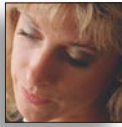# Competencies and Competitiveness

People.   Not money, not buildings, not tools: Competent people are

your most valuable resource.   You need the right ones, the dedicated

ones with drive and good instincts.   You want them as your managers,

your supervisors, your division heads: Organizers and visionaries who

But how can you find those people?

keep your business in top form, efficient now and prepared for the future.

And how can you promote those qualities among

And you want competence, dedication, and drive in your people:

your existing employees?

Men and women who routinely get the job done right and on time.

But how can you find those people? And how can you promote those qualities among your existing employees?

These are the key questions that you need answered:

• How can I create a unified, motivated work-force?
• How can I retain and develop my best people?
• How do I find the candidates best suited for promotion?
• What–exactly–should I look for in applicants?

Answers to these key questions will help you refocus your company, drawing your entire work-force together into a united, highly motivated team. You'll see more cooperation among your managers, leading to better coordination and less internal competition. You'll see productivity increase as workers come aboard with the new system. You'll see overhead decrease as everyone recognizes the rewards for personal effectiveness.

In particular, you want:

• Increased management focus
• Highly effective training programs
• Increased employee motivation and productivity
• Efficient screening for promotions
• More certainty in hiring

These are the goals, but they seem elusive. Fortunately there is a way to integrate motivation, retention, recruitment, and training by focusing your human resources program on the key concept of employee competencies.

Competencies:
How They'll Work for You

The skills and knowledge top performers apply in their work are called competencies. These competencies include personal characteristics, motives, self-concepts, knowledge, and behavioral skills. The more complex the job, the more important these competencies are.

Workitect analyzes key jobs in your company, task by task, to create competency models. The model for each job identifies the key competencies an employee needs to excel in that particular job. This process systematically identifies critical competencies that cause or predict outstanding job performance.

For more than thirty years, we have worked with client organizations to create these mod-els for outstanding performance in strategic jobs. Identifying, understanding, and increasing employee competence is what Workitect is all about. By assessing key jobs in your company and creating competency models for them, Workitect can help you:

• Identify key skills and traits that mark the effective employee
• Develop employee review templates that rate workers on primary competencies
• Develop an in-house training process directed toward crucial skills and attitudes
• Produce competency profiles to aid in promotion and hiring

Creating an Integrated Human Resource System

Competencies are the key to executing your company's strategy and reaching your long-range goals. But the essential first step is establishing clear short-range and long-range directions. Companies that skimp on clarification risk developing competency programs that emphasize the wrong skills and confuse employees.

Once you've clarified your strategic directions you're ready to build a competency-based system that will strengthen and support your company into the future. The result of this effort will be an integrated human resource system that:

• Assesses the competencies of current employees
• Rewards employees who meet job goals and develop target competencies
• Provides training and development programs to build key competencies
• Promotes employees strong in needed competencies to fill vacant positions

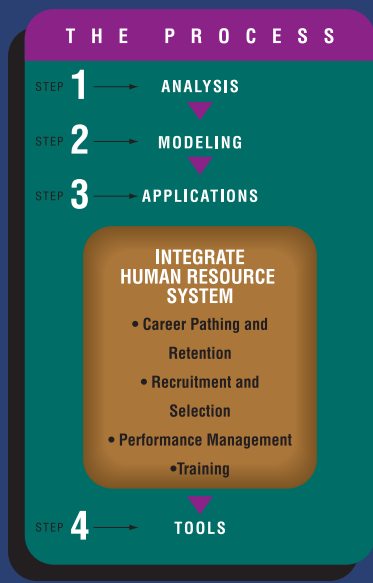### The Benefits of an Integrated System

The bottom-line benefits of a competency-based system are obvious: Employee motivation leads to increased productivity and higher profits. But the real values of an integrated human resource system are more complex–and more powerful. Focusing on competencies will renew your company. You'll uncover startling energies and synergies that can give you the responsive, competitive
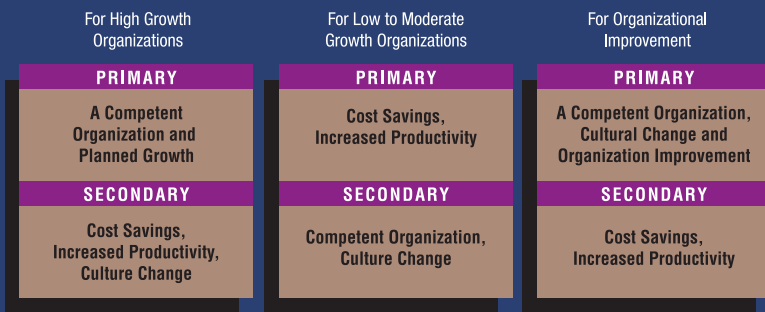
THE PROCESS

STEP 1 → ANALYSIS
▼
STEP 2 → MODELING
▼
STEP 3 → APPLICATIONS

INTEGRATE HUMAN RESOURCE SYSTEM
- Career Pathing and Retention
- Recruitment and Selection
- Performance Management
- Training

▼
STEP 4 → TOOLS
▼

THE PAYOFFS

For High Growth Organizations	For Low to Moderate Growth Organizations	For Organizational Improvement
PRIMARY	**PRIMARY**	**PRIMARY**
A Competent Organization and Planned Growth	Cost Savings, Increased Productivity	A Competent Organization, Cultural Change and Organization Improvement
SECONDARY	**SECONDARY**	**SECONDARY**
Cost Savings, Increased Productivity, Culture Change	Competent Organization, Culture Change	Cost Savings, Increased Productivity

Competencies are the key to executing your company's strategy and reaching your long-range goals.

edge you need. Here's what you can expect:

Enhanced Management: With corporate goals clearly defined and a system of employee rewards in place that supports those goals, managers feel empowered. They communicate more effectively with subordinates and with each other. Work proceeds more efficiently. Quality measures go up.

Motivated and Committed Employees: By involving employees in building your new competency-based system, you ensure their early engagement with it. And because the new system rewards employees for overcoming real, daily challenges, people develop a sense of appreciation and commitment. Less time is lost to wasteful activities. Employees put creative energy into completing their tasks.

Increased Corporate Effectiveness: As all levels of your organization align with company goals, overall effectiveness increases dramatically. And the focus on adding and refining key competencies augments this increase continuously. Individual employees become more effective and, as a whole, your company becomes more dynamic, more competent.

Easier Cultural Change and Organizational Improvement: A competency-based, integrated human resource system supports your company's strategic direction. Necessary change becomes simpler when both management and employee goals are defined in terms of the company's success. With little incentive to cling to older methods or attitudes, both management and employees participate more willingly when change is necessary.

Increased Resilience to Market Pressures: Your company responds to outside stresses not as threats but as challenges. At every level, the goal is not individual survival but group adaptation. By linking employee well-being to corporate health, you tap the creativity and motivation you need to stay competitive.

Cost Savings and Increased Productivity: An integrated human resource system cuts redundancy and waste. It gives overlapping and competing departments incentive to cooperate and coordinate their work. Individual employees see that they benefit by finding more efficient, effective ways to do their work. Less time and material are wasted. Productivity goes up.

Bringing the Power of Competencies to You

Workitect helps you create the best human resources structure for your unique culture and your particular business needs. We don't have prepackaged, one-size-fits-all solutions. Our consultants use their experience to adapt powerful concepts to fit your particular needs and culture.

The advantages of this personalized approach are obvious:
• Careful attention to your special attributes and dynamics
• Ongoing adjustment to your management and employee responses
• A precision-fit human resources process designed especially for you

When Workitect's work is completed, your company will be in tune, its vigor renewed as its overall effectiveness increases measurably.

In early meetings with our consultants, you'll select one class of jobs, or "job family," critical to the success of your company. We then assess the jobs in that family to determine the exact competencies that enable your best employees to do their work so well. This assessment consists of the following steps.

Groundwork and Planning

We begin by identifying the immediate uses you'll have for your competency models. Next we review and customize a generic set of building-block competencies. These basic competencies form the foundation on which we'll build your unique job competency models.

Data Collection

Once we identify the job families to be modeled, we organize focus groups. Each group consists of three to five employees in each target job and one to three managers who supervise employees in that job. These are the topics those focus groups address:

Identify ways in which the target job is changing because of changes in:

- Your company
- The industry
- The marketplace
- Technology

Define the primary responsibilities of employees in this job. For each responsibility, identify:

- Tasks necessary for its fulfillment
- Performance outcome measures
- Skills required for effectiveness

Identify situations that employees in this job face today— and will face in the future.

Review the building-block competencies (customized earlier) and rate their importance for this job.

From the list of building blocks, select a set of competencies for this job.

Review, revise, and add to the set of specific behaviors for each selected competency.

In addition to the focus groups, we also conduct behavioral-event interviews with four to six superior performers in each target job group. These interviews add depth to the data collected in focus groups. Frequently we can identify particular experiences and events that signal development of desired competencies.

The final product of the job assessment is a collection of Job Competency Models for critical jobs. While the assessment itself is a valuable tool for understanding and improving group processes within your company, the Job Competency Models are your company's keys to virtually unlimited self-regeneration.

To construct these models, we bring together all data gathered from focus groups, surveys, and behavioral-event interviews. We prepare and circulate a draft job model for each job, based on data from the focus groups and interviews. Using feedback from your employees, we then produce, for each critical job selected at the beginning of the process, a final model containing the following specifications:

- Purpose and content of the job, including tasks, responsibilities, and performance measures
- A rating scheme that identifies the frequency and importance of particular tasks
- Formats which can be used to compare that job with other jobs
- Competency requirements for the job in terms of the skills and characteristics required for adequate and for superior performance
- Career paths that produce superior candidates for the job
- Process by which the key competencies for that critical job are developed

Career Pathing and Retention

Job Competency Models provide detailed maps for existing employees to follow as they plan their careers and self-development. The model for

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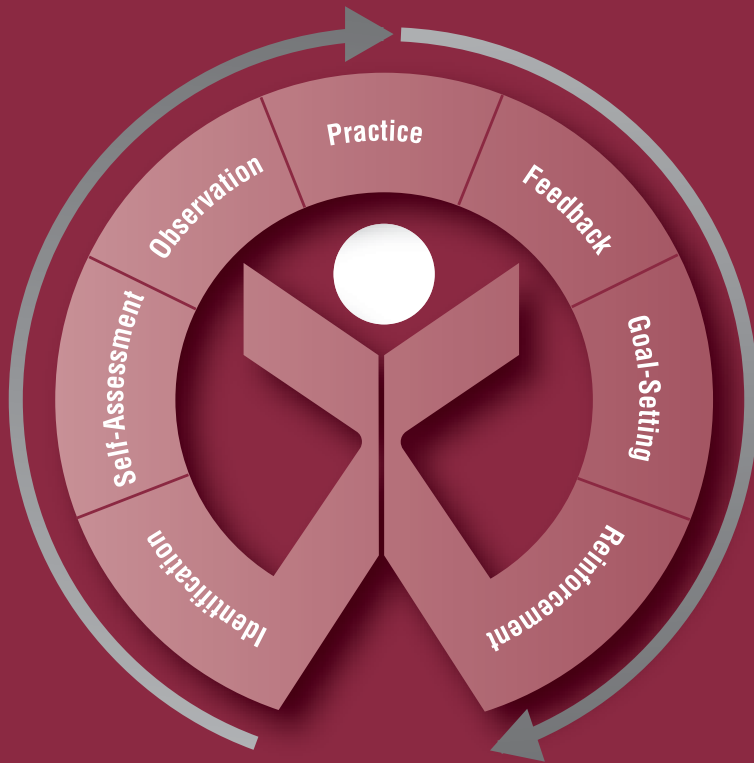
Imagine the positive, energizing effect these changes will make in your company.

continued

any given job describes the exact competencies necessary to advance to that job, giving aspirants both secure information and incentive to acquire those competencies. That's the kind of open opportunity that keeps talented and ambitious people working for you.

Recruitment and Selection

Today you may have all your players in place, but every new day brings the possibility of change. Retirement, outside recruitment, personal difficulties: These and many other events can leave you with holes to fill–and anxiety about the quality of the people you'll choose to fill them.

By applying Job Competency Models to the promotion and hiring processes, your senior management can greatly simplify their work. Models identify optimal career paths to look for, simplifying the search for candidates. Models also describe in detail the exact competencies employees will need to perform well in their jobs.

Performance Management

Performance assessments underlie decisions about employee rewards and promotions. Unfortunately many employees feel they have little control over the results of their work. You can counter this perception by linking employees' rewards to their competent performance in defined areas. By doing this you empower workers and encourage cooperative, team-building behavior.

Job Competency Modeling provides an excellent base for performance management. As with development and recruitment, employee assessment is based on accurate, detailed information about job performance. To appraise this performance effectively, your managers need:
• Accurate job-performance standards
• Clear descriptions of job behaviors required to perform specific job tasks
• Indicators of both average and superior job competencies

When you use competency models to provide these data, assessments yield useful, practical recommendations. Skill-based compensation systems also explicitly tie rewards to the development of key competencies. This gives employees greater control over their professional development and offers incentive for excellence to workers and managers on every level.

Training

Competency modeling provides a truly ideal framework for your training program. Studies show that competency-based training offers a return on investment (ROI) nearly ten times higher than the ROI of traditional training methods. And improvement of your training is central to Workitect's purpose. We have developed a process entitled the Competency Acquisition Process (CAP) for managing training efforts through increasing levels of competencies. The CAP consists of seven steps, outlined below.

Identification of Required Competencies: Job Competency Models supply this information, or a simpler, less detailed system can be used for non-critical jobs.

Assessment: Employees assess their current competencies and compare them to examples of superior performance. Performance assessments by managers are obvious tools as well. Employees and managers then decide which skills to focus on.

Observation and Study: Employees study examples or models of superior performance. Trainers provide supporting information to aid participants' comprehension.

Practice: After acquiring a basic understanding of the concepts involved, participants move to practical, job-related applications of their new knowledge.

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Feedback: Trainers observe participants applying their new knowledge and offer constructive feedback and reinforcement.

Goal-Setting: Trainers work with employees to set specific goals and action plans for applying new competencies back on the job.

On-the-Job-Support: Supervisor and peers reinforce and support each individual's demonstration of newly acquired skills.

When your employees enter this cyclical process of planning their own development and acquiring necessary training, everyone benefits. They take responsibility for their own career paths, their own job security, and you gain an ever more skilled and competent workforce. Improved performance, bonuses, increased productivity, and career advancement spell success for everyone.

STEP
4
HANDING YOU THE TOOLS

We at Workitect want your company to benefit to the fullest from your competency-based system. That's why our work isn't finished until we show you how to replicate the process of identifying competencies, modeling them, and applying them thoroughly. With these valuable tools, you can spread the competency focus throughout your company.

We'll show you all the steps necessary to assess completely any job or job family, and to produce thorough Job Competency Models. We'll also show you alternative methods to achieve serviceable results in less time or at smaller cost. For example: You can build workable–though less precise–Job Competency Models quickly and at low cost through single interviews with superior employees in targeted jobs and a panel discussion with these employees and their managers. Small-scale models constructed this way provide many of the benefits of the full-scale models but require a smaller time and resource investment.

In addition to showing you how to produce standard models of existing jobs, we teach you the principles of competency-based management.

Using these principles, you can devise strategies for dealing with such difficult personnel situations as these:

Re-engineering: Build competency models for jobs that don't yet exist. This lets you hire the people you need right from the start.

Downsizing: Use competency models to reassign tasks to the employees best suited to do them well.

Mergers: Construct new models rapidly to help your newly combined workforces work efficiently together.

The focus of our work is providing you with the tools you need to face the future confidently. Workitect wants your human resources system to work effectively for you, constantly renewing and improving your company.

Results You Can Count On

Say yes to increased competence. Say yes to increased effectiveness. Say yes to Workitect, the source for precision-built human resource programs.

When you choose Workitect, you say yes to:

• Empowerment of managers by a human resource system that actively supports company goals

• Motivated employees committed to corporate effectiveness as a means to self-improvement

• Constant growth in corporate effectiveness as all levels of your organization align with company goals

• A process of corporate change that draws more willing participation from employees on all levels

• Increased competitiveness and resilience in the marketplace, made possible by smoother internal transitions

• Increased productivity and ongoing cost reductions as employees make personal effectiveness a priority

Imagine the positive, energizing effect these changes will make in your company. Can you afford not to choose Workitect?

> **"Workitect taught us how to build and effectively use competency models. If you want to learn to internalize the processes of competency modeling, you can't pick a better organization to show you how."**
>
> *Corporate Manager,*
> *Human Resource Development*
> *Cable & Wireless, Inc.*

Building
Competence

800-870-9490 *www.workitect.com*