

Volume 2

October 2010

Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy

Core Competencies

The Core Competencies Newsletter
For Ontario's Developmental Services

Message from Steven Finlay,
CoChair of the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy Steering Committee

Quote about
Competencies:

The Core Competencies



The Core Competencies for the Developmental Services Sector were developed by the Hay Group, in collaboration with the Core Competencies Committee and many representatives of Ontario's Developmental Service Sector, including Direct Support Professionals and Executive Directors. The Core Competencies were validated by people who receive support as well as family members. The Hay Group submitted the report "Building Human Resource Capacity: Core Competencies for Ontario Developmental Services Sector" and the Competency Dictionary for 6 key positions in the sector, as well as an Executive Director Dictionary. In this newsletter we will explore the competencies "Developing Others" and "Holding People Accountable", which are competencies related to the Supervisor, Manager and Director roles. We will also look at the competency "Fostering Independence in Others" which related to Direct Support Professionals, Specialized Support Employees, Clinical Specialists, Managers and Directors. The definitions for the core competencies and the strategies for thinking about, and developing the competencies come from the Developmental Resource Guide, (DRG) also developed by the Hay Group. The DRG is being piloted at the sixteen pilot sites.

The DRG is being piloted at the sixteen pilot sites.



Fostering Independence in Others

Competencies Highlights

There are competencies identified specifically for seven key positions in the field.

What is it?: *this is about enabling others to be self-sufficient and to nurture self-determination. It is also the sharing of responsibility with individuals and groups so that they have a deep sense of commitment and ownership.*

What **DOES** this mean?

- Letting others make mistakes in a non critical setting; trusting their judgement skills and abilities while showing respect for their intelligence
- Making positive comments regarding individuals, employees and families current and expected abilities and potential

What **DOESN'T** this mean?

- Relying on others to "figure things out themselves"
- Controlling everything; second guessing everyone
- Assigning the same tasks to the same people all the time and giving the solutions to problems before they have had the opportunity to solve them

Thinking about *Fostering Independence in Others*:

- Demonstrate respect for other by monitoring the way in which you speak about the people you support and members of your team. When providing recognition, reflect, did your public praise make the person feel stronger and more capable.
- Demonstrate respect for others in the way in which you speak about the people you support and members of your team, check yourself to ensure that you speak positively about the strengths and capabilities of others and refrain, whenever possible, from criticizing others in your conversations.
- Make a concerted effort to steadily increase the amount of positive/ negative feedback you provide so the ratio of positive to negative is about 3 to 1.
- The book "Coaching, Counselling and Mentoring: How to Choose the Right Technique to Boost Employee Performance", by Florence M Stone, will show you the benefits to coaching, mentoring and counselling your employees to achieve the best results for your organization.



Holding People Accountable

What is it?: *Holding People Accountable* is about communicating in a direct way what one wants or requires of others. It includes giving directions, setting limits, and holding people accountable for performance, insisting on high performance, with the long-term good of the organization in mind. It involves being firm and assertive, and stepping up to difficult decisions.

What **DOES** this mean?

- Giving clear instructions as to what you expect from others
- Setting and communicating standards for performance
- Working with staff to set standards for performance

What **DOESN'T** this mean?

- Giving assignments without deadlines or with unclear quality requirements
- Assuming employees know what is expected of them
- Ordering employees around in an inappropriate manner, showing little respect

Thinking about *Holding People Accountable*:

- Using the input of your colleagues, review each situation and identify those where you could have been more firm or clear on expectations.
- Reflect on what do you need to do to modify or alter your behaviour to ensure you are setting clear goals and creating accountability.
- If you are unclear about your own standards and limits for high performance and for acceptable behaviour. Ask yourself what your standards are. List them.



Developing Others

What is it?: *this competency involves a genuine intent and passion to foster the long-term learning or development of others through encouraging, managing performance and coaching, in order to fulfill the current and future skill requirements of both individuals within the profession and the organization.*

What **DOES** this mean?

- Taking the time to work with staff on developmental strategies
- Providing behavioural feedback and support to someone after a setback
- Assigning appropriate and helpful work experiences and training to foster the learning and development of direct reports

What **DOESN'T** this mean?

- Taking a “no news is good news” approach
- Telling other people what an individual should have done differently but not telling the individual directly
- Simply reviewing employee progress through their written work or what others say
- Putting off dealing with developmental planning

Thinking about *Developing Others*:

- Assist employees in enhancing their confidence in their abilities by being frank, providing negative as well as positive feedback, while ensuring that you make clear what they can do to improve.
- When delegating tasks, include a discussion about the individual’s need in terms of training, information, tools, etc, to complete the task.
- The movie the Karate Kid is the story of an adolescent who learns how to fight and how not to fight. There is a good depiction of empowerment along with development.

Agency Implementation Team Guidelines

The Core Competencies are being tested at 16 pilot sites. Other Developmental Service agencies, at this time can take action to educate and familiarize themselves with the core competencies in preparation for a provincial launch. The implementation of core competencies at a local level should be lead by an “Agency Implementation Team”. In an effort to assist agencies with the development of their Agency Implementation Team a document outlining guidelines has been developed and piloted. The purpose of this document is to provide pilot site agencies with guidelines in the formation of collaborative Agency Implementation Teams. This document is a companion document to the “Intention of core competencies” as developed by the Human Resources Shared Interests Committee. Together these documents provide an initial framework for developing collaborative direct support employee and management implementation teams at pilot site agencies. The foundational principle of committee membership is that it is a collaborative effort led by a manager responsible for human resource training and organizational development and a direct support employee responsible for representing the perspectives of employees. These partners will share responsibilities and provide leadership for the committee throughout the pilot process. There should be an equal number of managers and direct support employees involved in the Agency Implementation Teams. Throughout the pilot initiative the Provincial Implementation Committee will continue to review the document “Guidelines for Collaborative Agency Implementation Teams” at the local agency core competencies pilot sites. It is our intention that we will have a very helpful and well tested guide to assist all agencies in developing an effective and collaborative Agency Implementation Team.

Questions and Answers

Questions and Answers
 A question and answer document has been developed and is being used at the Pilot Sites

Why do we need core competencies?

- As a result of ongoing developments in developmental services in Ontario and new legislative changes, employee roles are undergoing a significant transition from one of “shielding and protecting” to one of “empowering”; to reflect a transformation from “supporting individuals” to “inclusion” and “meaningful participation/full citizenship”. This transformation will be supported by recognized behavioural competencies, that are congruent with its vision, values and principles and recognize and value the contribution of developmental service professionals. It is expected that most of our current employees already embody these competencies but this both puts a “name” to desired behaviours and also reinforces the importance of certain behaviours during this period of transition.
- The introduction of competencies also provides a clear framework for the hiring of new employees and the development of future employees by the colleges.

When will they be introduced at my agency?

- The Core Competencies Pilot Project was officially launched on February 23rd 2010. Sixteen agencies representing developmental service agencies from across the province were selected to implement core competencies in their agencies. This pilot will continue through 2010. Following the pilot the DS HR Strategy Steering Committee will review the information collected from the pilot to form the strategy for province wide implementation of core competencies in all developmental service agencies. Rollout across the sector is expected to commence in 2011 pending the review of the results from the pilot agencies.

For more information about the Core Competencies or the Developmental Services Human Resource Strategy
 Or to have your name added or removed from the distribution list for this newsletter