

*Enhancing the lives of the people we support*

**COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT  
QUESTIONNAIRE  
FOR  
ROLE: EXECUTIVE  
ASSISTANTS/COORDINATORS**

**OCTOBER 2014**

**DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES HUMAN  
RESOURCES STRATEGY**

# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

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## Purpose

The Competency Assessment Questionnaire (CAQ) is designed to assess an individual's strengths and areas for development relative to the competencies for the individual's role (i.e., Receptionists, Administrative Assistants, Executive Assistants, Coordinators, Volunteer and Special Events Coordinators, IT/Finance Coordinators). It can be used as a self-assessment or to assess another individual's competencies.

The competencies in this assessment are based on the competency model for the individual's role. This model was developed with the input of individuals from across various regions of Ontario's developmental services sector.

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## Competency structure

Each competency includes the following:

- A **definition** – a description of what it means, and
  - A **scale of behaviours** – a behavioural scale of related behaviours that increase in sophistication as you move up the scale, with the least complex behaviours at level 1 to the most complex at the highest level (the number of levels in a scale varies by competency, typically 4-5 levels). For each level there is a level title that captures the essence of the level, and a series of illustrative behaviours (i.e., what behaviour looks like at that level).
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## Assessing competencies

When assessing an individual's competencies, the key factor is *consistency* – how consistently a person demonstrates the behaviours associated with a particular competency and competency level.

Performing a behaviour *consistently* means that it is something the individual does routinely in their role. Exhibiting the behaviour *some of the time* or having the *ability* to exhibit the behaviour (but not consistently exhibiting it) does not qualify as *consistently*.

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## Important considerations

There are some important considerations when assessing competencies:

- In completing a self-assessment, be aware that most people have a tendency to overrate rather than underrate their own behaviour.
  - Each level represents a jump in the size/scope of behaviour from the level that preceded it.
  - To get the most out of this evaluation, be sure to evaluate the behaviours exhibited on the job, rather than the behaviours one *intends* to exhibit or would like to have the opportunity to exhibit.
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# INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE, CONTINUED

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## How to complete the CAQ

Follow the steps outlined in the table below to complete the assessment. You may want to refer to the completed example on the following page.

Step	Action
1	For each competency, start by reviewing the definition.
2	<p>Then, beginning at level 1, ask yourself the following question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Do I (or the individual I am assessing) consistently demonstrate the behaviours at this level?</i></li> </ul> <p><i>Consistently</i> means <b>always</b> or <b>most of the time</b> (i.e., 75% of the time).</p> <p>When answering this question, think about examples to support your response.</p> <p>If you answer “yes”, then check the box for that level and move to the next level.</p>
3	<p>Stop when you reach a level where you (or the person you are assessing) <i>do not</i> consistently exhibit the behaviours.</p> <p>The level demonstrated for that competency becomes <i>the highest level you checked off</i> – this is the highest level at which you (or the person you are assessing) consistently demonstrate the behaviours at that level <i>and</i> the levels preceding it. In other words, you cannot rate yourself (or the person you are assessing) at a level 3, if you are not also consistently demonstrating the behaviours associated with levels 1 and level 2.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> If you cannot check off any of the boxes, this likely means that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You (or the person you are assessing) do not demonstrate this competency <i>or</i></li> <li>• You have not had an opportunity to observe the competency in the person you are assessing.</li> </ul>
4	For the level where you rated yourself (or the individual you are assessing), provide behavioural evidence to support your rating in the box that follows the competency rating table.
5	<p>When you have completed an assessment of all competencies, transfer your rating for each competency to the CAQ Summary on the final page of this CAQ.</p> <p>Also note, in the space provided, what you see as your key competency strengths and areas for development.</p>

## EXAMPLE: ADVOCATING FOR OTHERS

Check the highest level at which you, or the person you are rating, consistently demonstrates the behaviours at that level *and* all of the levels that precede it for this competency.

<b>Advocating for Others</b>		
Individuals demonstrating the competency “Advocating for Others” show through their behaviours an inclination to champion a cause or issue and try to get others to support it (i.e., trying to win the support of others).		
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	<b>Not demonstrated or no opportunity to observe</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>States facts to persuade or motivate:</b> Uses direct persuasion in a discussion or presentation. May appeal to reason, data, and others’ self-interest. May use concrete examples, visual aids, demonstrations, etc. At this level, focuses on fact but makes no apparent attempt to adapt presentation to the interest and level of the audience (adapting presentation or language is level 3).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	<b>Takes multiple actions to encourage:</b> Makes two or more <i>different</i> arguments or points in a presentation or a discussion. Takes two or more steps to convince. Includes careful preparation of multiple sets of data for presentation (e.g., may use both statistics and actual examples).
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Calculates impact of actions or words:</b> Adapts a presentation or discussion to appeal to the interest and level of others. Anticipates the effect of one’s words or actions on others’ perceptions of himself/herself. Takes a well-thought-out dramatic or unusual action in order to have a specific impact. Anticipates and prepares for others’ reactions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<b>Uses indirect influence:</b> Uses chains of indirect influence: “Get A to show B so B will tell C such-and-such.” Takes two or more steps to influence, with each step adapted to the specific audience. Anticipates areas where support or influence will be required and takes steps to add these key individuals to own network. Judges when to seek support to enlist the involvement of credible resources/objective experts to bolster arguments or improve buy-in of reluctant or resistant people. Solicits and engages the support of like-minded individuals to help convince others. Uses experts or other third parties to influence. Sounds out key decision-makers and influencers prior to meetings. Uses a combination of logical argument, personal conviction and passion to create a winning case.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<b>Uses complex influence strategies:</b> Uses an in-depth understanding of the interactions within a group to move toward a specific agenda (e.g., may give or defer information among individuals to have specific effects); uses “group process skills” to lead or direct a group. Assembles political coalitions; uses complex maneuvering to reach a goal or have an effect. Builds “behind the scenes” support for ideas. This may include building support within the Board for management suggestions. Builds and continuously maintains a network of contacts and resources to support initiatives.

Please provide behavioural evidence that supports the competency rating:

*When Linda was speaking to the family of a potential new client, knowing that they had several concerns about the type of care their son would receive and their past experience (from a previous telephone conversation she had had with the family), she made a point of addressing each of their concerns, one by one, and how she planned to address each. She spoke softly and slowly to put them at ease as she could see they were somewhat agitated and worried, and to help them understand the various options the agency could provide in terms of the support they were looking for. She was able to convince them that their son would receive the type of care they felt he needed.*

# COLLABORATION

Check the highest level at which you, or the person you are rating, consistently demonstrates the behaviours at that level *and* all of the levels that precede it for this competency.

<b>Collaboration</b>		
<p>Collaboration is about communicating with others both within one's team as well as with individuals, agencies and organizations outside one's immediate work area or span of control (e.g., with community partners and stakeholders) to create alignment within and across groups. It is not only encouraging but expecting collaborative efforts and information sharing across agency/organizational lines toward shared outcomes.</p>		
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	<b>Not demonstrated or no opportunity to observe</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>Collaborates/does own share of work:</b> Willingly accepts and quickly adapts to an assigned role as a member of a large or small team. Shares information with team members about actions or proposed changes that will affect them. Pitches in and works with others in unusual circumstances or when necessary to get the job done. Shares expertise and insight with others (e.g., through team discussions, brainstorming sessions). Clearly understands the goals of the team as well as the roles and responsibilities of each team member. Treats other team members with respect; recognizes that each person's contribution is valuable and essential to the overall success of the team.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<b>Values others and solicits input:</b> Genuinely values others' input and expertise. Wants all members of a group to contribute to a process. Recognizes and builds on the good ideas of others and willingly seeks feedback on ideas. Willing to help and encourages others to learn new and different parts of their jobs by sharing knowledge, experience and information. Respects the expertise of others and takes advantage of opportunities to learn from them. Recognizes where strengths lie within and across departmental resources and taps into their expertise; makes best use of people's talents. Reinforces sharing of expertise between team members and among teams to achieve superior services/results. Values the diversity of talents, skills, cultures and backgrounds that others bring to joint team efforts. Builds positive relationships within and across teams.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Encourages others:</b> Credits others who have performed well. Encourages and empowers others, making them feel strong and important. Demonstrates own commitment to important initiatives by actively contributing to the efforts of a team and by recognizing the contributions of other team members. Is quick to provide guidance and support to new team members/other teams to facilitate learning. Encourages people to continue their efforts when they become discouraged. Objectively represents the needs of own work area in cross-functional initiatives.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<b>Works to build team commitment and spirit:</b> Acts to promote a friendly climate and a good working relationship regardless of personal likes or dislikes. Builds good morale or cooperation within the team, including creating symbols of group identity or other actions to build cohesiveness. Works to resolve conflicts, within and/or across teams, by clarifying understanding, listening for underlying concerns, and defining areas of agreement and of disagreement between parties. Consults with others and maintains objectivity when working on issues that cross boundaries. Aligns multiple perspectives across agencies/groups to best meet the needs of the client or others stakeholders to create synergy. Consistently holds self and others accountable for promoting collaboration and resolving cross-boundary conflicts to facilitate win-win resolution of differences.

Please provide behavioural evidence that supports the competency rating:

## CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING AND DECISION MAKING

Check the highest level at which you, or the person you are rating, consistently demonstrates the behaviours at that level *and* all of the levels that precede it for this competency.

<b>Creative Problem Solving and Decision Making</b>		
Creative Problem Solving and Decision Making is the demonstration of behaviours that enable one to identify and solve problems by understanding the situation, seeking additional information, developing and weighing alternatives, and choosing the most appropriate course of action given the circumstances. Problems can be solved by breaking the issue into smaller pieces or by identifying patterns or connections between situations that are not obviously related. It involves the willingness to and demonstration of behaviours associated with taking a creative approach to problems or issues. It includes “thinking outside of the box” to go beyond the conventional, and to explore creative uses of resources.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	<b>Not demonstrated or no opportunity to observe</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>Uses a common sense approach to solve problems:</b> Uses simple rules, common sense and past experiences to recognize problems. Responds to situations at face value. Identifies component parts of problems or situations. Breaks problems down into simple lists, activities or tasks, without assigning values or priorities. Sees single causal links between components of a problem/situation (e.g., “if this, then that” thinking).
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<b>Is open to new ideas/solutions:</b> Is open minded when presented with a new perspective. Applies new information to work problems and situations. Recognizes when a situation calls for or can be improved by an approach different from the usual.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Understands and acts on basic relationships:</b> Breaks down a problem/issue into its component parts. Identifies discrepancies, trends and interrelationships in data. Recognizes and acts on cause and effect relationships (A leads to B). Recognizes that problems may be multi-dimensional. Divides issues into categories (e.g., pros and cons). Looks behind the face value of a set of facts; understands less obvious implications. Uses knowledge and/or experience to understand, evaluate and solve problems/issues.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<b>Identifies and considers options to solve a problem or issue:</b> Generates multiple alternative solutions. Thinks imaginatively in order to develop creative solutions or options for which there are few or no precedents. Thinks “outside of the box” to identify new solutions. Evaluates alternative solutions and identifies and acts on the optimum course of action. Is prepared to try out different solutions while maintaining a safe environment. Recognizes underlying issues and the implications of decisions or courses of action.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<b>Solves complex problems:</b> Solves complex problems that may involve using several analytical or creative techniques to break the problem down into component parts or issues. Applies complex learned concepts when examining patterns or trends. Adapts existing frameworks to approach a situation from a different perspective. Examines potential implications of decisions/solutions on all affected stakeholder groups, which may include several areas/departments across the agency.

Please provide behavioural evidence that supports the competency rating:

## INITIATIVE

Check the highest level at which you, or the person you are rating, consistently demonstrates the behaviours at that level *and* all of the levels that precede it for this competency.

<b>Initiative</b>		
Initiative is about taking action, proactively doing things and not simply thinking about future actions. The time frame of this scale moves from addressing current opportunities or problems (being reactive) to acting on future opportunities or problems (being proactive). People with this competency are action-oriented – they act in the present to create value in the future.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	<b>Not demonstrated or no opportunity to observe</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>Addresses current opportunities or problems:</b> Recognizes and acts upon present opportunities or problems (usually within a one or two day timeframe). Takes the initiative – identifies a current problem and takes ownership of it, working on it until it is resolved. Takes action to overcome immediate obstacles/barriers to success. Is alert to opportunities for innovative solutions to problems and pursues them. Works independently, does his/her work without constant supervision.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<b>Takes action under pressure:</b> Makes time-critical decisions even when only limited information may be available. Acts promptly and with confidence when a situation requires a quick decision. Proactively manages own time.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Thinks and plans ahead:</b> Thinks ahead and plans for contingencies and effectively prepares and organizes resources and activities (usually taking place within 3 months). Makes sure things aren't left to chance; sets up contingency plans to deal with last minute changes, ensures sufficient follow-up to check on progress, uncover potential problems and identify areas where support/assistance might be needed. Anticipates and prepares for problems that may interfere with work or attainment of results.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<b>Implements short-term plans:</b> Puts plan(s) in place and effectively implements them. Makes use of available resources and identifies alternatives to meet short-term goals.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<b>Implements longer term comprehensive plan(s):</b> Puts comprehensive plan(s) in place and effectively implements them. Makes creative use of available resources or identifies alternatives to meet major or strategic goals. Anticipates the potential ramifications of current actions on future events (e.g., liability, legal actions) and takes immediate long-term action to mitigate the risk/delays/difficulties they cause. Creates an environment in which proactivity/initiative is valued.

Please provide behavioural evidence that supports the competency rating:

## INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS AND RESPECT

Check the highest level at which you, or the person you are rating, consistently demonstrates the behaviours at that level *and* all of the levels that precede it for this competency.

<b>Interpersonal Relations and Respect</b>		
Interpersonal Relations and Respect involves dealing with people in a respectful and sensitive manner. It implies truly listening, understanding, accepting and respecting the opinions, feelings, perspectives and motivations of others. It is also the demonstrated willingness to use this knowledge to shape one's own responses and to show a concern for the welfare, dignity and feelings of others.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	<b>Not demonstrated or no opportunity to observe</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>Listens respectfully to others:</b> Treats people with respect, dignity and courtesy in all situations. Listens respectfully to others; picks up clues to others' feelings or meanings, or listens when approached by others. Pays close attention to and accurately interprets behaviours of others (e.g., body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, nuances, questions).
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<b>Actively seeks to understand and responds appropriately:</b> Takes the time to draw out and understand the interests, concerns and objectives of others. Responds to people's concerns by altering one's own behaviour in a helpful, "responsive" manner. Respects others' values and goals. Shows concern, consideration and respect for others, including people with different values, background, culture and personalities. Able to gain the confidence of others and establish good working rapport with people from different backgrounds or cultures.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Effectively uses empathy:</b> Genuinely sees things from another person's perspective. Takes a careful read of the atmosphere to accurately anticipate how individuals and groups will react, and tailors approach accordingly, pushing forward or holding back, as necessary. Determines and uses the best response to calm irate, upset, or agitated individuals/clients who find themselves in stressful or crisis situations (e.g., uses humour, empathic listening, explanations, etc.). Sincerely cares for what people are experiencing and acts accordingly. Consistently and effortlessly adjusts behaviours to current, unexpressed or poorly expressed thoughts, concerns, or feelings to enhance the relationship. Produces good results when working with others by displaying tact, cooperation, sensitivity and respect for the opinions and situations of others and their culture.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<b>Understands deep underlying issues/needs and adjusts behaviours accordingly:</b> Displays an in-depth understanding of the ongoing reasons for a person's behaviour or responses and adapts his or her behaviours and uses this information to present, persuade, interact and work effectively with others. Makes an assessment of a person's specific strengths, weaknesses, and needs based on a deeper understanding of the individual. Takes into account the interrelationships between the individual, their culture, their community, their history and how this impacts their behaviours.

Please provide behavioural evidence that supports the competency rating:



## PLANNING AND ORGANIZING

Check the highest level at which you, or the person you are rating, consistently demonstrates the behaviours at that level *and* all of the levels that precede it for this competency.

<b>Planning and Organizing</b>		
Establishes an efficient course of action to ensure accomplishment of specific objectives and work plans. It involves being able to set time-lines, by judging the level of difficulty of tasks and projects.		
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	<b>Not demonstrated or no opportunity to observe</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<b>Responds to day-to-day position responsibilities:</b> Effectively manages priorities and responsibilities with attention to detail. Plans with realistic time frames for the completion of projects and responsibilities. Breaks down responsibilities to make sure every-day tasks and projects move forward. Seeks input when completing projects to make sure they are done as expected. Being able to report the status of one's own work at all times
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<b>Adapts to changing priorities and needs:</b> Accepts that priorities and position responsibilities will change, Evaluate time frames for completion of projects and responsibilities in order to stay on track, Identify potential problems or issues as they arise and make necessary adjustments to complete position or department responsibilities, Manage multiple priorities by planning with appropriate persons and realizing realistic time demands involved.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<b>Anticipates potential issues:</b> Manages multiple tasks and responsibilities for different teams and programs, Maintains and organizes resources for internal groups, teams, and committees, Notify and collaborate with appropriate people making them aware of potential issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<b>Plan processes to reduce potential issues:</b> Think "outside of the box" to identify new solutions that can impact the position, department or agency, Anticipates future needs within the position responsibilities, Assist with developing solutions to address future opportunities and reduce risk.

<b>Please provide behavioural evidence that supports the competency rating:</b>

## CAQ SUMMARY

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Transfer your competency rating on each competency to create an overall summary of competency strengths and areas for development. Indicate whether the competency is a strength (i.e., the rating is at the target level or higher) or an area for development (i.e., the rating is below the target level for the role).

Competency	Behavioural Level Assessed	Target Level for the Role	Competency Strength or Area for Development?
Collaboration		4	<input type="checkbox"/> Competency strength <input type="checkbox"/> Area for development
Creative Problem Solving & Decision Making		4	<input type="checkbox"/> Competency strength <input type="checkbox"/> Area for development
Initiative		4	<input type="checkbox"/> Competency strength <input type="checkbox"/> Area for development
Interpersonal Relations & Respect		4	<input type="checkbox"/> Competency strength <input type="checkbox"/> Area for development
Planning and Organizing		4	<input type="checkbox"/> Competency strength <input type="checkbox"/> Area for development

Which competencies do you see as your key strengths (or those of the person you are assessing)?

Which 2-3 competencies do you see as your key areas for developmental focus (or those of the person you are assessing)?