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How Competency Models Can Build the Leaders Your Company Needs

Can you develop leaders in the workplace in much the same manner as professional athletes? Though many of us applaud inspiring leaders with a claim that they are "born leaders," the truth is more mundane.

People become great leaders over time, by cultivating a mix of skills, behaviors, and experiences that position that individual as the right leader for the right situation at the right time.

A leadership competency framework tailored to the needs of your organization can be incredibly effective as you characterize what it will take to lead your organization through its next growth stage. The right leadership competency models will help you effectively develop leaders in the workplace.

Talent Identification and Selection

What's next for your organization? Are you thinking about expanding a product or service? Moving into a new market? Do you plan to grow through acquisition? Does your organization need to re-think what's next after several years of stagnant growth? Are you facing a wave of retirement in your workforce? Need to embrace new technologies? Your company's strategic goals have everything to do with finding and developing leaders who can take you there.

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Your leadership competency framework captures the specific skills, behaviors, knowledge, and experience you need in your next leader. Use it to hire and promote the candidates who are best aligned with your strategic goals and objectives.

Develop Leaders in the Workplace

Once you've made your hiring or promotion decisions, you'll need to decide how to develop leaders in your organization. Competency models provide the roadmap, clearly outlining specifically what's expected from leaders and supporting decisions around the best training and development opportunities to close skills gaps.

Competency models help get to a deeper level of understanding and evaluating required skills and competencies. They can help tease out, for example, the nuances of decision making. Do your leaders need to be able to make fast decisions with limited information? Or is it more important to make more informed, more strategic decisions that weigh complex and

competing priorities? At some level, probably both. But you'll want to prioritize and assess each kind of decision-making competency – then evaluate your leaders and support their development in mastering the skills they need to succeed.

Competency models expose which important leadership skills and behaviors an individual needs in order to develop, so you can decide which development initiative to implement.

Some learning may be tactical – such as using necessary software applications or writing reports. Others will be experiential, best honed by incrementally progressive experiences such as facilitating meetings for a small team, cross-departmental projects, and client-facing engagements. For some areas of development, a mentor could provide just the kind of feedback, self-reflection, and exploration required to grow.

Evolution of Culture

As aspiring leaders step into management roles, they begin to shape your company culture. Of course, they need to be able to work within your current culture to be effective. If yours is a listening culture, leaders who behave as if they have all the answers will not be heard. If you are fostering a culture that embraces diversity and inclusion, a leader who builds homogenous teams will fail (and not simply by missing out on the many benefits of having diverse perspectives at the table). Leaders who are more attuned to shareholders than customers in a customer-driven organization will also fail to flourish.

But, a leader who embodies the best of your company's culture is in exactly the right position to influence change. After all, a leader who is competent in listening to others, evaluating market changes, building strategies and communications will notice things that need to change. Those leaders will help to shape a plan and build support for the kinds of cultural changes needed for your organization to thrive.

Succession Planning

You can't really talk about leadership development without mentioning succession planning. Whether your focus is to develop leaders in the workplace to fulfill a near-term succession plan or to create a leadership development program for a longer-term sustainable leadership team, competency models are one key to success.

Leadership is multifaceted and a good leadership competency model assesses both the leadership competencies themselves and the level of mastery. As part of your succession management program, assess the overall readiness of your aspiring leaders against the timing of when you'll need them to step into their roles. That assessment will not only give you – and your future leaders – full visibility into their progress; the feedback will also inform the next steps for the individuals and your organization alike.

Competency models are essential tools to develop leaders in the workplace. You have a choice when it comes to competency models. It's important, though, to find one that you can adapt to fit your organization's priorities and needs.

The Avilar Competency Model is one option, developed from decades of work with organizations of all types and sizes – and designed to be easily customized to fit the needs of any organization.

Maximize workforce potential.

Are you ready to get started?

If you are looking for a competency model to build a strong and resilient workforce, contact us to learn how our WebMentor™ Skills competency management system can support your competency-driven leadership development program.

The Avilar Competency Model

The Avilar Competency Model was developed from decades of work with organizations of all types and sizes. It contains over 350 skills clustered into more than 50 skill groups.

Our employee competency model can be used as is or customized to meet the specific needs of your organization.

Through competency evaluation and templates, Avilar's model can help your organization better understand your employees' skillsets. Our model is based on the principle that essential data is necessary for effective talent management.

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.