



Competencies for Success
City of Victoria

Exempt Staff Competency Framework

August 2009

COMPETENCIES

A competency is the term used to describe a cluster of related knowledge, skills, and attributes that a person can develop. Competencies identified in this model are common to all exempt staff positions and contribute to successful job execution and drive high performance at the City of Victoria.

Competencies are typically expressed in terms of visible on-the-job behaviours. Competencies can usually be developed by participating in learning events and through planned performance coaching or mentoring by others who hold the competency. Self directed learning efforts can also result in competency development - for example, independently individuals can create a learning plan of self initiating development activities they will experience and apply.

Competency models can provide valued information that can be used in PPR goal setting and PPR feedback discussions. The competency descriptions with the job description are useful tools to support successful performance.

The City of Victoria has created an organizational competency model to help signal to all staff what are desired attributes and skills we need more of. Competency models as they are created with the future in mind are reviewed and revised periodically. The competencies described, when actioned consistently, support the creation of a knowledgeable, engaged and productive workforce.

A job description may also have a few specific technical competencies unique to the profession, role or department. Technical competencies specific to the job role will be described in the specific job description.

APPLICATION OF THE MODEL

Competency models support corporate HR process that support Staff Excellence. Competency information will be used at the City of Victoria to:

- Supplement exempt job descriptions
- Inform the recruitment and selection process
- Guide the corporate learning and development multi year curriculum

An additional goal of the Competency model is to assist all staff as they take ownership for their own development. Competency model are valuable career planning tools as they can help describe attributes valued by the City. Competency models can break down barriers between departments as they demonstrate some of the common requirements of various exempt staff job clusters.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

The framework is a valuable tool which will be used by Exempt staff in PPR discussions. The framework is not meant to describe all key steps required to perform certain functions or tasks rather identifies some of the behaviours that, if present consistently, can lead to high performance.

SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF VICTORIA STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The competencies support the strategic direction of the City of Victoria, including how exempt staff can action the corporate values of Accountability, Honesty, Caring and Respect.

The City of Victoria Corporate Strategic Plan 2007 – 2009, includes a focus on Service and Staff Excellence. The development and resulting use by management of a competency model will support the achievement of key objectives and strategies in support of Staff Excellence including:

Objective	Strategy	Competency Model role
An innovative, responsive, diverse and highly performing workforce is sustained	Review organizational processes to optimize efficiencies	Competency models can help modernize various HR organizational processes resulting in efficiency
Staff are properly equipped to maximize productivity	Fully implement the PPR process	Competency models are a tool valued by Managers when they enact the PPR process
Staff are supported to be creative, flexible and empowered to take new approaches	Enhance employee development and training programs	Competency modeling will help identify priorities to be included in the Learning and Development curriculum. Self development resources will be linked to support self initiated development
Staff and Council act with integrity consistent with the corporate values	Communicate and encourage values-based behaviours in external service delivery and internal interactions	Competency model helps describe values based behaviours desired by the City

The development of a competency model was identified as an HR priority, is considered an industry best practice and was a key recommendation from the Workforce Planning Strategy – July 2008.

COMPETENCIES – OVERVIEW

There are eight competencies included the City of Victoria exempt framework. The competencies included (Strategic Focus, Internal Communication, Change and Continuous Improvement, Developing Self and Others, Fostering Relationships and Teamwork, Self Awareness and Effectiveness, Service Excellence, Achieving Results) support a focus on key areas of Direction, Results, People and Self.

The descriptions of the various competencies can be found beginning on page 8.



DESIGN

Each competency includes a summary statement which helps describe the intent of the competency. The definition statement is supported by a number of key behavioural statements that are categorized into three or four progressive proficiency levels. The behaviours identified do not represent all possible behaviours or steps required to display the competency. The model has five or six key behavioural statements chosen to describe each level. These key behavioural statements when present consistently suggest an individual is performing at a particular competency level.

For example:

Competency Title		Definition Statement	
Self Awareness and Effectiveness		<i>Demonstrates self awareness and implements strategies that result in maintained or increased personal effectiveness. Recognizes that how they show up at work is part of their leadership approach and style. Takes account of, and accepts responsibility for, the impact of own decisions and actions on others. Walks the talk by linking their actions to their beliefs and by seeking additional awareness and development of own attributes as a leader.</i>	
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
1.1 Inspires others through own positive attitude and energy 1.2 Builds trust by being honest, reliable, and consistent	Proficiency Level linked to a group of positions Group of behavioural statements that describes the competency at the associated level		

PROFICIENCY LEVELS

The behaviours across the various proficiency levels of each competency are generally cumulative. It is presumed that a person in a position requiring Level 2 behaviour would need to be capable of Level 1 behaviours prior to being able to action Level 2 behaviours. Following this approach, a person in a position requiring a Level 4 behaviour also is capable of Level 1, 2 and 3 behaviours.

The proficiency levels represent increasing degrees of complexity and sophistication of behaviour. Higher behaviour levels tend to have a greater scope of impact. Best practice research suggests it can take significant effort, a minimum of a concentrated six months to a two year effort, to master a particular competency level.

The desired level for various groups of exempt staff is listed in the following table:

Proficiency Levels (note highest level only shown)	Exempt Staff	Managers	Assistant Directors	Directors
Competency Focus: Direction				
Strategic Focus	1	3	3	4
Change and Continuous Improvement	1	2	3	4
Internal Communication	1 or 2	3	3	4
Competency Focus: Results				
Achieving Results	1	2	3	4
Service Excellence	2	3	3	4
Competency Focus: People				
Developing Self and Others	1	3	4	4
Fostering Relationships and Teamwork across the City	2	3	3	4
Competency Focus: Self				
Self Awareness and Effectiveness	1	3	4	4

Internal Communication - target level for other exempt staff may vary dependent upon job role

Strategic Focus

Demonstrates a positive attitude towards the City, our Direction and our Future. Expresses commitment to the future by aligning own actions and initiatives with organizational direction and priorities. Cultivates an environment in which the sharing of the short, medium and long term City direction, related business plans and associated impact on all employees is the norm.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
1.1 Actively participates in planning activities	2.1 Actively participates in strategic and operational planning activities, including cross departmental planning	3.1 Uses strategic and business plans in support of effective, timely decision making	4.1 Takes a future perspective when leading and managing in the present
1.2 Demonstrates an understanding of the City's long term vision	2.2 Translates or links plans into goals, objectives and section-specific activities and individual actions	3.2 Demonstrates commitment to agreed-upon corporate and council decisions, even those that are contentious (e.g. builds others understanding of corporate and council decisions)	4.2 Clearly communicates the City administration's long term direction to staff
1.3 Links own work efforts to the City and department's direction	2.3 Actively works towards future objectives	3.3 Champions cross departmental and corporate initiatives and strategies	4.3 Champions an integrated corporate business plan that is aligned to the City's strategic direction
1.4 Expresses curiosity in order to keep current on emerging issues that may affect strategic direction	2.4 Makes decisions based on what is best for the City not just for the department or section	3.4 Manages the impact of strategic initiatives across departments	4.4 Places emphasis and focus on key priorities
1.5 Supports cross departmental collaboration on corporate and council priorities	2.5 Builds support for the City's strategic plan	3.5 Develops contingency plans in advance of identified problems and opportunities	4.5 Effectively balances planning efforts with implementation activities
1.6 Willingly recognizes others' key corporate achievements	2.6 Effectively matches work expectations to available resources	3.6 Takes a regional view on municipal issues	4.6 Defers, eliminates or adapts initiatives in response to changing circumstances

Change and Continuous Improvement

Actively promotes appropriate change to meet the City goals and objectives. Measures organizational capacity and willingly promotes or embraces improvement and change when in the organization’s long-term interest. Supports others in appreciating the need for change and in adapting to change while remaining effective. Leads staff through change and transition and takes every opportunity to communicate the change vision. Strives for excellence and models a continuous improvement approach.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
1.1 Demonstrates an awareness of own reactions to change	2.1 Supports staff as they deal with change (e.g.: listening, coaching, supporting increased staff education on navigating change)	3.1 Supports change alternatives (e.g. creates scenarios, budgets, plans)	4.1 Inspires others to effect the desired change
1.2 Adjusts own approach to support new opportunities and changes	2.2 Enlists staff input when creating change strategies and when implementing change	3.2 Creates change plans that include internal communication strategies	4.2 Takes accountability for results of change initiatives
1.3 Implements personal strategies to deal effectively with change	2.3 Translates change strategies into practical plans, processes and timeframes	3.3 Coaches others as they translate change strategies into new service areas or work processes	4.3 Makes appropriate sacrifices when supporting difficult corporate change and transition
1.4 Shares factual information on changes from recognized sources or change sponsors	2.4 As changes occur, clearly communicates what will and will no longer be done	3.4 Supports change efforts by providing appropriate resources	4.4 Ensures that all members of the organization have information regarding corporate changes
1.5 Makes suggestions for improvements by asking “ why not” versus” why”	2.5 Takes calculated risks	3.5 Champions the adoption of new ideas and approaches	4.5 Provides guidance on the tolerance for risk within the organization
1.6 Adopts a continuous improvement approach by seeking opportunities for incremental improvement	2.6 Recognizes employees during the change process	3.6 Advocates for calculated risk taking	4.6 Assesses if change is the appropriate strategy to address issues

Internal Communication

Creates an atmosphere where information flows smoothly upwards, downwards and between departments in the City. Recognizes the importance of communication in building positive relationships and models effective two-way communication with others. Openly shares information in a timely fashion and keeps people informed “along the way”. Accepts personal accountability for communication and strives to be both understood and to understand others.

Level 1

- 1.1 Demonstrates an understanding that communication is a key part of their job
- 1.2 Demonstrates tact and diplomacy when communicating with others
- 1.3 Communicates in a respectful, clear and timely fashion
- 1.4 Encourages open and honest communication by expressing genuine interest in others
- 1.5 Attentively listens to ensure full understanding
- 1.6 Goes to the source for information, does not listen to rumors or speculate

Level 2

- 2.1 Takes responsibility to ensure all staff receive consistent messages
- 2.2 Shares information freely to help others make decisions and take action
- 2.3 Provides ongoing communication in addition to what is communicated at the start or end of a project or initiative
- 2.4 Adjusts the message for the target audience
- 2.5 Engages in two-way communication to build shared meaning and understanding

Level 3

- 3.1 Coaches staff to improve their communication skills
- 3.2 Creates opportunities to communicate by identifying key information to share with staff
- 3.3 Uses communication methods that encourage involvement and two-way dialogue (e.g. open space, stand-ups)
- 3.4 Identifies when proactive corporate internal communication is needed
- 3.5 Shares standard corporate communication messages

Level 4

- 4.1 Builds a culture that supports open and timely communication
- 4.2 Creates effective internal corporate communication messages
- 4.3 Sponsors corporate communication forums
- 4.4 Encourages department staff gatherings/meetings to enhance communication
- 4.5 Actively participates in communication events – (e.g.: all staff events, panel discussions and Q&A to support two-way communication)

Achieving Results

Demonstrates initiative and resourcefulness to achieve desired goals and objectives. Strives for excellence and creates clarity around expected standards and results. Delivers expected results in a timely manner. Monitors results and assesses progress to enhance future planning and resource utilization.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
1.1 Takes action to achieve results based on established goals and objectives	2.1 Communicates expected standards and results for the work unit	3.1 Ensures division standards and criteria support corporate and council goals	4.1 Sets organizational standards and criteria for measuring success (i.e. measures, targets)
1.2 Collaborates with others to determine how best to achieve results	2.2 Builds commitment to achieve desired results	3.2 Holds others and self accountable for expected standards of performance	4.2 Regularly uses results to assess progress towards objectives and modifies strategies as required
1.3 Holds self accountable to achieve desired results	2.3 Supports staff in meeting goals and objectives	3.3 Ensures clarity around roles, responsibilities and delegation of authority	4.3 Fosters an environment where people feel personally committed to achieve results
1.4 Evaluates results against goals and objectives	2.4 Addresses performance shortfalls openly and directly	3.4 Uses evidence-based approach to achieve desired results	4.4 Establishes corporate standards for the recognition of successful and high performance
1.5 Addresses barriers that may influence the achievement of results	2.5 Demonstrates a drive to execute by working along side staff to get the job done	3.5 Achieves desired results by focusing on key priorities	4.5 Sets a climate where individual, team and corporate achievement of results is celebrated
1.6 Provides feedback on results to internal and external stakeholders	2.6 Manages resources to achieve expected results	3.6 Allocates appropriate resources to achieve desired results	4.6 Advocates a focus on assessing capacity prior to launching new initiatives

Service Excellence

Focuses on providing service excellence and building positive relationships with internal and external customers/clients and external service partners. Demonstrates a professional service approach that contributes to effective customer relationships and engaged citizens. Serves the public interest by focusing effort on meeting key public need through the development and implementation of City services that support the mandate and direction of the City of Victoria.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
1.1 Recognizes that we are in public service and have relationships with service users, service partners and taxpayers	2.1 Keeps clients and external service partners informed about the progress of various service initiatives and programs	3.1 Effectively balances the ability to act in the interest of the public while meeting municipal responsibilities	4.1 Advocates for customer needs (internal and external)
1.2 Demonstrates a professional public service approach by treating all clients with respect regardless of their personal circumstances	2.2 Adopts best practices in support of service excellence	3.2 Improves relationships with key clients and external service partners to strengthen service delivery	4.2 Establishes service quality standards
1.3 Takes personal responsibility for customer service quality	2.3 Actively seeks to improve service quality (e.g.: take a process approach to service delivery)	3.3 Makes self available to the public, other clients or service partners	4.3 Identifies potential impacts of corporate and council decisions on service levels and service partners
1.4 Delivers core services in a friendly and responsive manner	2.4 Seeks client and/or external service partner feedback to improve services	3.4 Manages service expectations through workload planning and resource allocation	4.4 Provides organizational support to enable key customer service improvements (e.g.: resources, structure)
1.5 Follows through on public and staff inquiries	2.5 Develops a service excellence approach in others	3.5 Streamlines internal corporate or cross dept procedures	4.5 Initiates corporate-wide responses when responding to key customer service requirements
	2.6 Identifies duplication of services between departments or divisions	3.6 Recommends policy changes to enhance service excellence	4.6 Strengthens corporate supports to effectively serve internal customers (e.g. : systems, supply management, corporate administration processes, planning, HR)

Developing Self and Others

Demonstrates and fosters continuous learning in others and in self. Values and treats others in a way that creates the workplace relationships that are conducive to coaching. Is seen as a people developer and believes that their own success comes through the growth and development of others. Strives to help create a learning culture at the City of Victoria.

Level 1

- 1.1 Demonstrates commitment to continuous self- improvement (e.g.: seeks developmental feedback, attends learning events)
- 1.2 Acknowledges own strengths as well as areas for improvement
- 1.3 Enlists others' support by sharing their own key learning goals as well as key learnings from training events
- 1.4 Applies learning to the job to enable mastery
- 1.5 Proactively shares experience with others to support knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer
- 1.6 Considers mistakes as opportunities for learning, shares own mistakes and encourages others to learn from the experience

Level 2/3

- 2.1 Promotes application and sharing of learning in the workplace
- 2.2 Uses a coaching approach to develop others
- 2.3 Provides development support to staff as they look for new challenges
- 2.4 Provides constructive performance improvement feedback
- 2.5 Recommends staff for learning and development opportunities
- 2.6 Seeks feedback regarding own capacity and capability to develop others

Level 4

- 3.1 Champions continuous learning through involvement and sponsorship of corporate learning and development initiatives (e.g.: knowledge transfer strategies, corporate learning curriculum, succession planning)
- 3.2 Inspires others to reach their highest potential
- 3.3 Furthers own learning by mentoring future leaders
- 3.4 Identifies future staff development priorities based on the City's strategic plan
- 3.5 Communicates the City requirements for staff development
- 3.6 Provides resources to support ongoing corporate learning and development

Fostering Relationships and Teamwork across the City

Promotes a city wide culture of inclusion and respect by fostering effective working relationships and encouraging effective cross department teams. Encourages departments to work co-operatively versus competitively, with staff recognizing each other as colleagues. Takes personal accountability to foster relationship and teamwork across the City.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
1.1 Speaks of fellow staff and other departments in a respectful way	2.1 Expresses positive expectations of others in terms of their abilities and expected contributions	3.1 Manages group dynamics to enhance overall team performance	4.1 Promotes a “one city” culture and team
1.2 Demonstrates knowledge of who to involve, and/or refer to, when responding to others	2.2 Balances the interests of one’s own group with the interests of the organization	3.2 Aligns unique attributes and purpose of individual teams with the organization	4.2 Creates opportunities for cross department collaboration to result in increased City effectiveness (e.g. process integration, common practices, cross training)
1.3 Collaborates with others to realize the best outcomes	2.3 Facilitates the use of cross functional teams and work groups	3.3 Looks for ways to increase departmental and/or divisional interactions to develop effective working relationships	4.3 Proactively shares information with other departments to support collaborate decision making
1.4 Actively seeks to resolve conflict	2.4 Works to resolve barriers that impede cross-work unit collaboration	3.4 Fully utilizes the diversity of team members to achieve success	4.4 Takes ownership to help resolve corporate issues and challenges
1.5 Supports team decisions regardless of personal viewpoint	2.5 Solicits others’ input for decision making	3.5 Volunteers resources and/or staff members in support of team or corporate objectives	4.5 Stands behind corporate and council decisions regardless of department interests
1.6 Celebrates own and others’ achievements equally	2.6 Encourages the expression of various points of view		

Self Awareness and Effectiveness

Demonstrates self awareness and implements strategies that result in maintained or increased personal effectiveness. Recognizes that how they show up at work is part of their leadership approach and style. Takes account of, and accepts responsibility for, the impact of own decisions and actions on others. Walks the talk by linking their actions to their beliefs and by seeking additional awareness and development of own attributes as a leader.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
1.1 Inspires others through own positive attitude and energy	2.1 Addresses behaviours that contravene the City's core values and policies	3.1 Modifies leadership style to meet evolving workplace requirements	4.1 Shares how their own personal values influence their behaviour and their expectations of others
1.2 Builds trust by being honest, reliable, and consistent	2.2 Addresses work issues as they emerge, focusing on the situation, issue or behaviour when communicating with others	3.2 Makes principled and ethical decisions, even if they are sensitive or controversial	4.2 Provides support to improve the self awareness and effectiveness of others
1.3 Treats others with respect and consideration	2.3 Accepts criticism/critique of ideas and decisions as part of the culture of improvement desired for the City	3.3 Monitors others during challenging and demanding situations, providing additional support when necessary	4.3 Applies an understanding of power, influence and relationships inside and outside the City
1.4 Demonstrates appropriate work/life balance that ensures long term engagement and contribution	2.4 Fulfills commitments, even under difficult or challenging circumstances (e.g.: when taking on activities or projects that are difficult or unpopular)	3.4 Supports others in maintaining individual health and well-being	4.4 Demonstrates that awareness of self, with a focus on self leadership, is required prior to leading others
1.5 Acts to maintain or build the self-assurance and confidence of others	2.5 Takes action to improve own leadership effectiveness	3.5 Coaches others in giving and receiving feedback	
1.6 Assesses the impact of own behaviour on others			