should the focus be on the current skills needed or the future ones?
2  **Structure.** Should it be top down or bottom up? Should you focus mainly on involving jobholders or management?
3  **Job proximity.** How much data needs to be gathered about the roles people are involved in today?
4  **Applicability.** Are the techniques feasible, relevant and credible in the organisation?
5  **Sensitivity.** Are there many different types/levels of roles with individual competencies that need to be differentiated between?

In order to be most useful, a set of competencies will usually need to be:
- **Manageable.** Too many competencies will tend to become unwieldy and inefficient.
- **Defined behaviourally.** They should be defined in terms of identifiable behaviours as opposed to desired outcomes, eg they need to be specific and observable.
- **Independent.** Any important behaviour should be included in one and only one competency. They should not overlap.
- **Comprehensive.** No important behaviours should be omitted.
- **Accessible.** They should be regularly reviewed in response to organisational change.
- **Compatible.** They should fit with an organisation's visions, goals and culture.

## An example of a competency framework

| Summary | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Key skills** | **Core competencies/ behaviours** | **Definition** |
| **Establishing and maintaining a good relationship** | Building a rapport | Works in a cooperative, respectful manner with colleagues, customers and the wider community. Balances a focus upon tasks with a consideration for people. Encourages teamwork and promotes respect and understanding for different backgrounds, opinions of others, and work–life balance issues |
| | Demonstrating trust and credibility | Ensures a feeling of trust when engaging with a customer. Makes sure that what is communicated is credible and not merely paying lip service. |
| | Effective communication | Communicates effectively and efficiently to ensure that key information and 'the message' come across at all times. |
| **Understanding the employer's needs and business** | Asking effective questions | Asks questions at the appropriate time and follows up with additional questions when not getting a desired response. |
| | Active listening | Listens for key information when dealing with customers and ensures the customer feels understood. |
| | Handling employer concerns | Analyses problems, identifies core issues, investigates, evaluates and integrates information. Generates appropriate solutions to solve problems or issues. |
| **Being a responsive provider** | Responding in a timely and succinct manner | Responds to queries in a timely and efficient way and does not necessitate a chasing follow-up call from a customer. |
| | Being flexible in style and approach | Consistently demonstrates flexibility in both style and approach (eg recommends appropriate alternatives when a training solution cannot be provided, and tailors the training solutions to the employer rather than providing off-the-shelf packages). |
| | Demonstrating a can-do attitude | Monitors and upholds high quality of service and products to customers (both internal and external). Manages time, plans and organises work tasks, monitors progress and meets deadlines. Manages multiple priorities. |

| Competency-level definitions | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **Definition** | **Overview** |
| 1 | Awareness/ understanding | **Demonstrates a good understanding of what needs to be delivered in relation to the core competency.** |
| | | Evidenced by: |
| | | • Recognising challenges within own role and maintaining flexibility in the application of the core competency. |
| | | • Defining the key aspects of the core competency, providing a clear explanation of its importance in building a high-performance organisation. |
| | | • Applying simple concepts and seeking out guidance when needed. |
| 2 | Working knowledge | **Interprets and evaluates expert advice and information.** |
| | | Evidenced by: |
| | | • Consistently applying the correct language and terminology within own role and during team discussions. |
| | | • Successfully being able to hold an informed conversation/debate with subject experts to contribute to establishing a high-performance team. |
| | | • Proactively asking informed questions to support the practical application of knowledge. |
| 3 | Skilled | **Consistently carries out integrated activities with minimal guidance.** |
| | | Evidenced by: |
| | | • Translating information into practical actions to deliver high-performance outcomes. |
| | | • Ensuring the achievement of consistent high levels of performance by being imaginative, flexible and resilient in response to constraints, and devising and developing awareness among colleagues. |
| 4 | Improvement and adaptation | **Demonstrates commitment to continuous improvement and able to diagnose and creatively solve complex problems.** |
| | | Evidenced by: |
| | | • Adapting expertise, providing troubleshooting support to colleagues to successfully solve significant or unusual problems. |
| | | • Generating substantial and continuous improvements, ideas and techniques to deliver high performance. |
| | | • Acquiring and adapting tools, processes and techniques from other areas within the group to deliver an improvement in performance. |
| 5 | Strategy and innovation | **Develops new approaches or methods that contribute to strategy to become a performance-driven organisation.** |
| | | Evidenced by: |
| | | • Successfully developing innovative and significant approaches and actions. |
| | | • Evaluating implications of long-term trends and their effect. |
| | | • Proactively evaluating and assessing the usefulness of tools that contribute to achieving a high-performance organisation. |

# The recruitment process

The CIPD Annual Survey Report 2008 found that 86 per cent of organisations still experience recruitment difficulties. The key reasons for this include a lack of necessary specialist skills in candidates (70 per cent), followed by higher pay expectations (44 per cent) and insufficient experience of candidates (42 per cent).

This section will take you through the recruitment process, from writing the job advertisement to deciding where to advertise it and how to recruit successfully. We will consider the advantages of recruitment agencies and where line managers should be involved in this process, not just HR. Finally, we will look at the advantages of competency-based interviews.

The average cost of filling a vacancy per employee is £3,667 increasing to £5,800 when organisations are also calculating associated labour turnover costs. In recent years numerous changes have been made in how advertisements are written. Part of this is to do with fashions in recruitment, but also employers now have to be extremely careful to follow the latest employment legislation on discrimination. These laws are designed to prevent race, religious, sexual and age discrimination. Where employers may once have asked for 'junior' or 'senior' applicants, they now have to refer to skills sets and experience levels. Being 'energetic', 'active' or even 'tireless' is now not sought because all three of those descriptors could be interpreted as requesting someone able-bodied. So the language of the advertisement has been tightened up and should only refer to qualifications and skills needed to do the job.

An example of a poor advertisement would be:

> Our client is a leading engineering technology provider, undertaking research, design, development and strategic services to the world's automotive manufacturers. The role is to work in Tokyo for 3–6 months to assist on a website design project. The work is 5 days per week but 50+ hours per week, so dedication and flexibility are vital. (http://use.perl.org)

It would almost certainly put people off!

Job advertisements should be clear and outline:
- the requirements of the job
- the necessary and desirable criteria for job applicants
- the nature of the organisation's activities
- the job location
- the rewards package
- job tenure (eg contract length)
- details of how to apply.

## How to recruit to your organisation

In a recent CIPD recruitment survey, corporate websites have broken even with local newspapers as the most common method of attracting candidates (used by 75 per cent of organisations).

Outlined below is a variety of ways to recruit.

- **Internal talent pool** provides opportunities for development and career progression, which are important factors for employee retention and motivation. Appointing people who have the potential to grow but who currently do not have all that is required is the most frequently used initiative to overcome recruitment difficulties (75 per cent).
- **Employee referral scheme**, including incentives (although be aware that employers do not rely on this method at the expense of recruiting a diverse workforce).
- **Keeping a 'pool of applicants'** is good for organisations looking at how they can build databases or pools of ready candidates to draw upon and slot into positions in the organisation as they arise without the need to re-advertise. This method is popular in central government, but only 32 per cent of organisations surveyed say they make use of talent banks.
- **Work tasters** provide an opportunity for potential recruits to experience the delivery of teaching/training sessions.
- Open days/evenings.
- Work with job centres or local universities.
- Alumni network.
- Trade press.
- Newspapers.
- Intranet and websites.

The CIPD *Recruitment, Retention and Turnover* survey in 2008 found that 78 per cent of employers in 2007 used recruitment agencies to attract and recruit employees. Research presented by York Consulting in the *Recruitment and Retention in the Post-16 Learning and Skills Sector* (2005) found that 6 per cent of staff surveyed in 174 institutions were agency staff, however, only 26 per cent of employers surveyed had a structured approach to evaluating the performance of recruitment agencies.

### Methods used to minimise recruitment difficulties

| Measures to cover hard-to-fill vacancies | No of Institutions | % of respondents |
|---|---|---|
| Use staff from within the organisation | 94 | 52 |
| Use agency staff | 77 | 42 |
| Multiple advertising means | 67 | 37 |
| Employ fixed-term contract staff | 36 | 20 |
| Employ part-time staff | 33 | 18 |
| Increase pay offered for job | 15 | 8 |
| Dropped courses | 7 | 4 |
| Headhunt from organisations | 6 | 3 |

**Source:** YCL/MORI quantitative survey of FE HR managers, 2005. Information taken from 5,492 respondents of which 25 per cent were private training providers and 35 per cent were FE colleges

The most common reasons why organisations use agency staff are to reduce the time and in-house resources dedicated to recruitment and to access specialist services such as screening, filtering and profiling of candidates. However, more value-added purposes include benchmarking, whereby employers can access salary data and local market knowledge, and recruitment agencies can provide appropriate speculative CVs to HR where they believe these are relevant to an employer's current or anticipated future needs.

### Resource

CIPD (Chartered Institute for Personnel Development) (2008) *Learning and Development*. CIPD Annual Survey Report 2008. London: CIPD. Available online at: www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/3A3AD4D6-F818-4231-863B-4848CE383B46/0/learningdevelopmentsurvey.pdf

### Maintaining a relationship with recruitment agencies

Investing time in each other is key to building a successful relationship.

As well as meetings and briefings, other ways to build relationships include:
- site/office visits
- immersion sessions
- agency days
- 'experience the job' sessions
- profiling of recruitment consultants
- training agency staff in the 'company ways'
- meetings with line managers and other employees.

There should also be processes to monitor performance in place, such as:
- service-level agreements: possible KPIs include quantity, quality, speed of turnaround, ratio of applications to staff hired, how long candidates remains in the post
- progress reporting
- levels of client (organisation) satisfaction
- strategic planning sessions: HR and agencies working together to improve a resourcing strategy
- updates on legislation
- external monitoring.

There is ongoing debate as to how involved line managers should be in the recruitment process and the agency interface. This depends largely on the extent to which the responsibility for recruitment is devolved in an organisation. Some employers prefer line managers not to be involved in the agency relationship, but to be involved more in the internal process (eg approving a shortlist of CVs, meeting final candidates and so on). Others regard them as integral to the process, involving them in meeting agencies at the point at which the initial recruitment need has been identified, right through to negotiating the job offer.

Many organisations that use online candidate management systems (a third party web-based application used to administer recruitment processes) are now opening up access to line managers.

Those organisations that do involve line managers in the agency interface report mainly positive benefits, including:

- a clearer understanding by the agency of the local environment, culture, nature of the role and the personality of the manager (and also the team) – this not only enables agencies to brief candidates with first-hand knowledge but to achieve a better match of individual candidate to vacancy
- an additional, direct line of communication with whom the agency can raise questions and discuss requirements
- a stronger employer brand
- lower attrition rates
- improved management of information.

### Updates on legislation

Many larger organisations might have HR capability to do this themselves, but smaller organisations often rely on agencies to provide them with updates on new legislation and how to handle the legal aspects associated with employing temporary workers.

**Notes**

# Competency-based interviews

Competencies emerged in the 1980s as a response to organisational changes and to wider changes in society. Richard Boyatzis's *The Competent Manager* proved to have considerable influence on the profession and, over the following two decades, competency frameworks became an increasingly accepted part of modern HR practice.

The 2008 CIPD survey, *Recruitment, Retention and Turnover*, found that the most frequently used selection methods include interviews based on contents of the CV/application form (72 per cent), followed by competency-based interviews (65 per cent).

### Methods used to select applicants

|  | 2008 % |
|---|---|
| Interviews following contents of CV | 72 |
| Competency-based interviews | 65 |
| Structured interviews | 56 |
| Tests for specific skills | 48 |
| General ability tests | 41 |
| Literacy and/or numeracy | 40 |
| Telephone interviews | 36 |
| Personality/aptitude tests | 35 |
| Assessment centres | 34 |
| Group exercises (eg role play) | 22 |
| Pre-interview references | 16 |
| Online tests (selection) | 15 |

**Source:** CIPD, 2008

Originally competency frameworks consisted mainly of behavioural elements – an expression of the softer skills involved in effective performance. Increasingly however, competency frameworks have become broader and more ambitious in scope and include more technical competencies. It is important to build the key skills and behaviours for employer responsiveness into your recruitment process. The best way to do this is through ensuring you have a competency framework in place and that you apply it.

Many organisations develop a competency/behaviour framework to manage performance, recruitment and progressions. However, managers and individuals can find it difficult to use, mainly because people cannot see the benefit of the framework and there aren't clear links between their framework and what the business is trying to achieve.

Frameworks need to be succinct so that they are accessible and applicable. They need to be updated regularly in order to remain relevant to the employment environment. It is also important to ensure the correct degree of detail (between being too vague and irrelevant to being too bureaucratic and unappealing).

CIPD's 2007 annual report found that an overwhelming proportion of frameworks (85 per cent) were designed in-house or in-house with consultants. A very small proportion (8 per cent) used frameworks produced and made available by an external organisation (eg a trade association or government body). Yet many of the subjects that were included in the framework fell under expected generic headings.

The competency-based interviews are:
- **fair** to all candidates
- **objective** in depth and structured
- **consistent** between interviewers
- **standardised** for all stages and roles
- based on the idea that **past performance** = **future performance**.

**How do competency-based interviews differ from normal interviews?**
Normal interviews (also called unstructured interviews) are essentially a conversation where the interviewers ask a few questions that are relevant to what they are looking for, but without any specific aim in mind other than getting an overall impression of the individual. Questions are fairly random and can sometimes be quite open. For example, a question such as 'What can you offer our company?' is meant to gather general information about the candidate, but does not test any specific skill or competency. In an unstructured interview, the candidate is judged on the general impression that he/she leaves; the process is therefore likely to be more subjective.

Competency-based interviews (also called structured or behavioural interviews) are more systematic, with each question targeting a specific skill or competency. Candidates are asked questions relating to their behaviour in specific circumstances, which they then need to back up with concrete examples. The interviewers will then dig further into the examples by asking for specific explanations about the candidate's behaviour or skills. These will usually start with phrases such as: 'Tell me about a time when you', 'Give an example of a situation where', 'Describe a scenario'.

**Tips for effective interviewing**

- Three or more questions per competency.
- Focus on relevant information.
- Cover positive and negative evidence.
- Facilitate negative evidence.
- Varied phrasing of questions and comments.
- Variety of questions – candidates know commonly asked questions.
- Non-discriminatory questions.

**Obtaining and assessing information**

Here are some ways to obtain information from interviewees against competencies.

- **Use open questions** such as 'Give me an example of when', or 'What do you think about …?'. Closed questions result in 'yes' or 'no' answers and do not allow the interviewee to give a fuller response, which ultimately helps the interviewer to assess them against competencies.
- Make sure that all **responses are satisfactory**. If an answer doesn't quite 'add-up', make sure to probe and receive a full explanation.
- Design questions to cover all the competencies. Two to three questions per competency are sufficient. Examples from recent experience help to ensure that the candidate is currently active in these areas of competency.
- Make sure to **observe carefully**, giving full attention to responses.
- **Record quotes** from the candidate. Quotes are sources of objective evidence, and when reviewing your notes having interviewed several candidates these can be a more helpful reminder than something more generalised such as 'candidate is good at problem solving'. It will also help to avoid discriminating against or in favour of a candidate on subjective grounds, as quotes provide an objective ground for comparison.
- When assessing which candidate to select it can be helpful to **score** each candidate against each competency. This will help to form an overall objective assessment of candidates.
- **Evaluate** based on the classifications, supported by objectively recorded evidence.

**Remember**

**O**bserve
**R**ecord
**C**lassify
**E**valuate

**Exercise: competency-based questions**

In groups of no more than five, use the nine key skills and behaviours on page 16 to develop two or three questions under each competency. Think about what would constitute a good/excellent answer.

1   Make sure to observe carefully, giving full attention to responses. Compare what a person is saying with how they behave.
2   Record quotes from the candidate.
3   Write notes during the interview, do not be tempted to score during the interview, this should be completed afterwards using the quotes.
4   It may be useful to interview in pairs.
5   When assessing which candidate to select it can be helpful to score each candidate against each competency. This will help to form an overall objective assessment of candidates.
6   Evaluate based on the classifications, supported by objectively recorded evidence. Compare these to the pre-determined competency framework on page 17.

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## Presentations

The final section outlines how to incorporate presentations into an interview session, and sets out some of the benefits including an excellent method to assess some of the competencies such as 'active listening', when asking questions or 'responding in a succinct manner'.

1   Tell the candidate in advance of the interview that they will be required to give a presentation, and suggest a time length, eg 5–10 minutes.
2   Presentations can be sector specific (topics such as the Leitch review, what employers want from providers, any recent education-based news) or 'open' (eg a sport or hobby, a recent news story), depending on what the interviewer wants to extract from the process.
3   Open presentations can be useful for candidates who may not be expected to have strong sector knowledge.
4   Sector-based presentations can be useful where you would like to see in-depth sector knowledge.

Asking candidates to do presentations:
- reveals how much preparation the candidate has made
- shows their ability to produce an output in a logical, clear and concise manner
- further reveals communication skills
- creates a useful conversation base
- helps assess key competencies.

# Inductions

Every organisation, large or small, should have a well-considered induction programme. Key parts of the process include:

1   Orientation (physical): describing where the facilities are.
2   Orientation (organisational): identifying individual roles and how the employee fits into the team and the organisation.
3   Health and safety information: this is a legal requirement.
4   Explanation of terms and conditions.
5   Details of the organisation's history, its products and services, its culture and values.
6   A clear outline of the requirements of the role.

## Induction issues and benefits at a glance

| Key issues | Benefits | Challenges |
|---|---|---|
| **Length** of induction process? | **Avoids** negative impression of new work environment. | **Utilising** new technology, e-learning, online feedback. |
| **Timing:** when to begin? | **Helps** sustain high levels of morale and promote sound team integration. | **Utilising** new methods. |
| **Applicability** of process to all new employees? | **Circumvents** future expense in recruitment and selection. | **Ensuring** relevance to all employees and the involvement of current staff. |
| **Structure** a robust planning process to provide objective feedback at all stages. | **Enables** new hires to become productive more quickly. | To **formalise** the process or not? |
| | **Improves** employment brand through promotion of core values. | Making the intake of data more **manageable**. |
| | **Establishes** organisation in competitive human resources market. | **Avoiding** it becoming a time burden on the organisation. |

**66 99**

The term 'induction' is generally used to describe the whole process whereby employees adjust or acclimatise to their jobs and working environment.

www.cipd.co.uk

# Writing job descriptions

**Exercise: job descriptions**

In groups, look at the following job descriptions and consider:
- What is good about it?
- What can be improved?

**Job description: World Class College, maths teacher**

**Job purpose:**
To provide our learners with a first-class learning experience that enables them to achieve their individual potential.

**Key responsibilities and accountabilities**
**Teaching and learning**
- Planning lessons.
- Teaching learners, including setting and marking work carried out in college and elsewhere.
- Maintaining an orderly and purposeful learning atmosphere at all times.
- Assessing, including reporting on learners' progress and attainment.
- Liaising with learners and other support staff within the college.

**Assessment and reports**
- Providing or contributing to oral and written assessments, reports and references.
- Participating in the college's self-evaluation procedures.

**Curriculum development**
- Advising and assisting the Learning Leader and other staff with the preparation and development of courses of study, teaching materials, schemes of work, methods of delivery and assessment.
- Assisting with the preparation and implementation of the departmental and college development plans.

**Staff meetings**
- Participating in meetings that relate to the college curriculum (including pastoral arrangements), administration or organisation.
- Marketing and liaison.
- To participate in marketing and liaison activities aimed at marketing the college.
- To contribute to the development of links with external organisations in order to develop relationships and maintain good communication links with key stakeholders.

**Pastoral system**
- To evaluate, monitor and report on the progress of each learner.
- To promote the general progress and well-being of the learner.

**Other duties**
- Take on any additional responsibilities which might be determined by the principal.

**Person specification**
**Essential knowledge**
- In-depth knowledge of the learning and teaching of mathematics to support the attainment of all learners at various levels.
- A thorough knowledge of government policy and current developments in relation to Skills for Life.
- Good understanding of the principles of equal opportunities, particularly as they affect work with adult learners.

**Essential qualifications/training/experience**
- Teaching qualification in mathematics (or a closely related subject), ideally post-16.
- Successful experience of teaching post-16 mathematics to a diverse learner profile, with proven ability to raise standards.
- Experience in using different assessment methods to identify learning needs and to monitor learner progress.

**Essential skills and abilities**
- Ability to work proactively to raise standards and improve achievement in all levels of mathematics programmes.
- Ability to use initiative to solve problems and remove barriers to learning.
- Ability to manage time effectively and to work to deadlines.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal (to a variety of audiences).

**Special conditions**
- Able to travel between various college sites to teach.
- Able to attend local and national training events.

### Job description: business development manager

**Location**
World Class College (main campus)

**Reporting to**
Deputy Principal

**Key responsibilities and accountabilities**
- To contribute to the strategic direction of business development/employer engagement within World Class College in response to employers' needs and local, regional and national strategies and developments.
- To contribute to the continuous development of working links and partnerships with employers, industry and other external organisations (Business Link, broker network, RDA, LSC), through the building of long-term working relationships and the successful provision of appropriate services including training, consultancy, research and advisory services.
- To develop and expand the college's income diversification and generate new commercial opportunities through agreed college strategies.
- To contribute to the embedding of CRM within the college in order to ensure quality of service, response and development of client relationships.
- To increase the college's activity with large employers through the development of a relevant offer, services, quality and reliability.
- To develop within the college a client-focused culture which is demonstrated in high-quality responsive provision which meets the needs of employers and other relevant stakeholders.
- To oversee the collation of LMI and to work with directors to inform curriculum development plans.
- To contribute, as a member of the senior management team, to the overall strategic planning functions in college and to the achievement of the college's vision.
- To maintain accurate records and monitor progress towards agreed targets and deadlines and submit monthly performance-related reports to the line manager.

This job description is a guide to the duties you will be expected to perform. These may be subject to review in the future in line with the strategic direction and development of the college.

**Person specification**

**Essential**
- Educated to degree level or equivalent in a relevant discipline.
- Evidence of continuing professional development.
- Strong communication skills.
- Ability to prioritise work against changing agendas.
- Ability to provide significant input at a strategic level for the department and college as a whole.
- Effective ICT skills.
- Excellent people management skills, with the ability to inspire and motivate others and to lead them in the attainment of successful outcomes.
- Able to effectively build relationships with external contacts (specifically employers) and expand existing networks.
- Ability to represent the college and engage with external organisations at a senior level
- Ability to analyse and interpret financial and numerical information.
- Significant experience in a business development environment, with a strong commercial focus.
- Experience of managing multiple stakeholder relationships.
- Experience of successfully leading teams.
- Experience of managing significant budgets.

**Desirable**
- Supporting sector-specific qualifications.
- In-depth knowledge of using CRM systems and ability to extend and develop system use.
- Experience of working in the FE sector.

**Job description: receptionist**

**Location**
World Class College (main campus)

**Reporting to**
Admissions Manager

**Hours**
25 hours per week

**Main purpose of role**
Processing enquiries and bookings for courses and providing general administrative support to the admissions team. Staffing the college reception and ensuring that customers are made to feel welcome.

**Key responsibilities and accountabilities**
- Answering the telephone.
- Responding to email enquiries.
- Opening and distributing mail.
- Greeting visitors to reception and directing them as appropriate.
- Respond to general face-to-face enquiries at reception.
- Providing refreshments for visitors if required.
- Replacing stationery/promotional material as required.
- Processing course bookings.
- General administrative support to the admissions team, eg word processing, photocopying, data entry, etc.
- Assisting with any large mail-outs to students.
- Setting up meetings and book rooms.
- Liaising with tutors and other staff as necessary.

This job description is subject to regular review in consultation with the Admissions Manager. Any other reasonable duties may be requested as required by the Admissions Manager.

*continued*

| Person specification | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Criteria** | **Essential** | **Desirable** | **Method of assessment** |
| **Qualifications/training** | | | |
| • Educated to GCSE level or equivalent, including passes in English and maths | ✗ | | Application form |
| • Training or qualification in customer service | | ✗ | Application form |
| • Training or qualification in IT | | ✗ | Application form |
| **Experience/knowledge** | | | |
| • At least one year's experience of working in a customer-focused environment | ✗ | | Application form and interview |
| • Experience of acting as a first point of contact for the public | ✗ | | Application form and interview |
| • Experience or knowledge of the sector | | ✗ | Application form and interview |
| **Skills and abilities** | | | |
| • Ability to prioritise own workload and have a flexible approach | ✗ | | Interview |
| • Is computer literate and is familiar with applications such as MS Office | ✗ | | Interview (test) |
| • Works effectively as a team member | ✗ | | Interview |
| • Is attentive when being spoken to, asks questions and seeks clarification where necessary | ✗ | | Interview |
| • Has a strong customer focus and communicates effectively with all external and internal contacts | ✗ | | Interview |
| **Additional information** | | | |
| • Would suit a dynamic and energetic individual | | | |
| • Is prepared to wear a uniform | | | |

**Notes**

**Notes**

**Notes**

Here are some tips for writing effective job descriptions.

- **Be as concise as possible.** Although considering individual tasks can be a starting point, roles should be considered in terms of responsibilities rather than individual tasks. For example, refer to 'managing communications with specific employers' rather than the tasks that may be involved in that. This helps to understand what skills are needed to perform this role.
- The job description shouldn't be a lengthy document (it is not an operating manual for how to perform the role). However, some roles will need longer job descriptions, especially smaller organisations that require staff to cover a wider or mixed range of responsibilities. If more detail is required, refer to relevant procedure documentation to ensure that the emphasis remains on the individual's skills/behaviours rather than the minutiae of the role.
- Consider the **level of the role** when writing the job description. Roles can be operational/managerial/strategic and this should be reflected in the job description. Managerial roles should include responsibilities for other staff and strategic roles should highlight the responsibilities of the role at a corporate level. Again, by tailoring the job description according to the level of the role, it stresses what skills are needed.
- Writing a job description is an opportunity to **clarify or revise the responsibilities of a role**. It is worth spending time reflecting on how the role can be most effective.
- Always refer to relevant **employment and discrimination law** when compiling job descriptions.
- **Avoid jargon** and unexplained acronyms and abbreviations.
- The job description is a **live document** that should be reviewed and amended as appropriate. If a new role is created or there is a change in staff or another opportunity to revise the job description, it is worth taking a step back from the operational duties and focusing on the skills and behaviours required in the role. What does your organisation really need from this role? It is easy to fall in to a trap of not updating job descriptions as a role evolves or copying a description from another similar role.
- **Do not recycle** job descriptions from other roles.

## Structuring job descriptions

A job description should begin with a brief summary of the job's purpose. It should be a one-line description that will help individuals understand what the role is about at a glance. It should answer the question: what is the job intended to achieve?

The main section of the job description will cover responsibilities and accountabilities. A useful way to structure this section is to form a statement for each area of responsibility, constructed in two parts. The first part should describe a main activity and include at least one 'action verb', which gives the jobholder's responsibility for the activity. So, it would describe what is done and to what/whom. An example would be: 'Maintain records of all customer contact details and update when required.'

The second half of the statement should describe the purpose or the end result of the specific activity, eg 'to ensure that the organisation has a complete and accurate database including all of its customers.'

Some job descriptions contain a phrase similar to 'and any other duties that the management deem to be appropriate/necessary'. This can be unfair on the employee and lead to a lack of clarity regarding the responsibilities of the role. A more effective option is to state that the job description is subject to review if and when the requirements of the role change. This is a more collaborative approach that should involve the employee wherever possible to make sure that new responsibilities are clearly understood and to assess whether the employee possesses the relevant skills or if there is a need for training.

Without an effective job description, it is not possible for a person to properly commit to, or be held accountable for, a role.

### Resource

Chartered Institute of Personnel Development: www.cipd.co.uk (for good practice job descriptions)

## SMOG test for job descriptions

It is important to consider whether the language used in a job description is appropriate for the type of role. A Level 2 job description is not appropriate for a Level 1 literacy job. The readability of a job description can be tested using the SMOG test (Simplified Measure of Gobbledygook) available online at www.literacytrust.org.uk/campaign/SMOG.html. You simply copy in the text you want to test and it comes back with a SMOG grade against which you can check the educational level of the text. Used as a guidance tool, it can be very helpful.

| SMOG grade | Educational level | Example of writing |
|---|---|---|
| 0–6 | low literate | *Soap Opera Weekly* |
| 7 | junior high school | *True Confessions* |
| 8 | junior high school | *Ladies' Home Journal* |
| 9 | some high school | *Reader's Digest* |
| 10 | some high school | *Newsweek* |
| 11 | some high school | *Sports Illustrated* |
| 12 | high school graduate | *Time magazine* |
| 13–15 | some college | *New York Times* |
| 16 | university degree | *Atlantic Monthly* |
| 17–18 | post-graduate studies | *Harvard Business Review* |
| 19+ | post-graduate degree | *IRS Code* |

**Source:** www.literacytrust.org.uk/campaign/SMOG.html

However, successful reading is about far more than word recognition; it is about style, content, physical presentation, complexity of intellectual engagement required, learner interest, confidence and skill.

### Tips

The language used in job descriptions should:
- avoid jargon and unexplained acronyms and abbreviations
- be matched to the type of job and be readily understood by the employees concerned
- avoid ambiguity about responsibility and be clear about the post-holder's accountability for results and resources.

# The performance management process

Performance management is a holistic strategic process about linking long-term business goals to teams and individuals.

Performance appraisal is one of the tools of performance management, an operational, short- to medium-term activity concerned only with the individual and their performance and development. It is an opportunity for the individual and their manager to engage in a dialogue about the individual's performance, development and the support required from the manager. In addition to discussing past performance, the appraisal should also focus on development and improvement plans and objectives for the future.

CIPD research stresses the importance of a positive relationship between individuals and line managers. Carried out sensitively, the performance appraisal is an important vehicle in developing and maintaining this relationship.

The five key elements of the performance appraisal are:
1   **measurement:** assessing performance against agreed targets and objectives
2   **feedback:** providing information to the individual on their performance and progress
3   **positive reinforcement:** emphasising what has been done well and making only constructive criticism about what might be improved
4   **exchange of views:** a frank exchange of views about what has happened, how individuals can improve their performance, the support they need from their managers to achieve this and their aspirations for their future career
5   **agreement:** jointly coming to an understanding by all parties about what needs to be done to improve performance generally and overcome any issues raised in the course of the discussion.

## Conducting a performance appraisal
Preparation is key.

The appraiser or the person conducting the meeting should:
- consider how well the individual has performed since the last meeting
- consider to what extent any agreed development plans from the last meeting have been implemented
- think about the feedback to be given at the meeting and the evidence that will be used to support it
- review the factors that have affected performance both within and outside the individual's control
- consider the points for discussion and the possible actions that can be taken by both parties to develop or improve performance
- consider possible directions the individual's career might take
- consider possible objectives for the next review period.

The individual or appraisee should:
- consider what they have achieved during the review period, with examples and evidence
- be prepared to give explanations for any objectives that have not been achieved
- think about what they most enjoy about the job and how they might want to develop the role
- be prepared to discuss any aspect of the work in which improvement is required and how this might be achieved
- consider their future learning and development needs with arguments to support their case for specific training
- consider what level of support and guidance they require from their manager
- be prepared to discuss their aspirations for the future both in the current role and in possible future roles
- consider objectives for the next review period.

**Exercise: performance management**

In small groups, discuss how would you manage an employer-facing member of staff who is:

1   not demonstrating the key skills and behaviours?
2   consistently excelling at the key skills and behaviours?

Also consider how these scenarios would be dealt with by your organisation at the moment and how you could improve this.

## Performance improvement plans

Corporate strategic goals provide the starting point for business and departmental goals, followed by agreement on performance and development, leading to the drawing up of plans between individuals and managers.

Performance improvement plans should assign time frames and cover:
- development planning (PDP)
- training (formal and informal)
- mentoring
- coaching
- work shadowing
- secondment.

# Talent management

Talent management is about developing human capital within an organisation to ensure that the current and future needs of the business are met, and that strategy and targets are achieved.

People make a significant difference to an organisation's performance. Developing talent in the workplace not only differentiates organisations as employers of choice, but also stimulates innovation and mitigates operational risk. A talented workforce drives the organisation to achieve its goals and creates capacity for sustainable change. Key elements include:

- recruitment and retention
- learning and development strategies
- people strategy
- identifying/developing the people with high potential
- succession planning.

A talent management approach would include aligning recruitment processes, job descriptions and performance management processes, so that not only will they reflect the key skills and behaviours, but they will also reflect the organisation's focus on talent management.

**❝❞**

Research found that an environment where people can 'do what they do best' was related to lower employee turnover, higher customer satisfaction and higher productivity.
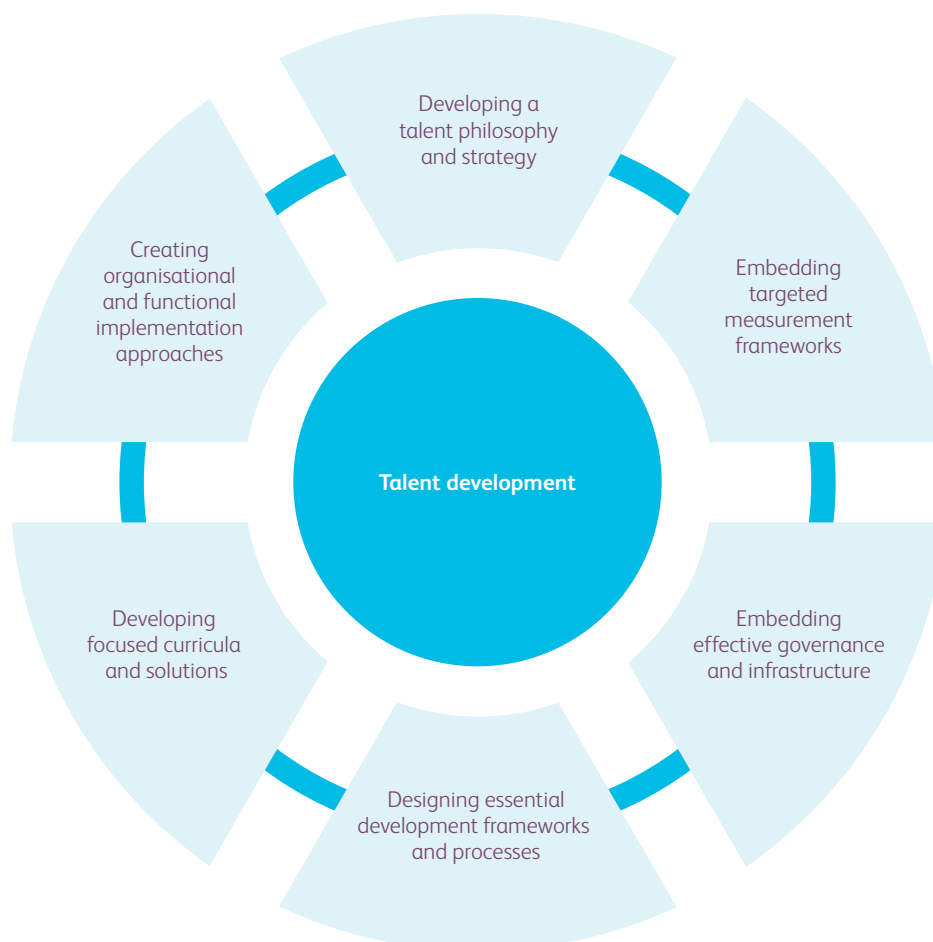
www.trainingzone.co.uk, 'Developing Talent? Build on Strengths', April 2008

To ensure successful talent management, the following need to be carefully considered.

- The line manager's engagement in the process is key.
- An effective talent management programme should include all employees within the organisation.
- Accessibility of development opportunities is critical to enabling sustained improvement in capability.
- Succession planning is straightforward when you understand what your pipeline needs to deliver.
- Individuals should be held accountable for their own development and encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.
- Talent management should recognise the short-, medium- and long-term needs of both the business and the individual.

## Developing a talent management strategy

## A suggested approach to developing a talent management strategy



Talent development

Developing a talent philosophy and strategy

Embedding targeted measurement frameworks

Embedding effective governance and infrastructure

Designing essential development frameworks and processes

Developing focused curricula and solutions

Creating organisational and functional implementation approaches

This approach to implementing a talent management strategy uses a framework with six separate areas of focus. Each area can be addressed at organisational and/or functional level. Each area can be undertaken as a discrete package of work or as part of an integrated, strategic talent management project. Collectively, the six areas deliver an effective talent management end-to-end programme.

There are several tools to support implementation of a talent management strategy, including:
- competency and capability frameworks
- capability audits
- training needs analysis
- structured interviews
- evaluation strategies
- testing and accreditation strategies
- career pathways.

**Integrated Talent Management Study 2008**
IBM and Human Capital Institute collaborated on undertaking research with 1,900 individuals from more than 1,000 public and private organisations around the world. The findings from the research and their impact on human capital are presented in *Integrated Talent Management Study 2008*.

The study found that knowledge and service-intensive industries, such as electronics, technology and professional services firms, are more likely to apply talent management practices, while the public sector significantly lags in such use. The findings add to the growing body of evidence that talent management has a profound impact on an organisation's bottom line.

**❝❞**

Organisations need to treat talent management as a major purchasing decision. You wouldn't go out and build a new manufacturing plant and not maintain it, but that's often what happens with people who are hired. If you can build a business case, and demonstrate return on investment then it should be no problem.

*Integrated Talent Management Study* 2008

## Why is it important in the education sector?

*The Workforce Strategy for the FE Sector in England 2007–2012* has four priorities:

1 Understanding the nature of the workforce
2 Attracting and recruiting the best people
3 Retaining and developing the modern, professionalised workforce
4 Ensuring equality and diversity is at the heart of strategy, policy-making, planning and training.

This strategy sets out how the sector will attract, develop and nurture the workforce, so that it is a force for change.

### Resources

Human Capital Institute: www.humancapitalinstitute.org

LLUK (Lifelong Learning UK) (2007) *The Workforce Strategy for the FE Sector in England 2007–2012*. London: LLUK. Available online at: http://www.lluk.org/documents/ the_workforce_strategy_for_the_further_education_sector_in_england_2007_2012_full_ publication.pdf

### Notes

Outlined below are two case studies of successful talent management in the education sector.

### Case study: Barnfield College

**Actions taken**
- Staff development in all job roles took on greater importance and a more critical approach was taken to linking development needs with desired outcomes.
- The college formed its own internal training department which uses Investors in People, the EFQM Business Excellence Model and criteria from the Further Education National Training Organisation to design people development plans that align with the business plan.
- Management By Walking About (MBWA) is a desirable and essential habit of the management team.

**The results**
- The culture is one of a continuously improving organisation in which every member of staff makes their mark and leaves a positive legacy. Everyone is encouraged and supported to 'take the job the distance'.
- With its reputation for staff development, the college 'grows its own' and is an 'exporter of talent'.
- Support staff have progressed, and students have taken academic and professional qualifications to become qualified as teachers, working at the college and elsewhere.
- The college intranet is used as a valuable tool for communications and learning.
- The entire staff gets together off-site for one day each year, and 35 per cent of the full-time staff have some form of off-site residential development each year.

**Source:** www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

**Case study: Chelmsford College**

**Actions taken**
- Using Investors in People enabled the college to change, improve and align its continuous professional development activities for its people with its business goals.
- In addition, it enabled progress on the five values of the college – high-quality teaching and learning; opportunities for all; supporting the individual; continuing improvement towards excellence; and working with partners and teams.
- The processes and practices that have been refined through working with the standard are now in the college's bloodstream and are shared and understood throughout the workforce.

**The results**
- Recruitment and retention of staff has been enhanced and student targets have all been met.
- The development of teaching, administration and support staff has facilitated career progression, and in some cases the college has supported staff to become qualified teachers.
- It has a reputation for equality and inclusivity and this has been enhanced through creative and effective approaches to the development of its people.

**Source:** www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

## Identifying your high potentials/performers
A talent management strategy which focuses on the skills and behaviours required to be employer responsive can identify high potentials/performers and develop them to meet the needs of the organisation and the individuals.

**High potentials** can be defined as having high expectations and will be more mobile in seeking the role and challenge that will take them forward in their career plans (not necessarily within your organisation).

**High performers** can be defined as less risky, more loyal and therefore less likely to move. They have lower aspirations but will still be excellent in their current role.

**Plan of action**

What are the top three actions I need to carry out back in the organisation?

What are the timescales I need to set myself?

What resources do I need to support me in these actions?

How will I measure the success of these actions?

**Contacts**

Name

Job title

Organisation

Email

Telephone

Name

Job title

Organisation

Email

Telephone

Name

Job title

Organisation

Email

Telephone

Name

Job title

Organisation

Email

Telephone

Notes

# Resources

## Publications

Boyzatis, Richard E. (1982) *The Competent Manager: A Model for Effective Performance*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel Development) (2006) *Talent Management: Understanding the Dimensions*. London: CIPD. Available online at: www.cipd.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6101AA06-F0C7-4073-98DA-758E91C718FC/0/3832Talentmanagement.pdf

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HMSO (Her Majesty's Stationery Office) (2007) *World Class Skills: Implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England*. Norwich: HMSO. Available online at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/uploads/documents/ World % 20Class % 20Skills % 20FINAL.pdf

Lord Leitch (2006) *Leitch Review of Skills: Prosperity for all in the Global Economy, World Class Skills*. London: HMSO. Available online at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/furthereducation/uploads/documents/ 2006-12 % 20LeitchReview1.pdf

York Consulting (2005) *Recruitment and Retention in the Post-16 Learning and Skills Sector*. Research Report 697 undertaken by Philip Wilson, Vicky Hopwood and Matt Antill. Annesley: DfES Publications. Available online at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/RR697.pdf

**Websites**

Chartered Institute of Personnel Development: www.cipd.co.uk

Investors in People: www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

Learning and Skills Council: www.lsc.gov.uk

Learning and Skills Improvement Service: www.lsis.org.uk

Lifelong Learning UK: www.lluk.org

World Class Skills: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/wcs

# Courses

Visit the World Class Skills website for listings of all seminars and workshops within the programme: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/wcs

Courses that may be of special interest are:
- Assessing your level of responsiveness
- Identifying key skills and behaviours for engaging employers
- Legal advice on employment terms and conditions
- Undertaking effective organisational and training needs analysis
- Using HR to support employer responsiveness.

PDFs of all the courses are available to download.

### E-learning
Visit the World Class Skills website for all e-learning courses within the programme: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/wcs

Courses that may be of special interest are:
- Building employer-responsive skills in your organisation
- Targeting SMEs for training.

# Appendices

# Competency-based questions

Here are some examples of competency-based questions.

### Establishing and maintaining a good relationship
**Building rapport**
Q. Please describe a recent example where you had to forge a new customer relationship.
Q. What difficulties did you need to overcome in developing the relationship?
Q. Describe the activities you have undertaken to maintain a relationship with a customer.

**Demonstrating trust and credibility**
Q. In your recent employment history, how have you proactively gained the trust of a customer or your colleagues?

**Effective communication**
Q. What do you believe constitutes effective communication?
Q. Please describe a situation where you had to communicate to a range of different stakeholders.
Q. What challenges did you need to overcome?

### Understanding the employer's needs and business
**Asking effective questions**
Q. What do you believe to be an employer's top three demands from a college/ITP and why?
Q. Describe a situation where you have used effective questioning to uncover a customer's real needs.

**Active listening**
Q. How would you define active listening?
Q. Describe a situation where you have taken on board the views of others even when they conflicted with your originally held views.
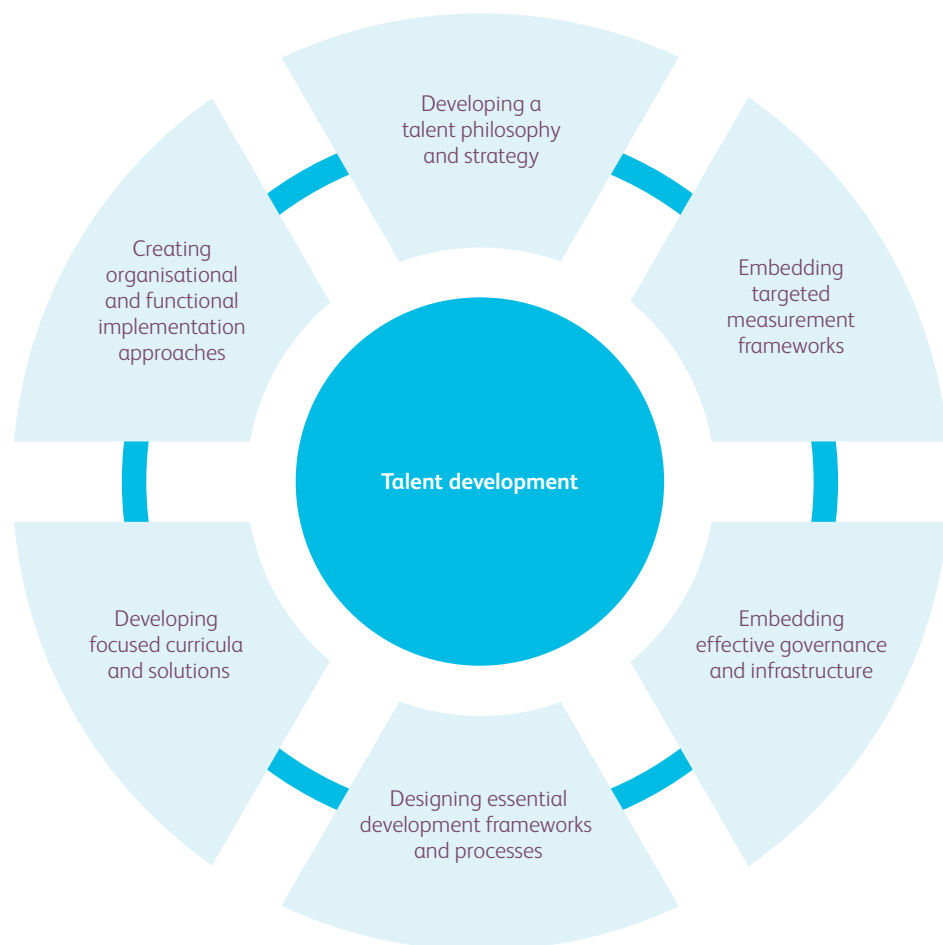
**Handling employer concerns**
Q. Describe a recent situation where you had to deal with the concerns of a customer.

**Being a responsive provider**

**Responding in a timely and succinct manner**

Q. What do you consider to be an appropriate response time to an email?

Q. How do you ensure your responses to customers are succinct?

**Being flexible in style and approach**

Q. Describe a situation where you have had to adapt the way you work to suit a new target audience.

**Demonstrating a can-do attitude**

Q. How have you recently gone beyond the remit of your job role to attain a desired output for your employer?

Q. When you have been unable to meet a customer's needs, how did you provide a response that still added value?

**Notes**

# Talent management strategy: a guide

This approach to implementing a talent management strategy uses a framework with six separate areas of focus. Each area can be addressed at organisational and/ or functional level. Each area can be undertaken as a discrete package of work or as part of an integrated, strategic talent management project. Collectively, the six areas deliver an effective talent management end-to-end programme.

## A suggested approach to developing a talent management strategy



Developing a talent philosophy and strategy

Embedding targeted measurement frameworks

Creating organisational and functional implementation approaches

Talent development

Embedding effective governance and infrastructure

Developing focused curricula and solutions

Designing essential development frameworks and processes

## Developing a talent philosophy and strategy
### What does this mean?
Developing a talent strategy that aligns to your organisation's business goals and aspirations. Recognising market sector challenges and conditions, the organisation's priorities and employees' needs and expectations.

### Why do you need to do this?
A fundamental change in business strategy (eg becoming more employer responsive) will trigger a need to ensure the organisation has and retains or develops the necessary skills and abilities in the right parts of the organisation to deliver the new strategy.

### Benefits
* Confidence that the investment made in employees is focusing on the right areas and reinforcing the organisation's vision and direction.
* Lower but more focused training and development budgets — talent development achieves a greater return on investment with increased value per training hour.

### Tools
* Talent strategy audit
* Capability audit
* Structured interviews

### Deliverables
* Vision statement for talent
* Current organisation capability versus future needs
* Framework for talent development (priorities)
* Business case for investment
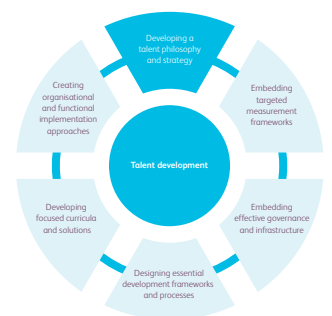
## Embedding targeted measurement frameworks
### What does this mean?
Development of measurement and evaluation frameworks to identify the added value that talent interventions bring to the business, enabling continuous improvement and assuring alignment to business priorities.

### Why do you need to do this?
Providers may wish to demonstrate the value and ROI (return on investment) from talent development initiatives. This can be vital in improving the level of management control over training and development spend, providing transparency to the business and to investors, and understanding where and how to invest future budgets.
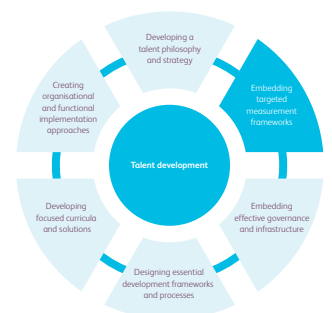
**Benefits**
- Structured and standard benefits-tracking mechanism for short-, medium- and long-term tracking.
- Consistency of measurement across all parts of the organisation gives the ability to compare different parts of the business.
- Visibility of talent-development spend and results.

**Tools**
- Evaluation strategies
- LM system selection
- Talent management responsibility structures

**Deliverables**
- Talent management KPIs and measures which input to key management information.
- Management consensus regarding the value of talent management.
- Targeted management action taken to drive the results which align to business strategy.
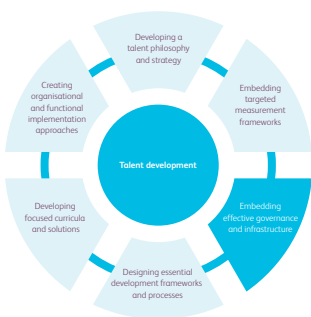


## Embedding effective governance and infrastructure
### What does this mean?
Establish and manage a successful talent management framework which is owned by and embedded in the business. This includes developing leadership for talent management as a strategic issue, defining interfaces with recruitment teams and linking development with key performance processes.

### Why do you need to do this?
This increases your organisation's control over talent management spending, ensuring that spend is correctly targeted and achieves economies of scale. It can be particularly valuable in organisations that need to reduce costs or have just been through a functional transformation or re-structuring.

### Benefits
- Enables your organisation to focus and control spending, reducing the chances of duplication of frameworks, systems and solutions.
- Promotes up-to-date, relevant and coordinated talent solutions, ensuring the talent proposition has clarity, credibility, integrity and transparency.

## Tools
- Talent management responsibility structure
- Activity KPIs
- LM system selection

## Deliverables
- Clear RACI – an organisational model with roles and responsibilities for talent management and managerial/leadership goals
- Talent objectives and action plan
- Management 'control' processes – clear decision-making processes/gateways

## Designing essential development frameworks and processes
### What does this mean?
Designing key processes which can enable continuous capability improvement. These may include core development frameworks, eg competency models and career paths, and integrated development processes such as performance development models and individual development plans.



## Benefits
- Ensures the interventions will deliver the best value from the limited resources available and will be tailored to suit all parts of the organisation, creating an attractive employee proposition.
- Clear talent management processes also clearly communicate consistent expectations of the desired skills.
- Well-designed frameworks make measurement easier, providing an audit of what talent currently exists and what the organisation needs in the future, and a way of tracking whether the gap is shrinking.
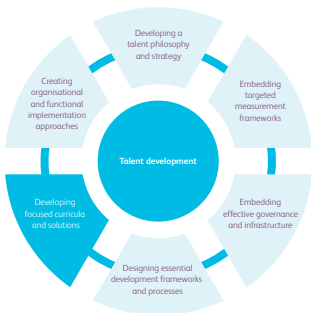
## Tools
- Problem-performance analysis
- Behavioural objectives
- Competency/capability frameworks
- Career pathways
- Structured interviews

## Deliverables
- A set of talent management frameworks and processes
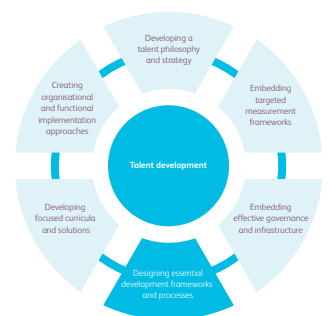
## Developing focused curricula and solutions
### What does this mean?
Creating overarching learning curricula and bespoke interventions such as employer-facing skills programmes. Supporting the implementation and management of programmes into a business-as-usual context.

### Why do you need to do this?
To develop programmes to address the talent needs of the organisation.

### Benefits
- Redesigned interventions translate into increased job performance. This also leads to increased employee engagement as employees can see improvements in skills and on-the-job performance.
- Particularly innovative interventions can also gain external recognition and improve the organisation's external reputation.

### Tools
- Competency/capability frameworks
- Training needs analysis
- Curriculum analysis
- Testing strategies
- Structured interviews

### Deliverables
- Technical training courses and accreditation schemes
- Leadership/interpersonal and professional skills development programmes – assessment/development centres
- Line management support training



## Creating organisational and functional implementation approaches
### What does this mean?
Development of implementation strategies which create engagement and ownership of talent management by individuals and leaders within your business. In doing so, you will see your talent strategy translated into tangible, practical actions that drive performance improvement.

### Why do you need to do this?
This stage translates high-level strategy into action plans, with appropriately resourced timelines that articulate the direction, expected outcomes and deadlines for key parts of the business.

---

## Benefits

- Senior managers have confidence that the talent strategy plans and outputs necessary for business performance are being delivered.
- Regular status reporting against plans creates momentum, management focus and impetus for change while allowing issues and risks to be managed proactively.

## Tools

- Capability analysis and capacity planning
- Delivery channel matrix
- Implementation template

## Deliverables

- Implementation plans
- Status-reporting structure and process
- Risks and issues logs
- Documented responsibilities
- Resourcing profile

## Notes

# The tools

## Capability audit

A capability audit provides a detailed understanding of the current level of knowledge and/or skills across the workforce against a defined set of attributes, and invariably contrasts this with the capability required both now and in the future.

In most cases, the audit will include general, role specific, industry specific and personal knowledge and skills, such as:

- IT literacy (general)
- sales management (role specific)
- engineering (industry specific)
- language (personal).

The output of an audit is a point-in-time assessment of capability at an individual, business unit and organisational level. This helps to inform strategy implementation, change-management transition planning, recruitment planning, training strategies, etc.

## Capability audit tool
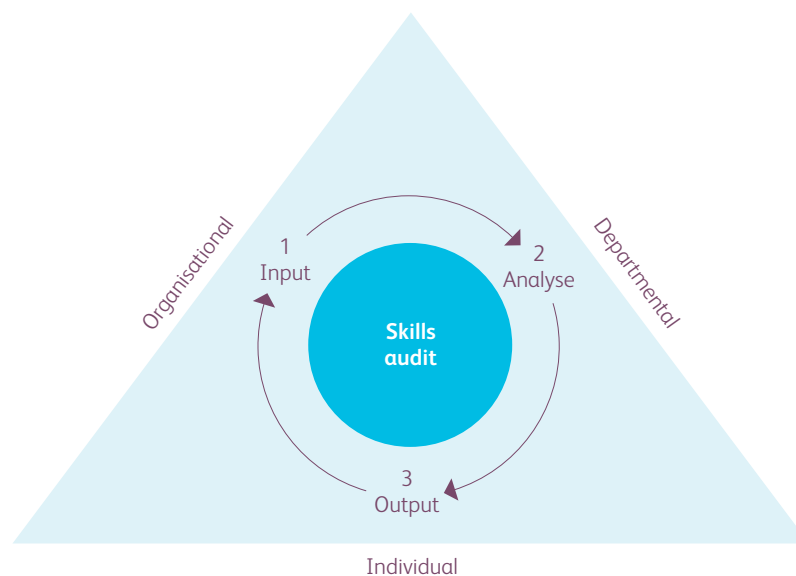
## What are the benefits?

A capability audit helps:

- you to identify/recognise the strengths of the organisation and the significant capability that resides within the workforce, which in turn can help to inform strategy development
- you to identify the key areas of the organisation's core capability requiring development – the 'hot spots' – which will help focus learning and development strategies
- reinforce, for individual employees, the key knowledge and skills required by the organisation and its employers.

## When do I use one?

A capability audit can be used when an organisation is changing their overall business strategy, or as part of an annual process or update, to ensure the skills of their workforce will be fit for the future strategy. Human resources or learning and development (L&D) departments may initiate the process if they feel that the current workforce capability has moved out of alignment with business strategy, or when a major change is being planned.
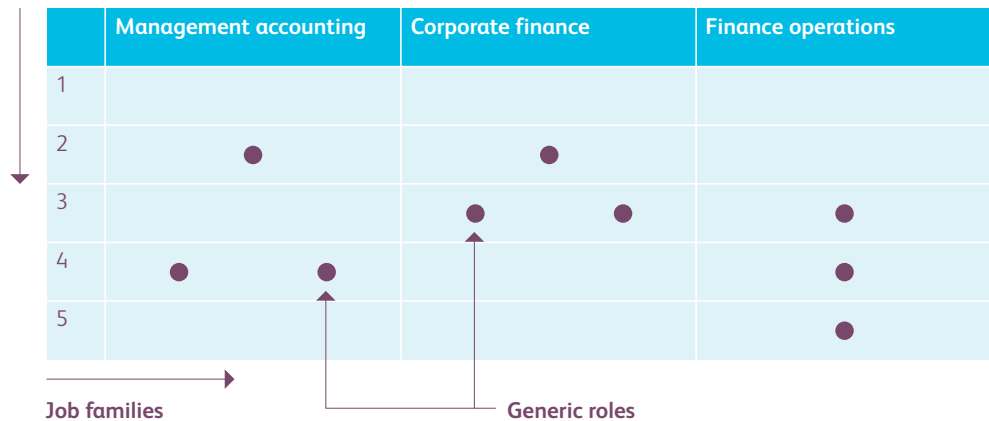
## Career pathways

Career pathways provide an outline of the possible routes through an organisation, function or role. These pathways help individuals to plan their own career progression and understand how an organisation may be able to support them in achieving their own career aspirations.

A career pathway can exist at three levels with varying granularity and formality. Career pathways can be at the:

1 job-family level (outlining the routes through an organisation, usually between well-defined, related job families)
2 role level (providing information about specific roles, including the prerequisite qualifications/criteria, the expected development and potential next moves in the organisation)
3 individual level (identifying examples and case studies of individuals who have moved through an organisation and the different roles, projects and experiences they have gained – this gives an idea of the range and variety of jobs available and to encourage breadth of experience).

## Career pathways tool

**Job Levels**

| | Management accounting | Corporate finance | Finance operations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | ● | ● | |
| 3 | | ● ● | ● |
| 4 | ● ● | | ● |
| 5 | | | ● |

**Job families** → **Generic roles**

### What are the benefits?
It is a tool to aid individuals to understand:
- how they compare to the profile of their current role
- the next potential roles on the route to a desired point
- what skills, knowledge and experience are required to move in to a particular role.

Career paths ensure that progression within the business is aligned to the current and future needs of the business, and can encourage mobility and skills development.

### When do I use one?
Career pathways offer you the ability to ensure that your employees:
- are clear about the routes a career may follow and what skills are needed in the current role and any future options
- understand that careers can be developed laterally as well as vertically
- have clear reasons for performing a particular role
- have a clear understanding of the relationships between roles in differing job families.

## Competency/capability framework
A competency/capability framework is a document that defines the core skills and capabilities an organisation considers critical for the successful performance of a job role. Ideally, these should be the skills and capabilities that will lead to improved performance rather than those basic skills all are expected to have.

Competency definitions should be based on clearly visible and observable behaviours in the workplace, and are normally developed into tiers (eg basic, competent, expert) or scales, either to distinguish between competence levels or set out expectations at different grades.

Organisations may also have different competency frameworks for different parts of their organisation, eg specialists versus generalists, leaders versus managers, etc.

### What are the benefits?
A competency framework provides a mechanism for communicating consistent expectations of what an organisation expects and requires, as well as enabling individuals to benchmark theirs and others' performance.

Competency frameworks can be used to support performance management, leadership development, individual development needs, talent segmentation and succession planning as well as recruitment of talent.

### When do I use one?
A competency framework helps you to establish what skills you need and compare this against what skills you have. This enables you to see where the 'gaps' are and put in place plans to address them.

Competency frameworks help organisations to articulate their different expectations of behaviours and skills when they change their vision or strategy, or need to respond to external conditions, eg regulatory requirements.

### Evaluation strategies
Evaluation strategies are methods of capturing and assessing information that enables a business to understand the effectiveness of talent management activities. These can demonstrate the success of the interventions and strategies according to hard financial measures as well as the qualitative improvement they have made.

Examples include: evaluating the strength of succession capacity, evaluating the engagement and motivation in talent, assessing training and development interventions, and assessing the strategic alignment of capabilities present in the organisation.

These methods of evaluating talent management should be integrated into current performance measures, such as performance management, recruitment, retention, diversity and development processes.

> **Example: commercial awareness and business mastery**
>
> **Level 1**
> - Demonstrates a broad understanding of the organisation, its products, competitors and the market places in which the organisation operates.
> - Demonstrates a working knowledge of the organisation's products and services.
> - Maintains an awareness of the finance organisation's key internal customers.
>
> **Level 5**
> - Demonstrates a thorough knowledge of the organisation's products and markets.
> - Demonstrates significant exposure in several critical business areas, supporting the adoption of best practice to keep ahead of the competition.
> - Anticipates financial risks and requirements of the organisation resulting from industry and environmental change.

**What are the benefits?**

As organisations strive for competitive advantage, there is increasing investment into talent management activities, which are seen as critical success factors. These investments that companies make to acquire, develop and retain talent can be high in terms of both time and money. It is therefore essential that there are measurable returns on this investment and that any improvements made demonstrate a real competitive edge/future proofing for the business.

Evaluation, tracking and measurement of talent-management strategies and interventions will enable the continuous refinement of these strategies and, in turn, create the flexibility needed to meet the ever-changing influences on businesses.

Prioritising spend and activities undertaken can be accurately determined through adopting evaluation strategies.

## When do I use one?

In order to determine the effectiveness of newly implemented talent management strategies or interventions, it is essential to have in place the baseline measures and the methods of evaluating the strategy/intervention prior to commencing any activities. In addition, it is essential to regularly assess the effectiveness of talent management practices in delivering objectives of talent acquisition, deployment and retention.

All interventions implemented and strategies adopted should be assessed against their original objective and the extent to which they are supporting/driving the strategic objective of the organisation/unit.

## Structured interview

A structured interview is a tool used to elicit information on a particular topic or set of topics from a number of individuals, in an organised and consistent manner, using a series of pre-defined questions.

As well as a source of information, interviews also act as a mechanism to engage key stakeholders within an organisation. They can be seen by the interviewee as a chance to share or give opinions, as well as to ask questions about the intended changes or direction of talent management.

It is likely that structured interviews will be used early on in the process, to glean opinions of key stakeholders and understand the context of the business. They may also be used later on if more information needs to be collected, eg to build a function-specific competency framework or to undertake a training needs analysis.

## What are the benefits?

The key objectives of structured interviews are to:
- collect facts, figures and data currently unavailable
- glean feedback, ideas and opinions into particular topics
- in a consistent and comparable way, build up a robust picture of an organisational issue or series of topics, enabling conclusions to be drawn based on the interview findings.

## When do I use one?

Good structured interviews help you in two key ways.

1  They provide a source of insight into an organisational topic or issue and can be used to uncover issues or provide details previously unavailable to the organisation or managers.
2  They act as a stakeholder-engagement tool, providing two-way communication with a select number of individuals.

Fundamentally, an organisation's understanding of an issue depends on how effectively the interviews have been undertaken. If the right questions are asked in a situation where rapport has been built, previously unknown views and information can be collected, which can alter the direction or strategy taken.

## Testing and accreditation strategies

A testing strategy outlines the purpose, approach and methodology for ensuring that knowledge and skills have been learnt or retained by participants in any learning and development intervention. A testing strategy can be knowledge based or skills based. This means that the test can be question based (for knowledge) or observation based (for skills/behaviours), eg a driving test or an assessment centre.

A detailed testing strategy should consider the following.

- Test format: will the test be a series of questions, a simulation or real-life observation?
- Test structure and framework: what will the test cover; how long will it be?
- Target audiences: will different participants need different questions or capabilities?
- Scoring strategy: how will the test be marked; is there is a pass/fail mark and remedial training strategy for failures?
- Approach to management information: how will information about participants and successes/failures be captured?
- Integrity: who will own the questions; where will they be stored?

## Testing and accreditation strategies

| Proposed training module | Test format | Number of test questions (total) | Size of question bank | Estimated test time | Required standard |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CBT/paper module 1 | Test completed at end of module 1 | 5 question test | 10 | Up to 5 mins | 80% |
| CBT/paper module 2 | Test completed at end of module 2 | 10 question test | 20 | Up to 10 mins | 90% |
| CBT/paper module 3 | Test completed at end of module 3 | 15 question test | 30 | Up to 15 mins | 90% |

### What are the benefits?

A testing strategy:
- provides evidence that training has been completed and understood by all relevant staff
- provides information on how knowledge and skills are being retained over time (if testing is repeated)

- assures an organisation that individuals have the capability to deliver a required level of performance
- identifies further areas of re-enforcement or repeat training that are needed or required
- provides evidence, if needed, for regulatory bodies where necessary.

**When do I use one?**

Testing strategies are used for three main reasons.

1  As part of the training/L&D solution evaluation to understand the effectiveness of the intervention.
2  As part of an accreditation process to assure the level and competency of an organisation's individuals, eg the sales force needs to meet a minimum required standard.
3  It provides evidence to regulatory bodies that training and competence issues have been addressed, and populations have received and understood compliance issues.

### Training needs analysis (TNA)

TNA sets out to answer two fundamental questions:
1  Is there currently a problem with individual performance?
2  Can training be of help to correct this problem?

TNA is used to gain a deeper understanding of the issue, what learning and development solutions have been tried before (if any), and what might be the most suitable L&D solution to resolve the issue.

TNA should look at whether the problem or solution may be driven by one or a number of strategic drivers:

- **Strategic needs.** Has the organisation changed its strategy recently? Are people aware of the new strategy and its implications for their roles? Are they effectively equipped with the right skills and knowledge to support the new strategy?
- **Operational needs.** Is the organisation currently underperforming or putting itself at risk? What are the causes of this – lack of knowledge of key regulatory requirements, insufficient skills levels to deliver or inappropriate L&D solutions?
- **Individual needs.** Do people feel that they have the opportunity to achieve their own aspirations and that they have the motivation and opportunity to perform at their best?

## Training needs analysis (TNA)
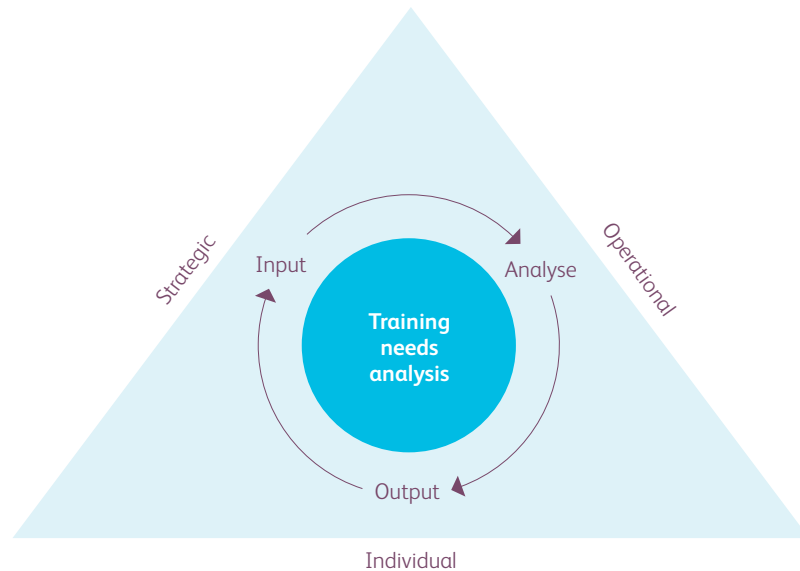


### What are the benefits?
Training needs analysis:
- enables effective planning of cost-effective training that delivers improvements in performance
- ensures the design of effective learning solutions that are aligned with strategic business objectives
- creates and sustains a competent, skilled and agile workforce that can deliver and achieve business targets
- forms part of an effective retention strategy by providing employees with relevant learning opportunities that allow them to achieve personal career goals.

### When do I use one?
TNA can be used when there has been:
- misdiagnosis of the need for training (eg irrelevant or ineffective training solutions have been developed previously)
- a failure to predetermine outcomes relevant to the business needs of the organisation
- a failure to focus on the future of the organisation rather than the 'here and now' (and when training content has become obsolete/outdated)
- a failure to consider all three layers of training need (training effects individual-level training needs but does not impact on organisational-level needs).

# Candidate assessment form

| **Candidate** | | | **Vacancy no** | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Vacancy title** | | | **Department** | | |
| **Interview type** | First | Second | Third | Presentation | Other |

**General summary**

Overall comments and reasons for decision or areas to probe further

Indicate the rating by circling the number that reflects your assessment of the candidate's performance

**5**   Excellent demonstration of skills and behaviours required for the role

**4**   Very good demonstration of skills and behaviours required for the role

**3**   Good demonstration of skills and behaviours required for the role

**2**   Marginal demonstration of skills and behaviours required for the role

**1**   Poor demonstration of skills and behaviours required for the role

**Recommendation**

| Reject | Offer | Further information required |
|---|---|---|

| Name of interviewer | Date of interview |
|---|---|

**Job expectations and career plans**

Reasons for leaving; reasons for joining; career plans

Current salary and benefits and sought salary/notice period

Work permit required (if yes, please specify):

| Skills and behaviours evidence – positive and negative indicators (select three to five skills and behaviours as appropriate) | Rating |
|---|---|

**Establishing and maintaining a good relationship**

**Building rapport:** Works in a cooperative, respectful manner with colleagues, customers and the wider community. Balances a focus upon tasks with a consideration for people. Encourages teamwork and promotes respect for and understanding of different background, opinions of others, and work/life balance issues.

Positive

Negative

**Demonstrating trust and credibility:** Ensures a feeling of trust when engaging with a client. Makes sure that what is communicated is credible and not merely paying lip service.

Positive

Negative

**Effective communication:** Communicates effectively and efficiently making sure that key information and 'the message' come across at all times.

Positive

Negative

| | Rating |
|---|---|

**Understanding the employer's needs and business**

**Asking effective questions:** Asks questions at the appropriate time and follows up with additional questions when not getting a desired response.

Positive

Negative

**Active listening:** Listens for key information when dealing with customers and ensures the customer feels understood.

Positive

Negative

**Handling employer concerns:** Analyses problems, identifies core issues, investigates, evaluates and integrates information. Generates appropriate solutions to solve problems or issues.

Positive

Negative

**Being a responsive provider**

**Responding in a timely and succinct manner:** Respond to queries in a timely and efficient way and does not necessitate a chasing follow-up call from a customer.

Positive

Negative

| | Rating |
|---|---|
| | |

**Being flexible in style and approach:** Consistently demonstrates flexibility in both style and approach (eg recommending appropriate alternatives when a training solution cannot be provided, and tailors the training solutions to the employer rather than providing off-the-shelf packages).

Positive

Negative

**Demonstrating a can-do attitude:** Monitors and upholds high quality of service and products to customers (both internal and external). Manages time, plans and organises work tasks, monitors progress and meets deadlines. Manages multiple properties.

Positive

Negative

**Technical knowledge**

# Job description template

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Job title** | | **Grade** | |
| **Department** | | **Reports to** | |
| **Location** | | **Hours per week** | |

**Job profile**    One sentence that encompasses what the role is about and what it is intended to achieve

**Key responsibilities and accountabilities**

A useful way to structure this section is to form a statement for each responsibility that is constructed in two parts.

1   The first part should describe a main activity and include at least one 'action verb', which gives the jobholder's responsibility for the activity, ie describing what is done and to what/whom.

2   The second part of the statement should describe purpose or the end result of the job.

For example: 'Maintain records of all customer contact details and update when required to ensure that the organisation has a complete and accurate database including all of its customers.'

# Person specification template

| Criteria | Essential | Desirable | Method of assessment (eg interview, application form) |
|---|---|---|---|
| To include skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications, etc. | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

### Information on competency framework

| | |
|---|---|
| **Competency 1** | Only applicable to organisations with competency frameworks in place. |
| | Provide details of the required behaviours to demonstrate each competency at the level indicated (from framework). |
| **Required level** | Indicate what the required competency level is for the role. |

### Additional information

To include any special circumstances or information that does not form part of the above sections. Can include 'the job description is subject to review if and when the requirements of the role should change'.

# World Class