

# COMMUNICATIVENESS

## *competency*



### Difficulty



# Communicativeness

Effective performers recognize the essential value of continuous information exchange and the competitive advantage it brings. They actively seek information from a variety of sources and disseminate it in a variety of ways. They use modern technologies to access and circulate information, even across great distances. They take responsibility for ensuring that their people have the current and accurate information needed for success.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holds organization accountable for maintaining effective communications. Champions a work environment where informal communications are welcome.</li><li>• Establishes formal (e.g., town hall meetings) and informal (e.g., brown bag lunch get-togethers) structures that support informal information-sharing.</li><li>• Creates corporate-wide systems that promote formal and informal communication.</li><li>• Is instrumental in establishing sustainable organization-wide communication initiatives (e.g., best practice sharing, company forums, etc.).</li><li>• Advocates information flow as a competitive advantage.</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consistently and effectively communicates with a wide spectrum of people at all levels.</li><li>• Implements sustainable communication procedures for their area of responsibility (e.g., regular meetings, newsletters, etc.).</li><li>• Finds innovative ways to share knowledge (e.g., websites, chat rooms, net meetings, etc.).</li><li>• Holds department or functional unit accountable for aggressive knowledge-sharing.</li><li>• Proactively shares best practices with others to enable them to perform at higher levels.</li><li>• Establishes communication vehicles and procedures to enhance team effectiveness.</li><li>• Easily accessible, approachable and open; personal style encourages free flow of information.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Creates formal and informal venues for the team to share information. Consistently encourages and expects information sharing within team and direct reports.</li><li>• Regularly solicits information from peers and external sources. Is easily accessible, approachable and open; personal style supports free flow of information.</li><li>• Actively includes others in projects and decisions.</li><li>• Uses a variety of forums for sharing information (e.g., e-mail, discussion groups, forums, other technology vehicles, etc.).</li><li>• Schedules regular team meetings to ensure frequent and timely communications. Flags new information to teammates to ensure that everyone is on the same page.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is proactive in sharing important information; shares needed information in a timely manner.</li><li>• Is easily accessible, approachable and open.</li><li>• Supports free flow of information; responds to communications promptly and effectively.</li><li>• Escalates needed information promptly up the chain of command.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is isolated and uncommunicative; actively or passively withholds important information; does not input or forward information.</li><li>• Does not differentiate when communicating (e.g., creates or forwards an overabundance of e-mails).</li><li>• Spends more time communicating than working; gossips, shares information inappropriately.</li><li>• Does not take advantage of available tools (e.g., e-mail) to communicate with others.</li><li>• Fails to document work or make that documentation available to be accessed by others if needed.</li></ul>

## Significance

Today's business climate is changing rapidly, and the pace is increasing daily. This dynamic context mandates active communications across all organizations to ensure the right information is in the right hands at the right time. Active communications are especially important in transnational organizations where cross-cultural barriers can sometimes hinder information transfer.

## Best Ways To Develop

Learn to leverage communications and information technologies. It is essential that you learn to value the need to communicate and to communicate proactively! To improve your performance in this competency, you must become proficient across all the various communication competencies: informal, listening, writing and presentation.

## Improving Your Capacity

**Read:** *The Business of Listening: A Practical Guide to Effective Listening* by Diane Bonet

**Read:** *Listening: The Forgotten Skill* by Madelyn Burley-Allen

**Read:** *Good Leaders Ask Great Questions* by John Maxwell

**Read:** *People Skills for Business* by Melissa Converas

**Read:** *Can't Get Through: 8 Barriers to Communication* by Kevin Hogan

**Read:** *Just Listen: Discover the Secret to Getting Through to Absolutely Anyone* by Mark Goulston

**Activity:** Concentrate on initiating communication. Ask classmates and professors what information they would like to receive from you. Think about what you tend to avoid.

**Activity:** Regularly exercise all channels. Be the first to initiate communication with others.

**Activity:** Continually ask questions about both content and process.

## Start Today

Create a casual situation for exchanging thoughts with those around you.

Identify an area of knowledge that you should be sharing with others; set up a method of communicating it regularly.

Prepare an information file for collecting and disseminating information.

## Tips

- Prioritize information to avoid data dumping.
- Share your knowledge; don't hoard it.
- Maximize the use of technology to facilitate information exchange.
- Use technology to expand your world, not replace it.

**Remember,** the key to improving competency is not just learning about the skill but choosing a takeaway and developing an action plan to put new behaviors into practice until it becomes a natural response.

# Development Action Planning Form

**Step 1:** Choose a competency area to develop.

**Target Competency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 2:** Describe a positive outcome in the target area of competence; include your vision of a preferred future state.

**Goal Statement:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Step 3:** List the benefits of achieving your desired end state.

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# COMPOSURE

## *competency*



### Difficulty



# Composure

Effective performers maintain emotional control, even under ambiguous or stressful circumstances. They are able to demonstrate emotions appropriate to the situation and continue performing steadily and effectively.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sets an overall positive emotional tone for the organization (e.g., professional, composed, optimistic, etc.).</li><li>• Continues to perform effectively under extremely challenging circumstances.</li><li>• Can be counted on to exhibit the calm, controlled demeanor required of executive leadership role.</li><li>• Leads the organization through changing or ambiguous situations with appropriate emotions.</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sets appropriate emotional tone within area of responsibility; helps others regain emotional control.</li><li>• Uses emotional detachment to transmit appropriate emotional tone to the group or function.</li><li>• Retains emotional control even under the most stressful circumstances.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understands the need to demonstrate appropriate emotions in positions of responsibility.</li><li>• Is reliably calm, cool and collected.</li><li>• Demonstrates ability and comfort in adapting to changing situations.</li><li>• Is comfortable; does not appear distressed when challenged.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Able to remain composed during the normal stress and ambiguity present in the work environment.</li><li>• Reacts to change with appropriate emotions.</li><li>• Does not reinforce inappropriate emotions in others; remains suitably neutral when required.</li><li>• Remains effective in new and unusual circumstances; overcomes inherent stresses.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appears uncomfortable in ambiguous or stressful situations.</li><li>• Has inappropriate emotional outbursts.</li><li>• Loses emotional control, even in routine work settings.</li><li>• Gets caught up in emotions of others.</li><li>• Fails to maintain productivity in stressful circumstances.</li></ul>

## Significance

Inappropriate or extreme emotion can reduce your effectiveness—it can cloud your judgment, muddle your message or poison the atmosphere. It is especially important that leaders constructively demonstrate emotions for appropriate emphasis and control less constructive emotions when necessary.

## Best Ways To Develop

Learn to monitor your emotional state and practice controlling expression of your feelings. This is a difficult competency to master, making it a good idea to garner a support community.

## Improving Your Capacity

Exercise is extremely important for managing stress and staying composed. Diet and sleep are also key ingredients.

Humor and comedy can lighten your mood and spirit.

Balance your life. Have hobbies and outside interests.

Develop friendships—it is important to have social support.

Compartmentalize different parts of your life and live this part in this moment.

Identify any potentially distracting emotion, freeze-frame it, and refocus yourself on the task at hand.

**Read:**        *Emotional Intelligence: 10th Annual Edition; Why It Can Matter More than IQ*  
by Daniel Goleman.

**Read:**        *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey.

## Start Today

Take a walk! It's good exercise and stress relief.

Identify negative emotions you experience today and vent them in a letter you will never send.

Share a joke or funny story; make light of a stressful situation.

## Tips

- Be aware that your emotions as the leader directly influence your team's emotions and stability.
- Keep providing the spark and passion; it is vital to organizational energy.
- Don't strive for constant calmness or you may appear dispassionate, insensitive.
- Identify your personal stressors and stress relievers; cultivate techniques to relieve stress.

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# CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

## *competency*



### Difficulty



# Conflict Management

Effective performers recognize that conflict can be a valuable part of the decision-making process. They are comfortable with healthy conflict and support and manage differences of opinion. They thwart destructive competition or friction, and use consensus and collaboration to debate and resolve issues.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses executive position to personally model a win-win standard of conflict resolution.</li><li>• Creates an organizational environment in which constructive conflict is encouraged and managed to the benefit of the organization.</li><li>• Establishes structures that support healthy debate and discussion over conflicting positions.</li><li>• Establishes rewards and recognition for healthy conflict behaviors.</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successfully mediates conflict between groups.</li><li>• Encourages debate and discussion across functional lines.</li><li>• Models open debate over conflicting opinions.</li><li>• Establishes formal opportunities to air differing opinions and conflicting ideas.</li><li>• Is skilled at turning aggressive conflict into healthy debate of issues.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exhibits a collaborative approach; models and supports a collaborative conflict style within the team.</li><li>• Offers opposing ideas in a negotiable manner.</li><li>• Listens to both sides before intervening.</li><li>• Is comfortable working with others with conflicting opinions.</li><li>• Successfully mediates conflict between group members.</li><li>• Promotes healthy conflict to create meaningful discussions.</li><li>• Provides opportunities for differing opinions on the team to be heard and debated.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offers opposing opinions appropriately.</li><li>• Seeks win-win solutions.</li><li>• Enters into debate without personal animosity; avoids personalizing conflict.</li><li>• Recognizes the value of differing opinions to the benefit of the organization.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Takes a “win-lose” attitude with others.</li><li>• Gives in to others’ views to avoid conflict; consistently defers to others.</li><li>• Avoids taking sides or always sides with the majority.</li><li>• Creates unnecessary conflict in the group.</li><li>• Reacts to conflict inappropriately; overreacts to or personalizes conflicting opinions.</li></ul>

## Significance

Conflict is inherent in virtually all environments, and is actually a useful tool when managed constructively. Left unmanaged, though, conflict can destroy an entire organization. Healthy debate comes from good conflict management, and is a valued skill in all walks of life.

## Best Ways To Develop

The first requirement in learning to manage conflict is self-awareness. Use a professional instrument (self-test) to assess your approach to conflict, and seek feedback from others. Learn to monitor your emotional involvement in a potential conflict; expression of emotion can reveal how important a situation is to you. This is critical information, but be aware you might be less willing to collaborate if you are feeling strongly about an issue.

## Improving Your Capacity

Prepare yourself before managing difficult situations; choose the appropriate time and place, ask a neutral third party to help mediate if needed, etc. Find common ground, focus on areas you both want.

Increase your competency in Active Listening to enhance your ability to manage conflict. Listen, paraphrase, even when you disagree.

**Read:**        *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss what Matters Most* by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, Sheila Heen, and Roger Fisher.

**Read:**        *Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work & in Life, One Conversation at a Time* by Susan Scott.

**Read:**        *Work it Out: Clues for Solving People Problems at Work* by Sandra Krebs Hirsch.

**View:**        *The Art of Resolving Conflicts in the Workplace: Six Strategies for Resolving Office Conflicts* produced by Kantola Productions.

## Start Today

Investigate and attend a Conflict Management course; ensure that it contains role-playing to practice the competence.

Arrange to be tested with a Myers-Briggs, Thomas Kilmann or other such psychological instrument to evaluate your conflict style.

For the next 24 hours, keep a log of all conflicts you encounter. Look for patterns in people, content, timing, mindset, environment, etc. Begin to analyze your personal role with conflict: Do you avoid? Instigate? Aggravate?

## Tips

- Encourage debate and discussion, but keep it focused on the business, not the person.
- When conflict erupts, step in to manage it before it becomes unproductive.
- Don't let fear of conflict keep you from debating important issues.
- Avoid rigid positions; be flexible.

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# DRIVE/ENERGY

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### Difficulty



# Drive/Energy

Effective performers have a high level of energy and the motivation to sustain it over time. They are ambitious and passionate about their role in the organization. They have the stamina and endurance to handle the substantial workload present in today's organizations. They are motivated to maintain a fast pace and continue to produce even in exhausting circumstances.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates a continuously high level of pride and enthusiasm about the organization's brand and company.</li><li>• Leverages opportunities to publicly recognize the organization's achievements and contributions (e.g., town hall meetings with associates, press releases, all-hands communications, etc.).</li><li>• Demonstrates authentic passion toward the organization through words and deeds; understands the executive's role in creating contagious enthusiasm throughout the organization.</li><li>• Establishes strategic goals and metrics to energize motivation for needed results for the organization.</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sets the pace for the functional work ethic and standards.</li><li>• Conducts business at a fast pace and high energy level, even in trying or exhausting circumstances.</li><li>• Leverages functional meetings and communications to energize associates toward company mission and vision.</li><li>• Works enthusiastically and productively, even in strenuous circumstances.</li><li>• Establishes structures and processes that recognize and reward enthusiastic drive toward results.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of continuously modeling motivation; displays optimism and positive attitude (verbally and non-verbally) to team; speaks confidently about the organization; recognizes and reinforces enthusiasm in other team members.</li><li>• Initiates important programs with passion and enthusiasm; communicates energy and passion in daily activities.</li><li>• Maintains a high level of energy for sustained periods.</li><li>• Looks for high energy and enthusiasm when hiring.</li><li>• Maintains a team environment that rewards high energy and enthusiasm; finds ways to instill passion in team members and a sense of urgency to get the job done.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is a hard worker – a go-getter; willingly puts in overtime when needed.</li><li>• Consistently shows up on time, pays attention and strives to do his/her best.</li><li>• Displays a visibly positive attitude about working for the organization.</li><li>• Drives enthusiastically toward needed results.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has a poor attendance record; is unreliable; is frequently late to work or meetings.</li><li>• Fails to maintain an effective work pace over time; falls behind.</li><li>• Appears uninterested in the organization or the job.</li><li>• Criticizes and complains at work.</li></ul>

## Significance

Energy equates to capacity. All the talent in the world matters little if you run out of gas short of the finish line! Your drive and motivation are the engines for your success.

## Best Ways To Develop

Your energy and stamina are a function of your health, conditioning and stress levels. Improving your diet, exercise, sleep patterns and emotional health (e.g., developing strong support networks) all will contribute to higher and more consistent energy levels. Examine those situations in which you have been highly motivated; what were the factors involved? Learn to leverage those factors in the future.

## Improving Your Capacity

Engage regularly in a physically active avocation like hiking or biking (in addition to reading and computers).

Vary your routine when you are in the middle of a long or difficult project. Changing the predictable can raise your energy levels and inspire new ideas.

Determine what time of the day you normally peak and schedule the most important things then.

Display visual measures of progress. Seeing physical evidence of your headway is motivational.

**Read:** *You Don't Have to Go Home From Work Exhausted!: A Program to Bring Joy, Energy and Balance to Your Life* by Ann McGee-Cooper.

**Read:** *The Energy Bus: 10 Rules to Fuel Your Life, Work and Team with Positive Energy* by Jon Gordon and Ken Blanchard

**Read:** *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us* by Daniel Pink

**Read:** *Why We Do What We Do: Understanding Self-Motivation* by Edward L. Deci

**Activity:** Explore personality inventories (e.g., Meyers-Briggs Personality Inventory) or career interest measurements (e.g., Strong Interest Inventory) to isolate the situations or jobs that give you energy.

## Start Today

Identify one or more people in your environment who “bring you up.” Arrange to spend some time with them.

Go for a walk outside (possibly to a coffeehouse!). Raise your heart rate and change your venue.

Ask a friend when they have seen you the most motivated. What did it involve, and can the situation be replicated?

## Tips

- Pace yourself. Most tasks are more like marathons than sprints.
- Develop a hobby or avocation; you need balance and recreation for renewed energy.
- Don't underestimate the importance of nutrition, rest and exercise.
- Ask yourself what drives you. Explore your passions.

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# MISSION FOCUS

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### Difficulty



# Mission Focus

Effective performers understand their own personal mission and calling - their core purpose for being. They believe in their mission, value it and are committed to it. They communicate it to others, stand behind it and interpret its application to their vocation. They frequently refer to the mission and incorporate it into daily activities.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Establishes or refreshes the mission—their core purpose for being.</li><li>Communicates the mission to others.</li><li>Integrates all behaviors to support their mission.</li><li>Uses their mission statement (in concert with vision and values) as a starting point for decision-making.</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Translates their purpose into functional mission.</li><li>Establishes plans and goals that support their mission.</li><li>Integrates their mission into all activities.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communicates their mission to others and interprets its application to vocation.</li><li>Refers to their mission frequently; incorporates their mission into daily activities.</li><li>Supports and reinforces their mission.</li><li>Understands that their mission conveys meaning; uses the mission as a motivator.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Knows personal mission, vision and values.</li><li>Supports that mission.</li><li>Incorporates mission into daily activities.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Does not know the mission; does not know “why we’re in business.”</li><li>Does not agree with part or the entire mission; can’t buy into it.</li><li>Does not value the mission or see how it should guide daily activities.</li><li>Avoids or resists discussions about the mission.</li></ul>

## Best Ways To Develop

Explore your personal mission statement. Connect your role to the your life purpose. Dialogue with others regarding purpose, core technology, vision, and guiding principles. To truly understand your core mission and differentiating values, do a “SWOT” analysis. Once you feel you understand core purpose, scan the environment for threats and opportunities. Then look inside for strengths and weaknesses. Surface one or two strategic issues.

## Improving Your Capacity

**Read:** *Competing for the Future* by Gary Hamel and C. K. Prahalad.

**Read:** *Organizational Vision, Values and Mission: Building the Organization of Tomorrow (Fifty-Minute Series)* by Cynthia D. Scott.

**Read:** *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey.

**Read:** *Vision in Action: A Practical Guide for the Cooperative Management of Small Organizations (Spirituality and Social Renewal)* by Christopher Schaefer and Tinjo Voors.

## Start Today

Begin with manageable changes – one thing at a time, one day at a time.

Consider one decision you will make today. Stay flexible with it. Suspend immediate judgment. Remember, the longer you withhold judgment, the better your judgment will be.

## Tips

- Take time to truly understand your mission, vision and values.
- Align your goals and activities to your purpose and strategy.
- It's not enough that you understand the mission; you have a responsibility to see that others understand it as well.

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# PRESENTATION SKILLS

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**Difficulty**



# Presentation Skills

Effective performers are able to organize and deliver public speeches that effectively inform or persuade audiences. They are adept at using current presentation technologies and media formats. They are able to field audience questions comfortably and confidently.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
4 Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Frequently presents for the organization in high profile or sensitive situations (e.g., shareholder meetings, press conferences, industry conference presentations, etc.).</li><li>• Gives powerful, cutting-edge presentations using innovative techniques and media.</li><li>• Has exceptional rapport with audience; connects easily; uses rhetorical questions; invites audience participation.</li><li>• Is very adept at managing challenging questions from the audience; stays composed, repeats question, looks at questioner, provides credible answers, or admits lack of knowledge.</li><li>• Is very skilled at managing hostile or volatile audiences; effectively handles high-profile audiences.</li></ul>
3 Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Likes the challenge of formal speaking; likes being on stage and does it well.</li><li>• Uses multiple media creatively; effectively uses electronic tools, handouts, demonstrations and video.</li><li>• Gives presentations that are very interesting; uses language cleverly, tells stories, provides facts and quotes, etc.</li><li>• Is skilled at fielding questions from the audience.</li><li>• Adjusts to audience response by modifying timing and/or content mid-delivery.</li><li>• Often gives presentations for very large audiences.</li><li>• Has a powerful impact (learned or innate) when speaking; easily captures the audience; knows how to “turn it on” for the audience.</li></ul>
2 Applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is good at speaking in front of the team and enjoys it; has developed a style to engage and educate the audience; knows how to hold audience interest.</li><li>• Engages the audience by eliciting discussion and making the presentation interactive.</li><li>• Consistently prepares well; knows the content thoroughly; fine-tunes and practices before presenting.</li><li>• Incorporates audience feedback and questions, yet stays on course and on time; paces the presentation to fit the audience; shows confidence and expertise when answering audience questions.</li><li>• Takes advantage of internal presentation skills training and looks for opportunities to hone and practice this skill.</li><li>• Is skillful with current multi-media presentation equipment and methods.</li></ul>
1 Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Uses and interprets non-verbal behaviors to enhance understanding; maintains eye contact; uses appropriate facial expressions, gestures and postures to demonstrate attentiveness.</li><li>• Shows full attention; does not interrupt.</li><li>• Asks basic questions to clarify.</li></ul>
0 Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Resists speaking in front of groups; avoids giving presentations. Misses opportunities to speak.</li><li>• Continues to be visibly uncomfortable speaking in front of groups, even after some experience with presenting; stammers, speaks too softly or quickly, avoids eye contact, can't organize thoughts, etc.</li><li>• Delivery isn't effective; lacks enthusiasm; pace or fluidity is off; delivery is mechanical or monotonous; reads slides verbatim; talks at the audience; language is too technical, too formal/informal, etc.</li><li>• Talks are poorly organized; audience can't follow train of thought; no documentation provided, etc.</li><li>• Fails to prepare adequately; does not know the material; can't respond to audience questions; uses poor visuals or can't connect visuals with the topic.</li></ul>

## Significance

In addition to adding a medium to communicate your message, mastering the competency often listed as the “most feared” can give you confidence that spills over into other areas. It goes without saying that organizational leaders must be able to communicate to formal groups.

## Best Ways To Develop

By attending a reputable workshop that offers several opportunities to be videotaped and receive expert feedback. There is nothing like this “out of body” experience to highlight strengths and identify areas for improvement.

## Improving Your Capacity

Take every opportunity to speak in front of people – at meetings, on committees, etc.

Use multiple media. Audiences are twice as likely to remember what they both see and hear.

Remember: you never look as nervous as you feel.

Look at your audience, speak loud enough to be heard and clear enough to be understood.

Use gestures to enhance your message.

Give practice presentations and get immediate feedback

**Read:**        *Bulletproof Presentations* by Michael G. Campbell.

**Read:**        *How to Prepare, Stage, and Deliver Winning Presentations* by Thomas Leech

**Activity:**    Attend workshop, Delivering Successful Presentations by Toastmasters.

## Start Today

Make an opportunity to present in front of a group. Start with a small informal group, but prepare a formal presentation.

Learn Microsoft PowerPoint presentation software.

## Tips

- Weigh content against image. Are you presenting, or pontificating?
- Do your homework. Organize your materials, know your audience.
- Practice, practice, practice!

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# PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING *competency*



Difficulty



Easy  
Stroll

Tough  
Climb

# Problem Solving and Decision Making

Effective performers are able to identify problems, solve them, act decisively and show good judgment. They isolate causes from symptoms, and compile information and alternatives to illuminate problems or issues. They involve others as appropriate and gather information from a variety of sources. They find a balance between studying the problem and solving it. They readily commit to action and make decisions that reflect sound judgment.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
4 Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is expert at anticipating and creatively solving the organization's strategic problems.</li><li>• Maintains and taps an external executive network for in-depth analysis of strategic challenges.</li><li>• Debriefs key strategic decisions (especially faulty ones) with senior team to learn from them.</li><li>• Demonstrates ability to make decisions and rally necessary resources and stakeholders quickly in company-wide crisis situations.</li><li>• Continually tracks strategic decisions and monitors impact in order to improve future decision-making.</li></ul>
3 Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is recognized for cross-organization analytical skills; is sought out for high level problem solving sessions.</li><li>• Mentors, trains, and empowers others to methodically analyze problems and make quality decisions for the organization.</li><li>• Proactively considers cross-team impacts or integration opportunities when reviewing problem/solution.</li><li>• Considers short- and long-term outcomes, strategic scenarios and overall impact for clients and for the organization when making decisions.</li><li>• Facilitates functional and cross-team decision-making sessions; consistently applies creative problem solving techniques (e.g., brainstorming, consensus decision making process, etc.).</li></ul>
2 Applied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyzes and anticipates unintended consequences when making recommendations or decisions.</li><li>• Forms informal problem solving teams; regularly forms and leads problem solving groups.</li><li>• Actively solicits opinions and input from others as part of the decision-making process; solicits ideas from the team; encourages team members to be part of the process when necessary; looks outside of immediate work group for input; takes advantage of experiences of others.</li><li>• Coaches team in creative problem solving; treats problem solving as a learning opportunity for self and team (team members report multiple opportunities to grow their problem solving skills with valuable coaching from their manager).</li><li>• Steps back from the issue to see the big picture; considers the broader picture; considers potential impact on stakeholders, customers and the organization when making decisions.</li><li>• Surfaces and solves problems in a timely manner; clearly decides and then willingly commits to action.</li></ul>
1 Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effectively uses appropriate decision-making techniques (e.g., properly identifies root problem, involves others, gathers data before deciding, generates more than one solution, withholds making decision until underlying issues are clear, etc.)</li><li>• Escalates problems to appropriate authority as needed.</li><li>• Is objective; is able to evaluate facts apart from personal bias.</li><li>• Willingly collaborates to help solve problems.</li><li>• Willingly provides useful input and feedback to more senior team members to aid in decision making.</li><li>• Asks questions; is able to isolate problem and generate acceptable alternative solutions.</li><li>• Identifies key decisions within area of responsibility.</li></ul>
0 Inadequate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fails to recognize and address problems; misses key problems; doesn't engage key problems quickly enough to prevent negative consequences.</li><li>• Lacks knowledge of problem-solving methodology (e.g., gathering information, generating alternatives, screening criteria, etc.).</li><li>• Is not open to collaborative discussion to assess problems and generate alternative solutions; does not involve others appropriately.</li><li>• Has tunnel vision—only considers what's obvious, or one way to do it; fails to see patterns within the problem; does not consider alternatives when making decisions.</li><li>• Makes decisions without necessary information; does not adequately research problems; jumps to conclusions without adequate analysis.</li><li>• Is indecisive, unable to make decisions; gets stuck.</li><li>• Over-analyzes; spends too much time on simple problems.</li><li>• Gets personally involved, too attached, and loses objectivity.</li><li>• Decisions reflect poor judgment; lacks the experience in key areas for needed insights.</li></ul>

## Significance

The result of competence in Problem Solving & Decision Making is good judgment. The team's success is the result of the accumulated impact of the thousands of judgments made by members on a daily basis. Your ability to render good judgments is paramount.

## Best Ways To Develop

First, participate in a reputable workshop that explores the fundamentals of good decision-making (use of a simulation is preferred), and then bring your learning back to school and practice in a coached environment. For example, ask your professor or team leader for feedback during, and after, the decision making process.

## Improving Your Capacity

Analyze a real company case, good or poor. Ask what went right, or wrong, in the decision making process.

Keep in mind that every decision involves an element of risk. Balance analysis with timeliness.

Identify the key elements in decision-making and key concepts. For example, know that the longer you withhold judgment the better your judgment will be. Keep an open mind during the discovery phase of decision-making.

Do not make decisions in a vacuum. People, data, facts and models are some of the most important decision-making tools.

**Read:** *Decisive: How to Make Better Choices in Life and Work* by Chip Heath and Dan Heath

**Read:** *How to Solve (just about) Any Problem* by Greg Z. Faiberg

**Read:** *Think Twice: Harnessing the Power of Counterintuition* by Michael J. Mauboussin

**Read:** *Thinking Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman

**Read:** *Don't Jump to Solutions: Thirteen Delusions That Undermine Strategic Thinking* by William B. Rouse.

## Start Today

Arrange to take an in-basket simulation. This is an excellent tool for analyzing practical decision-making skills (contact Organization Systems International).

Reflect on your best decision. Why was it effective?

Think about a poor decision you have made. What went wrong?

Pick one of the problems you are facing today. Methodically outline the elements to consider, including pros, cons, barriers, opportunities, resources, etc. Review your work with a mentor or supervisor.

## Tips

- Look at problems from all angles.
- Look for the problem behind the problem. Keep “peeling the onion” until you get to the root cause.
- Delay making a decision until you have ample information—the longer you withhold judgment, the better your judgment will be.
- Test assumptions! Paradigms are powerful inhibitors of creative problem solving.

**Remember, the key to improving competency is not just learning about the skill but choosing a takeaway and developing an action plan to put new behaviors into practice until it becomes a natural response.**

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# RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

## *competency*



### Difficulty



# Relationship Building

Effective performers understand that a primary factor in success is about establishing and maintaining productive relationships. They like interacting with people and are good at it. They devote appropriate time and energy to establishing and maintaining networks. They initiate contacts readily and maintain them over time. They are able to utilize relationships to facilitate business transactions.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cultivates an environment for the organization in which people and relationships are valued.</li><li>• Maintains a comprehensive network of internal and external relationships; taps that network frequently to further the interests of the organization.</li><li>• Spends considerable time and effort cultivating relationships (e.g., regularly contacts them by phone, meets with them over lunch, sends occasional e-mails just to keep communication open, etc.).</li><li>• Communicates the value to the organization of all individuals maintaining relationship networks.</li><li>• Establishes organization-wide events or get-togethers that reinforce and reward relationship building (e.g., recreational activities, company sponsored clubs, etc.).</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes and proactively maintains a broad network of relationships (e.g., colleagues, co-workers, vendors, suppliers, stakeholders, customers, investors, shareholder groups, board members, etc.).</li><li>• Effectively utilizes network of relationships to the benefit of the organization.</li><li>• Helps others to improve their relationship building skills; mentors and coaches others in the ways to establish and maintain such networks; teaches others how to tap their contacts to the benefit of the organization.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Values relationships and works to maintain them; seeks to know others on the team; makes opportunities to spend time with other team members; cultivates outside business friendships; continually keeps old contacts alive while adding new ones.</li><li>• Works effectively across the organization; maintains positive working relationships with peers and important others within the organization.</li><li>• Truly values people, and behaves in a way that promotes good relationships; is respectful, honest and open, interested, etc.</li><li>• Expands network beyond immediate work area to other functions and external contacts.</li><li>• Recognizes opportunities to tap the network to achieve organizational objectives.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Genuinely enjoys people; has a collaborative approach; is responsive to others; likes to work with others; enjoys meeting new people.</li><li>• Shows an understanding of the importance of good relationships (e.g., is supportive, involves others in actions and decisions, acknowledges requests or ideas of others, etc.).</li><li>• Makes the time to maintain existing business relationships; proactively initiates contact, even when there is no pressing need; is open to overtures from others to get together “just to keep the lines open.”</li><li>• Develops good working relationships with others on the team.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doesn't particularly like being around or working with others; would rather work alone.</li><li>• Doesn't recognize the value of relationships; doesn't understand the concept of working through people to achieve goals; doesn't believe it's any better to work with others than in isolation.</li><li>• Treats others in ways that discourages friendship; is disrespectful, non-inclusive, secretive, etc.</li><li>• Is able to make a lot of contacts, but doesn't know how to use them to facilitate business transactions.</li><li>• Has a lot of contacts, but fails to maintain them.</li></ul>

## Significance

There is a consistent correlation between an individual's effectiveness in the organization and his/her ability to call on a sizeable network of colleagues and friends for help and support. Your ability to build trusting relationships will be important to your success and critical for those in leadership roles. A second motive for having this competence (and the support network that comes from it) is most obvious during times of stress or personal crisis. Both mental and physical health are buoyed by the assistance of others during challenging times.

## Best Ways To Develop

First, assess your ability to build and maintain relationships over time. Do you have a strong network? Listen to your family and close friends – they may be able to provide feedback on how effective you are in establishing and maintaining relationships. If you think you have a gap to close, you may need to elevate the value you place on connecting with others.

## Improving Your Capacity

- Activity:** Follow up your meetings or contacts with a personal note of appreciation.
- Activity:** Take a reputable EQ (e.g., EQ Map), or personality (e.g., Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) self-test to diagnose your current status.
- Activity:** Join networking groups.
- Activity:** Learn about the Johari Window. It can help you build trusting relationships through honest exchange with others.
- Activity:** Ask other people questions, listen to their answers (consider preparing questions ahead of time).
- Activity:** Regularly read the papers and watch the news, so that you will have something to contribute to conversations.
- Read:** *How to Win Friends & Influence People* by Dale Carnegie
- Read:** *Silent Messages* by Albert Mehrabian
- Read:** *Well Connected: An Unconventional Approach to Building Genuine, Effective Business Relationships* by Gordon S. Curtis
- Read:** *How to Work a Room: The Ultimate Guide to Savvy Socializing in Person and Online* by Susan RoAne.

## Start Today

Call a classmate you haven't seen in awhile and plan a lunch. Don't talk about school. In your next conversation, ask open-ended questions.

## Tips

- Balance networking with hard-working.
- Make the effort to put a face to each voice: meet people personally.
- To build strong relationships you must trust enough to self-disclose.
- Be sincere!

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# WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

## *competency*



### Difficulty



# Written Communication

Effective performers write clearly and concisely, composing informative and convincing memos, e-mails, letters, reports, and other documents. Regardless of the format, they are able to use the written language to convey both substance and intent with accuracy.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<div>4</div> <div>Strategic</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capable of producing sophisticated, professional documents at the highest level (e.g., annual reports, Board reports, journal articles, etc.); can function both as author and editor of the work of others; assumes responsibility for the overall product and sees it to completion.</li><li>• Demands the highest quality in written communications that reflect on the organization (marketing materials, press releases, internal and external communiqués, etc.)</li><li>• Implements sustainable written communication forums for the organization (e.g., newsletters, regular communiqués, etc.)</li></ul>
<div>3</div> <div>Advanced</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holds function accountable for clear and concise written communications.</li><li>• Writing is captivating, engages reader; uses interesting, appropriate, and differing styles depending on reader.</li><li>• Uses and incorporates facts, quotes and analogies to add interest to written documents.</li><li>• Produces documentation that accurately reflects goals, projects, and initiatives.</li><li>• Consistently serves as a role model and mentor for strong written communication; is sought by others for help in developing written materials.</li></ul>
<div>2</div> <div>Applied</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing is well organized and easy to follow.</li><li>• Provides coherent, literate messages.</li><li>• Writing expresses key points and demonstrates knowledge of topic.</li><li>• Supplies necessary supporting facts.</li><li>• Checks for accuracy, understanding of subject.</li></ul>
<div>1</div> <div>Elementary</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepares clear and concise e-mails and other basic required written communications; message is clear.</li><li>• Uses proper grammar and punctuation.</li><li>• Goes to supervisor when needed for review/editing of written documents; learns from copyediting, shows improvement and doesn't repeat mistakes.</li></ul>
<div>0</div> <div>Inadequate</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Writing is disorganized and hard to follow; purpose of document is not readily apparent; message not communicated clearly or effectively.</li><li>• Gives too little or too much information.</li><li>• Writing lacks actions expected, or next steps.</li><li>• Topics and/or language are inappropriate; emotional tone is inaccurate or offensive.</li><li>• Written work contains misspellings, poor grammar, improper punctuation, etc.</li><li>• Writing is such a chore that it takes inordinate time and/or causes excessive distress; just the thought of a writing assignment can cause paralysis.</li><li>• Style is not appropriate for audience; too formal or informal.</li></ul>

## Significance

Effective Written Communication provides another alternative for communicating your message, an essential tool for success in any organization. Good writing is good thinking. Critical thinking and creativity improve as writing skills improve.

## Best Ways To Develop

Read, write, and review. Read to expand your vocabulary and your writing skills, and don't read just one genre. Expand your reading list to include a variety of fiction and non-fiction material. Begin writing your thoughts down – it not only preserves them, but also rehearses writing skills.

## Improving Your Capacity

Get feedback on your written communications.

Simplify. Practice writing one-page memos. Avoid wordiness, unnecessary details or overuse of technical jargon.

Revise. It is unlikely that your first draft will be perfect.

Don't recreate the wheel – look for past documents to serve as templates.

**Read:** *PBS Write to the Point* by Rosemary T. Fruehling and N. B. Oldham.

**Read:** *Better Business Writing: Techniques for Improving Correspondence (Fifty-Minute Series)* by Susan Brock.

**Read:** *The Business Style Handbook: An A-Z Guide for Writing on the Job With Tips From Communications Experts at the Fortune 500* by Helen Cunningham and Brenda Greene.

## Start Today

Investigate and sign up for a credible writing seminar.

Identify a classmate that is a good writer; ask him/her to mentor you for a while, that is, review all your written material, make comments, and give feedback.

Join or start a book club! Get together informally with a group of friends to read and discuss a variety of books.

## Tips

- Organize your thoughts before writing.
- A good report is like a good speech: it contains an attractive opening, an overview, well-developed points using facts, examples and stories, and a succinct summation.
- Reading is a good way to improve your writing.
- Write it then set it aside then read it again before sending it out
- Use a proofreader when needed

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