



# How to Get Started with Competency Management

## Part 2 – Getting Your Workforce on Board

Competency management is at the heart of workforce optimization and long-term success – **IF** your employees are on board. When competency management programs struggle to get off the ground or maintain their momentum, it's often because employees aren't fully participating.

If you've decided that competency management is right for your organization, but you don't know where to start, [read Part One](#). If you've initiated a competency management program but are struggling to get buy-in from your workforce, here are a few tips for getting them on board for building a competency-based organization.

**1 Include Employees in the Planning Process.** People are more likely to support projects they help to create. You already know that to set up your competency management program for success, you need your senior executive team to provide support and resources to get started. But remember that employees have a stake in the project's outcome, too. And their direct input will be more accurate and insightful than that of managers.

Before the project begins, find a handful of employees who can represent the needs and wants of your workforce. Look for "connected" communicators — people who can accurately represent multiple groups or departments. Include employees who will naturally champion the competency management initiative back to their teams, keeping colleagues up to date along the way.

**2 Be Sure Managers are Connecting the Dots.** Until it's part of the culture, a competency management program can feel like an abstract "nice to have" project managed by somebody else. Meet with your managers to be sure they understand competency-based management, how it works, and how your program fits into the big picture. Provide training or guidance for managers to



start referencing skills and competencies in their every-day conversations with employees.

Ask managers to connect the dots for employees, helping them understand how their roles fit within the organization and how they fit within their roles. Managers can use competencies to demystify performance expectations and opportunities for career growth, providing clear guideposts for success and advancement.

**3 Mark Your Competency Management Milestones.** As you begin to pilot your competency management program or roll it out across your organization, communicate milestones of each phase. This will help highlight the importance of competence in the workforce. Build interest and enthusiasm by sharing metrics and milestones that employees can relate to.

Is 87 percent of your sales team highly proficient in verbal communications? Is the marketing team the first to complete this year's competency-based approach to performance reviews? Did HR introduce two new career paths built on competencies? Look for changes that your employees will celebrate, then have fun with sharing the changes and results!

## 4 Catch (and Celebrate) Employees Doing

**Competencies Right.** Renowned speaker and author Ken Blanchard encourages leaders to “catch people doing something right.” Most leaders are quick to home in on what’s wrong. But one of the easiest and fastest ways to build an engaged workforce is to make a habit of noticing, encouraging, and celebrating the good things that are happening.



The same can be said for building a competency management program that sticks. Find employees who are focused on closing skills gaps to build the competencies they need – and let them know you noticed. Managers can call out individual growth and team successes at team meetings. Employees could be encouraged to share their stories of building new skills in the next company newsletter. When people earn promotions, share the good news and use the opportunity to highlight some of the skills, knowledge, and experiences they gained to prepare for the new role.

In short, to get employees on board with your competency management program, get them involved early and often. Be sure they see the value – to them – of building the skills and competencies they need to advance their careers. And celebrate with them as they reach the milestones that are important to them.

**You’ll be glad you did!**

### About Avilar

Avilar – The Competency Company™ is a leader in web-based competency management and learning solutions for corporations, government, and non-profit organizations. Formed in 1997, Avilar was a pioneer with its award-winning WebMentor™ product line and has built itself on the basis of superior customer service and highly adaptable product design.

Avilar consultants are recognized as industry thought leaders and have decades of experience in implementation and analysis. Let Avilar help you transform your organization from ordinary to extraordinary. [Visit our website](#) to schedule a demo of our competency management system or our LMS. You can be confident that we will listen to your organization’s specific needs and help you find the best solutions to the talent management challenges you’re facing.

