

Core Competencies for Strategic Leaders

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Core Competencies for All Strategic Leaders

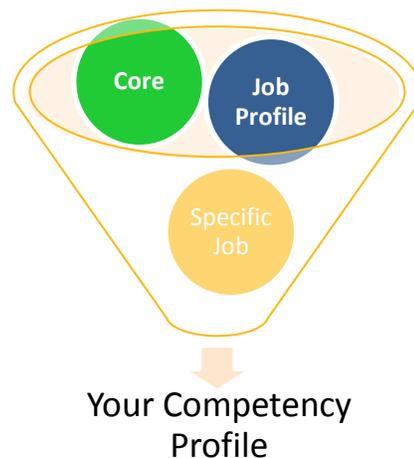
The term competency has various definitions and may seem abstract, but a “behavioural competency” amounts to the meeting of knowledge, a skill, or a mindset, and how you apply this knowledge and demonstrate these skills, attitudes, and behaviours in the workplace. Often, acquiring new knowledge or a new skill is the first step in developing a new competency, but it must also be applied with the appropriate mindset, and translated to actual workplace behaviours to become a mastered behavioural competency.

There are six core competencies that all Strategic Leaders in the BC Public Service are expected to demonstrate:

- Building Strategic Alliances
- Vision and Goal Setting
- Creating and Managing Change
- Solving Problems Creatively
- Promoting Empowerment
- Executive Presence

These behavioural competencies have been identified as core to Strategic Leaders through a series of consultations including a survey of Strategic Leaders, a focus group of selected Strategic Leaders, and input and approval by the BC Public Service Assistant Deputy Ministers’ Strategic Leadership Advisory Group. These six competencies have been identified as among the most common already in use in Strategic Leadership positions, and the ones that are the most critical in the majority of roles.

In addition to the six core behavioural competencies for all Strategic Leaders, there are also job profile-specific competencies that may be used for hiring, development and performance where a role is more focused on a specific function or set of responsibilities. The use of job profile-specific competencies is optional, while the six core competencies are expected to be demonstrated by all Strategic Leaders.



The competencies for each job profile are listed below.

Job Profile	Related Competency
Service Delivery	Motivating for Peak Performance
Project Management	Building Team Orientation, Design Strategy and Structure
Governance	Design Strategy and Structure
Negotiations	Negotiating/Conflict Management
Stakeholder Relations	Communicating Effectively

It's also important to note that Strategic Leaders may have other competencies listed in addition to their core and job-specific competencies that may be listed on their specific job description. For example, Aboriginal Behavioural Competencies may be key in some positions, and specific financial competencies in others. This guide provides the definitions for the six core and five job profile-specific competencies only.

Core Competency Definitions

Building Strategic Alliances

Building Strategic Alliances involves knowledge and skills to engage in internal and external stakeholder analysis and to negotiate agreements and alliances based on a full understanding of power and politics. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Builds multiple external collaborative relationships to support unit performance
- Identifies and accommodates external political activities that could affect the work and success of the unit
- Takes political and organizational realities into account when dealing with issues
- Identifies the key issues and accommodates the key players when dealing with external parties/units on joint projects
- Takes an inclusive approach when working with diverse stakeholders.

Vision and Goal Setting

Vision and goal setting involves knowledge and skills in establishing official and operative goals for the organization/units and to establish a system of measuring effectiveness of goal attainment. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Develops a vision for the unit and translates this vision into action
- Whenever possible, involves the unit in the creation of the vision and plan
- Communicates corporate goals and objectives within the unit
- Aligns unit tasks and objectives with corporate goals and objectives
- Establishes clear targets and measures to track progress toward unit objectives
- Shares organizational performance measurement information and encourages dialogue and analysis

Creating and Managing Change

Creating and managing change involves knowledge and skills to manage in the organization through setting direction and urgency, building a coalition of support, communicating widely, handling resistance to change and facilitating implementation of successful change actions. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Develops and uses different methods to help employees to positively react to change
- Actively embraces change efforts and initiatives to improve unit performance
- Works with others to identify creative ideas to manage change in the unit
- Works to build support, remove organizational barriers and get the necessary resources to implement change
- Applies best practices in change management models to create employee buy in and achieve sustained change

Solving Problems Creatively

Solving problems creatively involves knowledge and skills in fostering creative problem solving in the organization through critical reflection, problem analysis, risk assessment and rewarding innovation. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Uses innovative methods and technologies to get things done
- Reframes or restructures problems in a different way, when necessary, to solve them
- Is willing to try radically different ways of solving a problem even if it has never been done before
- Uses collaborative approaches to increase creativity and innovation

Promoting Empowerment

Promoting empowerment involves knowledge and skills in using processes such as delegation and information sharing to enhance subordinate ownership and empowerment over their task and performance. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Looks for opportunities for delegation to occur in the unit whenever possible
- Empowers employees to take risks, supports them when things go wrong and encourages them to learn from setbacks and failures
- Gives subordinates the authority and resources to get the job done when assigning responsibility for task accomplishment
- Holds subordinates responsible for the successful completion of tasks assigned
- Coaches employees to achieve their goals
- Has an awareness of demographic trends and generational differences when working with employees

Executive Presence

Building Executive Presence involves knowledge and skills in influencing others and having an observable impact at the executive level, through personal credibility, leadership, confidence, and an understanding of other people's perspectives and interests. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Gets ideas heard and uses good judgement to achieve appropriate impact at an executive level
- Builds credibility based on using expertise in an honest and consistent manner
- Uses body language and visual image to convey confidence, engagement and composure
- Thinks before speaking and states own perspective confidently, even in the face of challenge by others who hold power or influence
- Communicates effectively by using clear language and level of detail appropriate to the audience, and is aware of their effect upon others.

Job Profile Competency Definitions

Service Delivery: Motivating for Peak Performance

Motivating for peak performance involves knowledge and skills in using motivational techniques such as job design, role clarification, reward systems and performance appraisal to motivate optimum subordinate performance. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Creates a work environment where employees are challenged and fulfilled
- Recognizes and rewards good performance in the unit
- Assigns tasks and responsibilities in a manner consistent with subordinates' interests and abilities without compromising unit objectives
- Distributes rewards to subordinates fairly and clearly communicates the distribution rationale
- Understands the main drivers of employee engagement and what drives performance
- Takes a coaching approach to performance conversations

Project Management: Building Team Orientation

Building team orientation involves knowledge and skills in developing group identity, participative decision making and open and effective communication. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Creates teams that have the right mix of people, values all team members, and recognizes each team member's unique contribution
- Fosters team cohesion by getting involved in the day-to-day events of the unit
- Provides the information the teams need to achieve their goals and objectives
- Involves team members in decision making when their commitment is important for implementation
- Identifies and engages in team development activities as needed

Project Management: Designing Strategy and Structure

Designing strategy and structure involves knowledge and skills in the analysis of the environment, size of the organization, strategy and use of technology. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Takes constraints and opportunities into account when setting goals and making plans for the unit
- Organizes people and resources in the unit to make the structure compatible with the unit's strategic plan
- Adopts appropriate work methods, systems and processes for achieving unit goals
- Ensures that the unit's goals, structure, strategy and work methods all fit well together (are compatible with each other)
- Views business processes through a Lean lens

Governance: Designing Strategy and Structure

Designing strategy and structure involves knowledge and skills in the analysis of the environment, size of the organization, strategy and use of technology. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Takes constraints and opportunities into account when setting goals and making plans for the unit
- Organizes people and resources in the unit to make the structure compatible with the unit's strategic plan
- Adopts appropriate work methods, systems and processes for achieving unit goals
- Ensures that the unit's goals, structure, strategy and work methods all fit well together (are compatible with each other)
- Views business processes through a Lean lens

Negotiations: Negotiating/Conflict Management

Negotiating/conflict management involves knowledge and skills to engage in two-party/multi-party negotiations and to facilitate third-party intervention or mediations into conflict situations. This job requires the following most of the time

- Builds consensus and seeks the cooperation of others when working with other parties/units
- Recognizes and manages difficult relationships by stressing the importance of valuing diverse viewpoints
- Manages conflict by focusing on participants underlying interests rather than their stated positions
- Deals with issues rather than personalities and does not make things personal in negotiation with external units

Stakeholder Relations: Communicating Effectively

Communicating effectively involves good presentation skills (verbal and written), careful listening, problem framing and use of presentation technologies. This job requires the following most of the time:

- Is clear and convincing when making presentations to external audiences
- Adapts presentation to the audience when speaking or presenting
- Listens carefully to different audiences in order to understand their key points and major concerns
- Frames issues so that different audiences can understand them
- Makes effective use of new technologies and platforms for communication

Developing Your Competencies

For helpful ideas on how to develop your competencies, please speak with your supervisor, watch for courses and workshops specifically targeting these competencies through the Learning Centre, or go to [MyHR](#) for more information.