

Building a Competency Management Model

BEST PRACTICES FOR TRANSITIONING TO FULL-SCALE PRODUCTION

In our previous Knowledge Brief, we shared the “regulatory” element of the learning and compliance infrastructure.

In this brief, we discuss a proven model to build competencies that improve business processes and performance. Specifically, we will explain why commercializing companies should consider “operational skills management programs” that properly define and measure the competencies that drive employee development and retention.

According to a recent Brandon Hall survey, 72% of organizations indicated that the most important factor in an individual’s decision to join - and stay in - an organization is the opportunity for leadership and technical skill-building. Emerging companies should strive to not only map out “core” competencies that align with company values, but also “functional competencies.” Here are the other types of competencies, according to a recent Brandon Hall whitepaper:

- **Leadership Competencies:** which skills and abilities do managers or and supervisors need to possess?
- **Functional Competencies:** what functional skills, regulatory knowledge and technical skills are required of each job function?
- **Career-path Competencies:** what are the skills necessary to advance to other positions in the organization?



Benefits of a Well-Defined Competency Management Program

There are several business benefits to building a competency management program:

- Addresses employees’ desire for purposeful and meaningful work, thus improving employee motivation and performance;
- Enables organization leaders to execute on a talent strategy that’s aligned with measurable business goals;
- Improves employee retention and engagement by focusing on skill growth potential and “mastery” opportunities;
- Aligns business process improvements and growth objectives with skill mastery in critical and scarce competencies;
- Enables Human Resources and department managers to identify critical skill gaps.

Building a Skills-Based Competency Management Program

UL experts have assisted clients with their operational skills management programs to improve business productivity and performance. Research has shown that high-performing organizations combine competency programs with HR practices that stress information-sharing, incentive-based compensation and targeted recruitment.

Because commercializing companies are just starting the process of defining technical competencies, managers and subject matter experts can build a competency map that identifies key skills and incorporates those competencies throughout the various processes (i.e., job evaluation, training, recruitment, etc.) of the organization.

The technical competencies reflect expectations for an immediate, short- and long-range view of production and operations. For example, our Advisory Solutions team worked with a pharmaceutical manufacturer to define a skills rating system for many GxP roles, so that employees could be better measured against a defined scale. In addition, the company wanted employees to be defined at a specific competency level for their role, so they could know how to advance to new levels.

To accomplish this, we helped the client build a “Skills Development Framework” to address both compliance and employee development challenges. Through this framework, “knowledge gaps” were tracked, and aligned with quality initiatives, so that the end result was a stronger performing workforce, and improved quality metrics.

Steps to Building a Technical Skills Framework:

