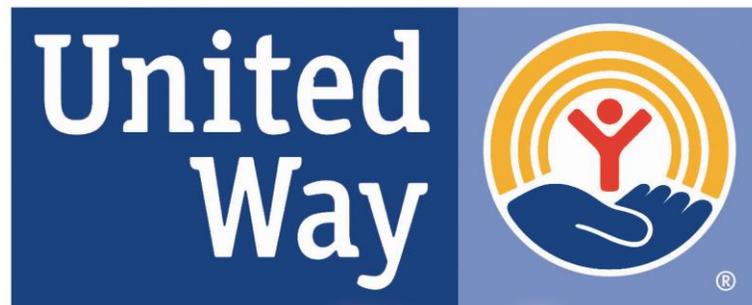

A Guide to Competencies and Behavior Based Interviewing

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United Way of Collier County

HR Toolkit

<http://www.unitedwayofcolliercounty.org/MAPHR>

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Competence is the ability of an individual to do a job properly.

Job competencies are not the same as a job task. Competencies include all the related knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes that form a person's job. This set of context-specific qualities is correlated with superior job performance and can be used as a standard against which to measure job performance as well as to develop, recruit, and hire employees.

There are many ways to develop and use competency models. Using a common competency model with common competency language is the underpinning of your Talent Management System! Similar language needs to be used for job profiles, performance appraisals, or development plans. **Competency models** help make transparent the skills an agency needs to be successful and drive their mission.

Organizational Competencies Usually, an organization will start with the competencies that will drive their mission or strategy at the highest level. These are competencies that are needed by every member of your agency.

Job Family Competencies Next, if your agency is large, you will look at the major job families within your organization and identify the competencies that are associated with that job family.

Job Specific Competencies Finally, you will look at your key roles and identify the competencies that are required to perform that key role successfully.

Each competency has a set of behavioral indicators. These indicators will help you determine whether a candidate possesses a competency, and to what degree.

Within each competency there will be varying degrees at which a competency is required.

Looking at your best performers in your key roles will help you not only identify role competencies, but also key behavioral indicators.

It is legally important to validate the statistical relationship between competency predictor variables and a measure of performance.

Sample Competencies

Competency	Description
Coping	Maintain a mature problem-solving attitude while dealing with interpersonal conflict, hazardous conditions, personal rejection, and hostility or time demands.
Tolerance of Ambiguity	Withhold actions or speech in the absence of important information; deal with unresolved situations, frequent changes, delays or unexpected events.
Communication	Clearly present information through spoken word; influence or persuade others through oral presentation in positive or negative circumstances; listen well. Write clearly and present ideas and document activities effectively; read and interpret information.
Decisiveness	Make decisions quickly on available information and take action; make commitments and not change decisions when challenged; deal with emergencies as necessary.
Conflict Management	Maturely express feelings and opinions in spite of disagreement; accurately communicate to others regardless of their status or position. Able to stay objective and fair when dealing with sensitive situations. Maintain constructive working relationships despite disagreement.
Energizing Others	Create positive energy (motivation) in individuals and groups.
Policy and Procedure	Relate routine operations in a manner consistent with existing solutions to problems; conform to established policies and procedures; log work activities.
Analytical Problem-Solving	Use a systematic approach in solving problems through analysis of problem and evaluation of alternative solutions; use logic, mathematics or other tools in data analysis or in generating solutions.
Information Seeking	Thoroughly investigates and researches multiple sources to expose details and complete information about resources, issues, problems, and so forth. Conducts in-depth research, asks probing questions
Goal Setting	Define realistic, specific goals and objectives, prioritize objectives.
Initiative	Undertake additional responsibilities and respond to situations as they arise without supervision. Prepare for problems or opportunities in advance.

Competencies (continued)

Competency	Description
Commitment to Task	Start and persist with a specific course of action while exhibiting high motivation and sense of urgency; willing to commit to long hours of work and personal sacrifice in order to reach goals.
Attention to detail	Ensures accuracy in documentation and data; concentrates on routine work details.
Perceptivity	Interpret verbal and non-verbal behavior; develop accurate perception and understanding of others' feelings, needs, values and opinions; be sensitive to and aware of personality differences and conflicts.
Organization and Planning	Organize or schedule people or tasks; develop realistic action plans while being sensitive to time constraints and resource availability.
Creativity	Develop unique and novel solutions to problems; use intuition and innovation to develop new ideas; present information in an interesting manner.
Flexibility/Versatility	Modify one's own behavioral style to respond to others' needs while maintaining one's own objectives and sense of dignity.
Partnering	Work in group settings or closely with others as necessary. Able to share due credit with coworkers.
Relationship Building	Relate to people in an open, friendly accepting manner; shows sincere interest in others and their concerns; initiates and develops relationships with others as a key priority.
Influence	Assert own ideas and persuade others; gain support and commitment from others; mobilizes people to take action.
Change Agility	Challenge the status quo and champions new initiatives; act as a catalyst of change and stimulates others to change, pave the way for needed changes, manages implementation effectively.
Service Excellence	Anticipates and meets the needs of customers; balances interests of a variety of clients; readily adjusts priorities to respond to pressing and changing client demands.
Execution	Deliver results; translates broader corporate strategies into specific objectives and action plans for the team; provides clear direction to team members.
Leadership	Assumes a role of authority as necessary; leads by example; delegates responsibilities and empowers employees to make decisions, provides both constructive and positive feedback on a regular basis.

Behavioral Based Interviewing

Overview

- Why are some people more effective in their jobs than others?
- Why do some people perform more consistently and achieve better results?
- What distinguishes average performers from exemplary performers?

Behavioral-based interviewing (BBI) is a technique used to obtain specific information from candidates about their past behavior, on the premise that **past behavior is the best predictor of future performance in similar circumstances.**

Employers cannot rely simply on candidates' statements regarding work history, experience, and education. Employers want **evidence** of candidates' competencies.

Effective BBI Questioning:

- Lead with:
 - Broad, open-ended question directed toward the competency or experience to be assessed
 - Ask for an overview of **S**ituation or **T**ask, candidate's **A**ctions taken, and end **R**esults (STAR Model)
- Probe further and "peel the onion":
 - Ask follow-up question(s) to dig deeper into candidate's response and gain a complete picture of the STAR:
What did you do? What did you say? What led up to that? How did you know to do that? Why was that important?
- Get clarification:
 - Make sure your questions are answered during the interview. If not, ask for clarification.

Understand that there is **no wrong answer** in BBI, but it is more about the process of **listening** for the clues that tell you how one performed previously in their job. For instance: did they convey motivation, sense of urgency, personal sacrifice and persistence behind their scenario? Were their answers all about "what I did" as opposed to "what the team did"? Be sure to clarify the themes to listen for during your interview planning process.

Sample Behavioral Questions

Competency: Coping	Competency: Tolerance of Ambiguity
<p>Behavioral Question</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a time when you had to deal with the anger or hostility of another person. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? What did you say? What were you thinking at the time? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remaining calm Actions and words matching Thinking both of the short term and the long term Showing empathy 	<p>Behavioral Question</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time when you had to deal with conflicting ideas and thoughts that left things unresolved for you in the midst of a task or project. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you react? What did you do? Who did you talk with about it? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Containing frustration while behaving authentic Seeking help Considering or offering options to reconcile Having a realistic view
Competency: Communication	Competency: Decisiveness
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you had to present an idea to someone in order to get a point across that was important to you. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? What did you say? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailoring the message to the person Preparing Listening to the receiver’s reaction Using a clear, logical approach 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please tell me about an experience when you had to make a difficult decision and acted on it. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes quick decisions as need Having courage of convictions Good decisions making when dealing with crisis Using confident language

Sample Behavioral Questions (continued)

Competency: Conflict Management	Competency: Energizing
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a sensitive conflict you resolved and still maintained your objectivity. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do/say? What was the reaction of others? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remains calm under pressure Difficult to provoke Ability to handle conflict successfully Actions and words match 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time when you brought some positive energy to a situation? <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you think the situation needed some positive energy? What did you do/say? What was the reaction of others? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authentic enthusiasm Creativity Long term view Consideration of group dynamics
Competency: Policy and Procedure	Competency: Information Seeking
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about when you found a policy or procedure difficult to follow. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you think about the procedure? Why was it difficult to follow? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency Upholds policies and procedures Committed to unwritten policies 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a time when you had to research a problem or situation with little guidance. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you research this problem? What sources did you use? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probes for more information Strong investigative skills Good research skills Uncovers root cause of the problem/situation

Sample Behavioral Questions (continued)

Competency: Analytical Problem Solving	Competency: Goal Setting
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you had to solve a complex problem on the job. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? What were your thoughts? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systematic approach Generation of options Evaluation of options to choose solution Use of tools Using confident language 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you had to accomplish something important over a specific period of time. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you get started? Walk me through your process. What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specificity of goal Consideration of measures and attainability Explanation of relevancy Time sensitivity
Competency: Initiative	Competency: Commitment to Task
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a time when you voluntarily undertook a special project above and beyond your normal responsibilities? <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the project? Why did you volunteer? What did you do to ensure you met all of your responsibilities? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer for task with already heavy workload Welcomes new opportunities; seeks it out Plans for situation before they arise Works well without much direction 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you had to go above and beyond set expectations to get something done. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? How did you feel? What was the reaction of others? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motivation Sense of urgency Personal sacrifice Persistence

Sample Behavioral Questions (continued)

Competency: Attention to Detail	Competency: Perceptivity
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a specific time when you ensured accuracy and consistency in a document or data that you prepared <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How did you ensure accuracy? What did you do? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double checks work Pay attention well Uses strategies to ensure accuracy and consistency 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you were in a situation that you sensed something was going on other than what was being said out loud. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you think something else was going on? What did you do about it? What was the reaction from others? What was the outcome <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading non-verbal behavior Understanding of other’s feelings, values, needs or opinions Willingness to check perceptions Sensitivity to personality differences
Competency: Organization and Planning	Competency: Creativity
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time when you had a lot going on at the same time and had to manage it all. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? How did you feel? What was the outcome? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduling of people or tasks Realistic action plans Sensitivity to time constraints Awareness of resource availability 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time you came up with an idea, solution or presentation that was out of the ordinary. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? How were you received? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unique or novel approach Use of intuition and innovation Presents information in an interesting way Pride in ideas

Sample Behavioral Questions (continued)

Competency: Flexibility/Versatility	Competency: Partnering
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you had to adapt your own way of doing things to someone else's. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why did you feel you should adapt? What did you say? How were you received? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues to maintain own objectives Continues to maintain sense of dignity Consideration of bigger picture view Responsive to other's needs 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a situation where you had to get a group of people to work together toward a common goal. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you do? What did you say? How were you received? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building morale Building group agreements Group involvement Shared responsibility
Competency: Relationship Building	Competency: Influence
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think of someone in your last job that you deliberately went about building a relationship with, tell me about it. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why was it important for you to build this relationship? What did you say and do? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of communication skills: listening, non-verbal Genuinely takes initiative to learn about others' interests Considers others' viewpoints without evaluation & judgment 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give me an example of a time when you had to get others to endorse an initiative of yours. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you say and do? How were you received? What happened? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivers ideas with confidence and conviction Gives compelling reasons for ideas Listens and responds (both verbally and non-verbally) to the response to the message Anticipates and prepares for the concerns of others

Sample Behavioral Questions (continued)

Competency: Change Agility	Competency: Service Excellence
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell me about a time when you had to embrace something new and get others to do the same. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you say and do? What were you thinking and feeling? What happened? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves people affected by the change early Awareness of the different reactions to and phases of change Listens to and asks for a lot of input Makes short-range plans for others during transition 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a situation where you had to go the extra mile for a customer. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did you say and do? What happened? <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often recognizes customer needs Works hard to ensure customer satisfaction Responds to service failures Provides high level of satisfaction to the customer
Competency: Execution	Competency: Leadership
<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a situation or project that had numerous obstacles and was under a tight deadline? How did you keep it on track and deliver the project on time? <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did do? What was the outcome <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivers results in a timely manner Drives work through to completion, meets deadlines Self-motivated; shows enthusiasm and spark for work 	<p>Behavioral Question:</p> <p>Main Question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe a challenge you had in encouraging and empowering employees on your team to complete a project or specific task. Tell me about a time when your coaching of an employee was effective because of the constructive feedback you provided. <p>Follow-up Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was this situation How did you empower your employees What was the outcome <p>Themes to Listen For</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers constructive feedback Empowers and encourages employees Assumes a leadership role Leads by example

Notes: