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| **Professional Core Competencies** | |
| **Influences** | |
| **Definition** | Using effective involvement and persuasion strategies to gain acceptance of ideas, and commitment to actions that support specific work outcomes. |
| **Importance** | Influencing is integral to achieving individual, team, workgroup, and organizational performance at levels beyond those met merely through regulation, compliance, and enforcement. Individuals at all levels with influence skills that include interpersonal skills, oral and written communication skills, empathic sensitivity, and technical credibility, exhibit personal authority that is not dependent solely on formal authority. This personal authority enables them to guide change in good times or in times of turmoil. The ability to influence facilitates dialog, and thus enhances one’s ability to gain cooperation, to develop optimal solutions, to work better with others who may be seen as “difficult,” and to resolve issues that impede organizational or personal success. |
| **How do Washington State Human Resource Professionals Demonstrate This Competency?** | |
| **Key Elements** | **Distinguishing Behaviors** |
| **Clarifies the situation.** | * Listens to all positions on an issue and provides opposing viewpoints when and where appropriate. * Clarifies positions held by participants. * Identify behavior patterns that undermine the ability to address issues constructively. * Frame the conversation so that leaders and influencers will get on board. * Assesses root causes of issues rather than treating symptoms. |
| **Shares own perspective to build trust.** | * Fosters a climate that allows others to challenge ideas or processes and develop alternative approaches. * Demonstrates a strategic understanding of the issues and of how barriers to solutions might be addressed. * Knows and understands the context for policy/process development and serving as an effective and active participant. * Understands the wider economic, social and political costs and benefits of a specific action. * Challenge your personal assumptions about your ability to exert more influence. * Build and leverage the power base you already possess. |
| **Builds a compelling case.** | * Develops broad support for ideas and initiatives. * Communicates a clear and compelling vision of the business situation to be resolved that provides employees with a sense of direction and which can solicit broad support from key stakeholders. * Connect actions to people’s and organization’s values. |
| **Involves others in exploring solutions.** | * Builds, maintains and impacts internal and external networks to build collaborative power and to achieve results. * Develops a range of options, whenever possible, exploring and explaining the consequences of each. * Leads collaboratively to gain buy-in and commitment from employees and stakeholders. * Communicates evolving conditions upward and makes their risk level and implications for the health of the organization clear. * Uses legitimate authority to achieve compliance when other methods of influence are unsuccessful. * Keeps internal stakeholders informed of progress towards goals and sustains support and motivation. * Balance key priorities. * Collaborate creatively to identify innovative and effective solutions. * Identify wins for all parties and create effective collaboration. * Deal with resistance in a positive and productive way. * Work across organizational lines to get things done. * Explore methods to overcome bureaucratic impediments. |
| **Empathizes with others concerns.** | * Communicates with employees and customers by first listening to their needs, issues and ideas and then relating those needs, issues, and ideas to a proposed solution. * Build trust in key relationships. * Provides structure and information that helps employees and organizational units understand how to react positively to new demands and circumstances and how to employ existing resources to fulfill new mandates. * Support people through the stages of transition and change. * Understand the importance of communicating in ways that leave others feeling uplifted. |
| **Steers commitment to action.** | * Inspires customers and subordinates to act at the highest level of honesty and integrity. * Move from a “problem” to a “success” paradigm. * Build long-term ownership and commitment. * Maintains the effectiveness of the message and enthusiasm over time. * Reaffirms key values and the importance of the mission in times of change to be a visible anchor for others. * Understands when demands exceed the capacity to respond, and, when it is necessary, has the fortitude to say “no” to unreasonable demands. |
| **Personal Growth Activities** may include, but are not limited to, on-the-job experience, developmental assignments, shadowing, experiential learning, participating in training as a leader or participant and other life experiences. Remember that many developmental activities can and will occur outside of work as part of your personal life.  **Specific EXAMPLES of developmental opportunities for this competency include:** | |
| **EXAMPLES of Developmental Activities**   * Gain greater experience in the state legislative process. * Work on joint labor-management groups to influence outcomes and effectively contribute to collective bargaining agreement processes. * Volunteer to lead a workgroup or committee where you will be required to influence participants towards a specific outcome. * Participate in formal or informal groups of like-minded individuals where you can discuss, practice and learn about influencing others. These can include professional organizations, community based organizations, your PTA, sports organization or church, service clubs, and similar organizations. * Mentor subordinate staff on influencing, or find a mentor for yourself. * Read books such as Getting to Yes, Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In by Roger Fisher and William Ury. * Listen to books or podcasts such as Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies by Jim Collins and Jerry Porras (Harper Audio, 1994) during your commute to and from work. * Watch a TED TALK, such as “How Great Leaders Inspire Action” by Simon Sinek (2010); use the included “reading list” provided with TED TALKs to further explore topics you find interesting. * Pursue professional certification through IPMA-HR, SHRM, ATD, and/or HRCI. | |
| **EXAMPLES of Training**   * Formal training on team/group dynamics. * ATD, SHRM, Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) or IPMA-HR local, regional or national organization-provided webinar, training or conference offering specific sessions or training on Influence for Human Resources Professionals. * Specialized focused meetings and trainings for Washington State human resource employees offered by State HR and the Office of the Attorney General Labor and Personnel section. * Consider attending programs offered by the Cascade Executive Programs at the University of Washington’s Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs. * Consider obtaining an advanced degree in your area of specialization. | |
| **Recruiting** for candidates who have this competency may include, but is not limited to, providing clear statements about qualifications desired or required in the recruitment announcement, performing specific outreach activities to organizations or groups whose members often possess the desired competency, developing interview questions that assess the candidates competence, and asking reference questions that assess the candidates competence.  **Specific EXAMPLES of recruiting activities for this competency include:** | |
| **Example of qualification statement:** A highly qualified candidate will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and ability to persuade others; negotiate with individuals and groups internally and externally; an awareness of, responds to, and considers the needs, feelings and capabilities of others; build consensus through give and take; is highly effective in dealing with conflicts, confrontations, and disagreements in a positive manner; develop extensive networks with other organizations; and identify internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization.  **Example of outreach activity:** Source the job announcement to the SHRM journal/online career center, or contact known individuals with this skillset asking for names of potential candidates who demonstrate this competency.  **Examples of interview questions:**   1. Tell me about a time when you’ve had to get people, over whom you have no authority, to do what you need them to do. What was your approach? What was the outcome? 2. Tell me about your most satisfying experience of gaining senior management’s support for an idea or proposal. How did you go about it? Why was it so satisfying? 3. Tell us about a situation where you made a decision and then changed your mind. 4. Tell us about a time when you played a key role in bringing about organizational change to a program, section or organization. 5. The successful candidate for this position will need to communicate and influence various levels of the organization. Tell us about a time/specific situation where you were successful in accomplishing an effort similar to this.   **Examples of reference check questions:**   1. Describe a situation where (person) had to build consensus among people with differing opinions or interests. 2. How did you see (person) grow while you were working together? 3. What different kinds of audiences has he/she worked with and in what capacity? 4. The art/practice of influence is a key role of this position. How has she/he demonstrated influence? | |

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| **Identifying Required Proficiency Levels**  While behavioral indicators are used to help in evaluating performance, proficiency levels describe the level of a competency required to perform a specific job successfully. These levels relate to the work required for **a specific job**. Different jobs require different levels of proficiency for successful performance. Not all jobs will require the highest level of proficiency and some may not require specific competencies at all. The proficiency levels outlined below apply to all of the HR Core Competencies. | |
| **Proficiency Level** | **Proficiency Description** |
| **Entry** | * Limited or no use of competency required for the job * Competency has been minimally demonstrated * May have had limited opportunity to apply the competency * May have limited understanding of the competency |
| **Developing** | * Basic understanding or knowledge required for the job * Basic understanding and knowledge sufficient enough to handle routing tasks * Requires some guidance or supervision when applying the competency * Understands and can discuss terminology and concepts related to the competency |
| **Independent** | * Detailed knowledge, understanding and application of the competency required to be successful in the job * Ability to handle non-routine problems and situations * Requires minimal guidance or supervision/works independently * Consistently demonstrates success in the competency * Capable of assisting others in the application of the competency |
| **Advanced** | * Highly developed knowledge, understanding, and application of the competency required to be successful in the job and organization (total mastery) * Can apply knowledge outside the scope of one’s position * Is able to coach or teach others on the competency * Has a long-term perspective * Helps develop materials and resources in the competency |
| **Expert** | * Specialist/Authority level knowledge, understanding, and application of the competency required to be successful in the job * Recognized by others as an expert in the competency and is sought out by others throughout the organization (expert in the area) * Works across team, department, and organizational functions * Applies skills across multiple projects or functions * Able to explain issues in relation to broader organizational issues * Creates new applications or processes * Has a strategic focus |