SELECTION, TRAINING
AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
THAT PRODUCE (AND RETAIN)
SUPERIOR PERFORMERS

COMPETENCY

Portfolio

EXAMPLES OF OUR WORK

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These pages are taken from a model for a senior management team. Shown to the left are:

1) An introduction and a summary of main responsibilities (the top page).
2) A listing of key responsibilities and performance measures (the middle page).
3) A listing of critical core competencies, with definitions (the bottom page).

The process for doing this model included some strategic planning that included the identification of existing core competencies, required competencies and the “gap”. The competency dictionary, containing 35 competencies from which the models are developed, was reviewed and modified.

Starting with the executive group is the ideal way to implement a competency system. Actually going through the modeling process brings about understanding, ownership and commitment. Executives then see the competency system as a way to ensure that the right competencies are in place to carry out the business plan, and not just as a human resource activity.

To help demonstrate these payoffs for line executives, ask for our “Competencies and Competitiveness” and “ROI of Competency Technology” white papers.
To the left are two pages illustrating the listing of required core competencies for a branch manager job. The top page lists two competencies to “select for” and the bottom page lists several competencies that can be developed. The model contains eight to twelve critical core competencies developed through a combination of focus groups and behavioral event interviews.
These pages are taken from a model for a sales job in a manufacturing company. Shown to the left are:
1) An introduction and a summary of main responsibilities (the top page).
2) A listing of key responsibilities (the middle page).
3) A listing of critical core competencies, with definitions (the bottom page).

The model contains eight to twelve critical core competencies developed through a combination of focus groups and behavioral event interviews.

Organizations often start with competency models for sales positions because sales performance is usually easier to measure than performance in other positions. The difference between what a top performing sales person sells and what an average sales person sells is significant in most organizations, and translates directly into higher revenue and bottom-line impact. Most executives easily understand the payoff of having a competency model that reflects what top performers do, backed by selection, training and performance management processes that produce more top performers than average performers.

Our “ROI of Competency Technology” white paper cites research showing this payoff as it applies to sales positions.
Example: Analyst/Programmer

These pages are taken from a model for Analyst/Programmer. Shown to the left are:
1) An introduction and a summary of main responsibilities (the top page).
2) A listing of key responsibilities and performance measures (the middle page).
3) A listing of critical core competencies, with definitions (the bottom page).

The model contains eight to twelve critical core competencies developed through a combination of focus groups and behavioral event interviews.
Examples: Store Sales Manager & Buyer

Pages from two different competency models are displayed. Shown to the left are:
1) A listing of key responsibilities (for store sales managers, the top page on the left).
2) A listing of critical core competencies, with definitions (for store sales managers, the middle page and for buyer, the bottom page).

Each model contains eight to twelve critical core competencies developed through a combination of focus groups and behavioral event interviews.

STORE SALES MANAGER
CRITICAL CORE COMPETENCIES

Selling/Customer Service: The ability to know customer needs and wants
- Demonstrates ability to achieve sales goals
- Models selling skills to staff
- Meets sales and service standards
- Projects the brand
- Builds relationships with customers that foster long term loyalty
- Presents self with confidence
- Provides Product Information to staff

Managing Human Resources: The ability to identify talent, train them well and manage their performance
- Matches candidates accurately to job requirements that project the brand
- Provides appropriate training in selling skills to associates
- Develops capabilities of CSM’s
- Sets clear, understandable performance standards and insures accountability
- Effectively delegates both tasks and responsibilities
- Provides specific feedback, both positive and corrective
- Motivates and supports associates in their efforts to achieve goals

BUYER
Critical Core Competencies

Creative: Identifying fashion opportunities and sourcing product that supports the company brand
- Displays openness to different and new ways of doing things to produce merchandise
- Continually identifies new resources to produce product
- Demonstrates a business curiosity, seeks new information and asks appropriate questions
- Discusses impact of new fashion trends across the business

Organizational Skills: Keeping track of schedules, people, resources and other information in a way that supports the accomplishment of goals
- Knows the appropriate people to go to for the best answers, gets them involved and makes decisions
- Provides accurate, timely information, coordinates schedules to produce the product
- Tracks the flow of product to ensure deadlines are met, follows up with business partners to ensure execution of plans
- Possesses strong sense of urgency (makes it happen)
- Maintains records in a logical, user-friendly system
- Delegates tasks and responsibilities to develop associates
### Scaled Ratings

**Optional Formats for Competency Descriptions**

Most job competency models include a description of each competency that includes observable behaviors which indicate the demonstration of that competency.

Some organizations prefer that each competency be described by levels of proficiency. The examples on this page show several variations, each with descriptions that range from a low level of proficiency to a superior level.

When doing models for multiple levels of a job category, an option preferred by some organizations is to describe the competency in terms indicative of the way it would be demonstrated at each job level. For example, the behavioral indicators of the competency of “fostering teamwork” may be somewhat different for a supervisor of manufacturing than for a vice president of manufacturing, even though the competency is common to both jobs.

These competency description variations can also be applied to organizations wanting to “certify” performers in a specific job category, such as customer service representatives or mechanics.

### Scaled Rating Form for People Managers (Leadership Practice Version)

Person being rated:  
Rater:  
Date:  

**Instructions**
The tables below are designed to help you accurately assess an individual’s capability on 12 leadership practices. The first column displays the labels used to describe four levels of capability: ‘Not Developed’, ‘Developing’, ‘Capable’ and ‘Outstanding’. Most practices have different aspects which have to be rated separately. In the example on the next 2 pages, the four aspects for Delivering Business Results are ‘Setting Goals’, ‘Progressing Goals’, ‘Maximizing Value’ and ‘Concern for Standards’. You are asked to rate each aspect and then make an overall rating for the Leadership Practice as a whole.

**Two things are important in using this scale accurately. You should:**
- be guided exclusively by the scale examples when making a judgment about a person’s level of capability
- try to recall concrete examples of a person’s behavior at work to support your rating

#### Make ratings by checking the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Setting Goals</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Progressing Goals</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Developed</td>
<td>Little evidence of setting or communicating goals</td>
<td>Rarely acts on own to progress goals; No strong concern shown; Seldom follows through</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Sets goals but they are sometimes unclear or unrealistic</td>
<td>Occasionally acts to progress goals but is not always timely or consistent in approach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capable</td>
<td>Typically sets goals which are specific and achievable, but are often not challenging</td>
<td>Typically monitors and progresses goals in a timely fashion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Typically sets goals that are specific, realistic and challenging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Impact & Influence

- **Novice**
  - Advances arguments without using relevant data or authoritative sources
  - Does not address other arguments or evidence that does not support own position
  - Tends to use the same approach (e.g., logical arguments) for all influence situations
  - Rarely considers others’ concerns when trying to gain their support
  - Often uses heavy-handed influence strategies when they are inappropriate (e.g., immediately appealing to the other person’s boss)

- **Developmental**
  - Sometimes supports own position with data or reference to authoritative sources
  - Is usually ineffective in trying to address others’ concerns, objections and alternative positions
  - Sometimes varies approach to influencing but range is limited and often insensitive
  - Considers more obvious concerns of others but does not ask questions to learn about less obvious concerns

- **Capable**
  - Typically supports a position with arguments which are internally consistent and based on authoritative sources
  - Effectively responds to concerns, objections and alternative positions by offering counter arguments and presenting relevant data
Interview guides can be created to assist interviewers in assessing competencies. The top form on the left is used to rate the competencies of a job candidate during and after the actual interview and summarize the assessment of the candidate. In this organization, a form was created for each job category for which a competency model had been developed.

The bottom page is one page taken from a manual used to train and guide interviewers, most of whom are line managers. Asking the suggested questions will elicit information necessary to evaluate the competencies of a candidate. Training in a special interviewing technique to assess competencies is also available and is recommended. Contact us for more information about this training or for information about competency-based selection systems implemented for other organizations.

**BUYER/ASSOCIATE BUYER INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**OPENING QUESTIONS**
Opening questions generate wonderful opportunities to probe and understand a candidate's thought process, skill level and accomplishments.

Try one of these:
- Tell me about your business.
- Tell me about your company.
- How do you drive your business?

**PROBES**
Probes allow you to clarify more information which we need to make a decision about a candidate's fit within our organization. After asking a selection question, try to understand:
1) What prompted the candidate to take action?
2) What specific action did the candidate take?
3) What impact did the action have on business?
4) What did the candidate learn from that situation?

**SELECTION QUESTIONS BASED ON COMPETENCIES**

- **Creativity**
  - Tell me where you trend shop for your business
  - What key designers do you look at as fashion pacesetters?
  - What fashion trends do you see happening in women's apparel today?
  - Describe a fashion trend that you translated into sellable product.
  - How did you learn your business?
  - Describe a new idea, source or process that you brought to your business that impacted sales or improved productivity of work
The top page on the left is the front form used to help employees establish goals and the bottom page is the back of that form. The “Goals and Results” page is customized for each major job category, the one shown being for a Buyer job. This organization believes that there needs to be clarity and consistency in the goals set for each major job category.

The back side of the form lists competencies for each specific job along with a rating template. Supervisors are trained to assess and rate performance and competencies to complete the form properly.

Many different formats are possible. The important thing is to create a system that is compatible with the organization’s way of doing business and to ensure that people get feedback on the degree to which the required competencies are being demonstrated on the job.

For more information about performance management systems, ask for a reprint of Ed Cripe’s article in ACA News titled “Making Performance Management a Positive Experience”, a description of our “Managing Performance- With Competence” training program and/or project profiles describing systems we have implemented for other organizations.
COMPETENCY SELECTOR

Employee: ___________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
Date: ______________________

Instructions: If there are competencies identified for your job, check these competencies in column A. Read the definition and behaviors for each competency, beginning on page 23. Then check any boxes that apply in columns B-G. After completing this process for all 31 competencies, use column G to select 3 competencies to target for your personal development.

1. Establishing Focus
2. Providing Motivating Support
3. Fostering Teamwork
4. Empowering Others
5. Managing Change
6. Developing Others

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On-line Information At Your Employees’ Fingertips

**Flexibility**

- Any competency system that we create can be put on-line and be made compatible with your existing or planned information system.
- We do not have a “standard” software package that you have to force-lift into your system. Nor do you have to modify your system to fit our specifications.
- Each organization has different needs and system capabilities, which makes customization the only way to go.
- Merit will work with your IS people to see that you get a system that is user-friendly at a reasonable cost.