TRAINING MANUAL FOR COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

A step-by-step guide on developing competencies

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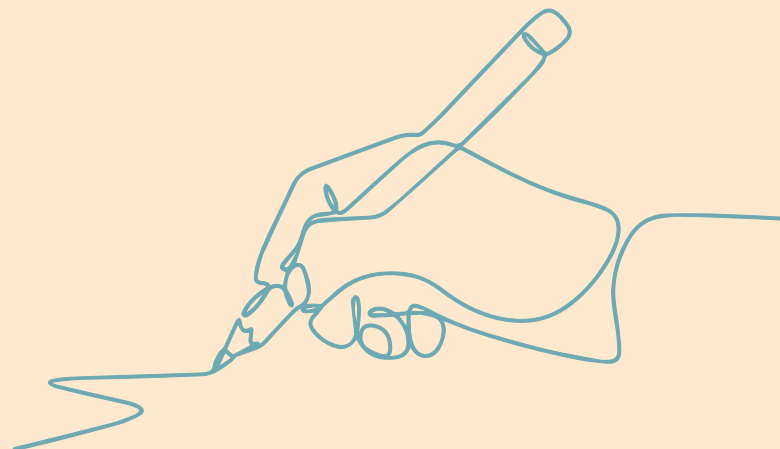A step-by-step guide on
developing competencies

CLOP | CREATING
LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR PUBLIC
OFFICIALS

CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASK   Attitudes, skills, knowledge

MDO   Ministries, departments and organisations

MOOC   Massive open online course

WAO   Work allocation order

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES AND BOXES

OVERVIEW

PURPOSE

This training manual is a guide on how to develop competencies relevant for ministries, departments, and organisations (MDOs) using a range of resources such as:

1. Work allocation orders
2. Course modules
3. Organograms/organisational charts
4. Official websites
5. Job descriptions
6. Recruitment notices

The manual is accompanied by a quality assurance checklist that outlines the quality standards and requirements with regards to competencies.

AUDIENCE

This training manual is intended for MDOs involved in developing and reviewing competencies.

SCOPE

This training manual answers the question 'What does an ideal competency look like?' by providing detailed instructions on how to define, research, document, and develop competencies. The manual is divided into three key sections:

1. **Section 1: Overview of competencies**

   This section provides an overview of competencies as stipulated under Mission Karmayogi, including a definition and an introduction to the ideal competency structure.

2. **Section 2: Developing competencies**

   This section provides overarching instructions for followed by step-by-step guides on how to develop specific competency information fields. Each individual sub-section includes:

   a. A definition
   b. A detailed step-by-step guide with examples
   c. Summary of the steps required for developing a competency*

3. **Section 3: Quality assurance checklist**

   Designed in a question format, this section provides a quality assurance checklist for each competency information field.

   * Please note that the steps used in this manual are only recommended and advisory in nature. They are not mandatory.
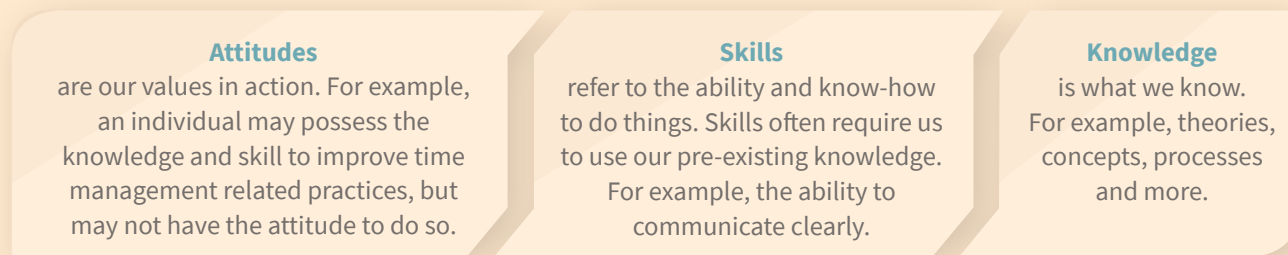
SECTION 1

OVERVIEW OF COMPETENCIES

This section presents an overview of competencies in terms of their definitions, types, and attributes.
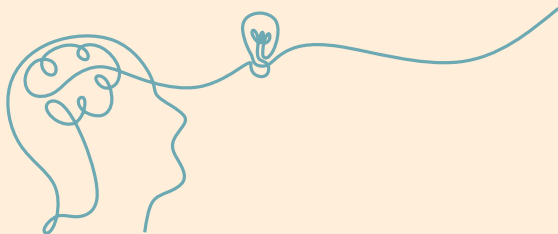
Competencies can be defined as a combination of attitudes, skills and knowledge (ASK) that enable an individual to perform a task or activity successfully in a given job.

Attitudes
are our values in action. For example, an individual may possess the knowledge and skill to improve time management related practices, but may not have the attitude to do so.

Skills
refer to the ability and know-how to do things. Skills often require us to use our pre-existing knowledge. For example, the ability to communicate clearly.

Knowledge
is what we know. For example, theories, concepts, processes and more.

These are the constituents of a competency

These are types of competencies

Behavioural Competencies

Underlying characteristics – motives, traits, skills, and aspects of one's social image, social role or a body of knowledge – that can result in effective and/or superior performance in a job or role

Examples:
Empathy, Problem solving, Organisational awareness

Domain Competencies

Knowledge elements, skills and abilities that are required for an effective and/or superior performance in an activity or a role. Domain competencies are usually specialised in nature and are applicable in a narrow set of organisations, functions and/or positions.

Examples:
Climate change and energy, Gender Sensitivity , Health and nutrition

Functional Competencies

Knowledge elements, skills and abilities that are applicable across many organisations, functions and/ or positions

Examples:
Data collection and analysis, Project administration, Budgeting

An ideal competency consists of seven information fields – namely, label, description, type, area, level and level label.

1. Competency Label
2. Competency Description
3. Competency Type
4. Competency Area
5. Competency Level
6. Level Label
7. Competency Level Description

This guide provides steps to develop each of these seven fields, keeping in mind the following structure.

SAMPLE COMPETENCY *(Note: This is an illustrative competency. A complete example can be found on p. 25)*

Competency Label: Record Management

Competency Description: Maintain, classify, review, and dispose off records to manage information across an organisation's life cycle, while supporting the documentation of organisational history

Competency Type: Functional
Competency Area: Office Management

Competency Level and Level Label	Competency Level Description
Level 1: Aware of data collection sources and instruments	» Aware of record classifying and indexing systems, including provisions in the Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998 » Understands how record management contributes to the achievement of an organisation's aims and objectives » Recognises different types of risk in relation to recordkeeping
Level 2: Understands what data to collect and how to collect it	» Distinguishes between record categories at the stage of indexing (A - keep and microfilm, B - keep but do not microfilm, C – keep for specified periodonly) » Describes the legal and statutory responsibilities relating to all nonclassified records » Documents trends and best practices with regards to new record management systems and solutions

SECTION 2

DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES

This section on developing competencies presents overarching instructions for competency development, and a step-by-step guide on developing the seven competency attributes.
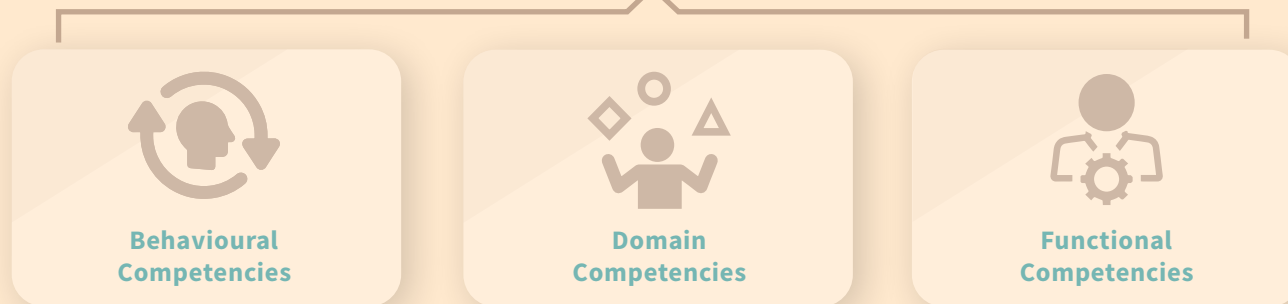
INSTRUCTIONS

Competencies can be defined as a combination of attitudes, skills and knowledge (ASK) that enable an individual to perform a task or activity successfully in a given job.

STEP 1

Keep the following resources handy

Developing competencies requires the support of a range of resources such as:

» Work allocation orders
» Course modules
» Organograms
» Official MDO websites
» Job descriptions and recruitment notices.

STEP 2

Have a pen and paper handy, or be ready with a blank document to take notes

The purpose is to take meticulous notes as you read, observe, and document the various resources available for developing competencies. Referring to your notes will also make the development process more efficient by ensuring that all your information is in one place.
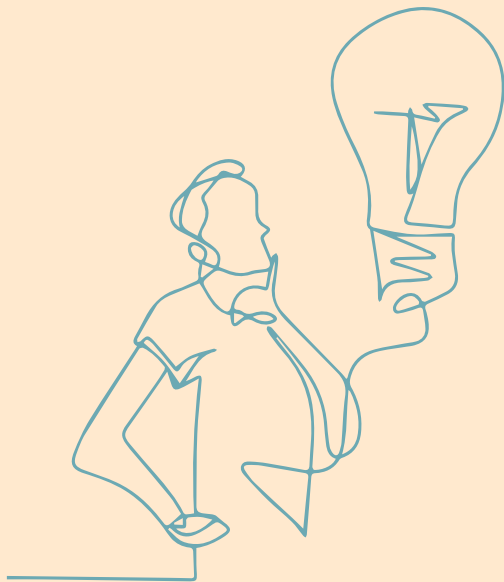
STEP 3

Carefully read and understand every step

Going through the steps carefully will ensure a deeper understanding of the competency development process.

STEP 3

Things to keep in mind and avoid

The next page provides a list of things one should keep in mind as well as things one should avoid in the process of developing competencies.

Things to keep in mind

1. Use present tense action verbs (a list of action verbs is provided in Appendix 1

   For example, schedule, prepare, classify, document, procure, etc.

2. Ensure competencies are observable and measurable.

   For example, preparing a document is observable and measurable but appreciating a document is neither.

3. Align with government vocabulary.

   Use words from government resources like work allocation orders, manual of office procedures, etc.

4. Stick to the recommended word/ character limit as much as possible.

Things to avoid

1. Evaluative adjectives or adverbs make it difficult to measure or observe a competency

   For example, good, wrong, appropriately, quickly, slowly, etc.

2. Qualifying phrases tend to provide an author's insights into the competency, instead of a identifiable characteristic

   For example, review documents with confidence.

3. Long, complex sentences affect the certainty and specificity of a statement

   For example, using 'writes down minutes of the meeting every week,' is more complicated then 'notes minutes for weekly meetings.'

The seven attributes of a competency are split into three parts in the development process

Part 1	Competency labels, areas, and types
Part 2	Competency levels, level labels, and level description
Part 3	Competency description

For each part, section 2 will present definitions, steps* and tips. A summary of the steps is provided below.

Please note that the steps used in this manual are only recommended and advisory in nature. They are not mandatory.

Table 2: Summary of steps for developing competencies

How to develop competency labels, areas, and identify competency types

Step 1	Familiarise yourself with the larger MDO associated with the individual role/ sector you're developing competencies for
Step 2	Identify and highlight keywords in the resources that indicate various activities undertaken to meet the objectives of the MDO
Step 3	Group common keywords to determine potential competency labels and refine them to come up with standardised names
Step 4	Identify broader themes/ areas the competency labels sit within and refine them to come up with standardised names
Step 5	Determine competency types

How to develop competency level descriptions and level labels?

Step 1	Conduct a competency review, identify recurring activities, and group common activities together
Step 2	Place the recurring activities into levels (from 1-5)
Step 3	If applicable, add examples to the level descriptions
Step 4	Summarise competency level descriptions in 2-6 words to come up with level labels.

How to develop competency descriptions

| Step 1 | Identify key activities across your competency proficiency levels and the broader objective they're working towards |
| Step 2 | Combine the key activities and objectives to arrive at a comprehensive competency description |

LET US BEGIN DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES!

2.1 COMPETENCY LABELS, AREAS, AND TYPES

DEFINITIONS

Competency area

A collection of competencies closely related to one another at a knowledge/subject level. In simple words, a competency area can be defined as a broader subject area that encompasses several smaller sub-fields (also known as competency labels).

For example, Office Management, Project Administration, Accounts, etc.

Competency label

The competency label indicates what the competency is about, and how it is commonly known. For example, Vigilance planning, Pay and allowances, Project management, Record management.

Competency type

There are 3 types of competencies:

1. **Behavioural:** Underlying characteristics – motives, traits, skills, aspects of one's social image, social role or a body of knowledge – which can result in effective and/or superior performance in a job or role

2. **Domain:** Knowledge elements, skills and abilities that are required for effective and/or superior performance of an activity or a role. Domain competencies are usually specialised in nature and are applicable in a narrow set of organisations, functions and/or positions

3. **Functional:** Knowledge elements, skills and abilities that are applicable across many organisations, functions and/or positions

Recommended word/character limit for competency area and label: 2-4 words.

SUMMARY OF STEPS

How to develop competency labels, areas, and identify competency types	
Step 1	Familiarise yourself with the larger MDO associated with the individual role/sector you're developing competencies for
Step 2	Identify and highlight keywords in the resources that indicate various activities taken to meet the objectives of the MDO
Step 3	Group common keywords to determine potential competency labels and refine them to come up with standardised names.
Step 4	Identify broader themes/areas the competency labels sit within and refine them to come up with standardised names.
Step 5	Determine competency types

LET US NOW DELVE INTO EACH STEP OF THE PROCESS

STEP 1

Familiarise yourself with the larger MDO associated with the individual role/sector you're developing competencies for, using one or more of the following resources:

1. Work allocation orders (WAO)
2. Official website of the relevant MDO
3. Manual of office procedures
4. Recruitment notices and/or job descriptions

Going through these resources will help understand the objectives/mandate of the associated MDO.

STEP 2

Identify and highlight keywords in the resources that indicate the various activities undertaken to meet the objectives of the MDO

The aim of identifying these activities is to understand the workflow of an MDO, considering its larger objectives. Here, workflow refers to the key activities an MDO might perform through existing systems and processes. Make sure to list down these keywords.

Figures 1 and 2 provide examples of such activities, systems, and processes from some of the resources mentioned in step 1. Figure 3 presents a sample list of the highlighted keywords.

Tips for steps 1 and 2

Focus on understanding the larger MDO the individual role/sector nests within. This includes identifying the various functions performed by the MDO, its allied units/divisions, and the broader mandate.

One way to do this, is by browsing the 'About us' or 'Vision/Mission' section of an official website of the MDO.

Figure 1(A)

WAO from the Ministry of Jal Shakti, with highlighted activities, systems, and processes

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Ministry of Jal Shakti
Department of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

ALLOCATION OF WORK IN THE MAIN SECRETARIAT OF THE DEPARTMENT

I. ADMINISTRATION WING
WING HEAD – JOINT SECRETARY (ADMN.)

1. **DIVISIONAL HEAD: DIRECTOR/ DEPUTY SECRETARY (ADMN. & GA)**

   A. **ADMINISTRATION SECTION (INCLUDING SC/ST & OBC CELL)**

   (i) **Establishment matters of all (Group 'A', 'B' and 'C' employees of the Department (Sectt.)** - Establishment and administrative matters of all employees in the Department (Sectt) belonging to various services/cadre viz. CSS, CSSS, CSCS, CSOLS, IES, ISS, SSS, CWES, Ex-Cadre Posts and officers appointed through Central Staffing Scheme.

   a. Pay fixation / promotion / confirmation/ grant of MACP / Stepping up of pay / grant of annual increment, etc.

   b. Grant of NFSG.

   c. Pension cases.

   d. Cases of Joining Time/Joining Time Pay/ TTA.

   e. Maintenance of Service Book / Personal files.

   f. Up-keeping of data / Web Based Cadre Management System.

   (ii) **Misc. matters related to Group 'A'** –

   a. Sending proposals to ACC for appointment of officers through Central Staffing Scheme.

   b. Creation of posts in NWIC

   c. Filling up of posts to be filled by the Indian side of Pancheshwar Development Authority, Nepal.

   (iii) **Engagement of Consultants** –

   a. Examining the requirement for appointment of consultants based on the requests received from various Sections/ Units

   b. Appointing consultants / renewal after due Administrative and Financial approvals.

   c. Issuing orders for monthly payment

Figure 1(B)

Manual of office procedures from the Ministry of Jal Shakti, with highlighted activities, systems, and processes

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

102. **Activities involved in records management**
   (1) Records management covers the activities concerning mainly recording, retention, retrieval and weeding out.
   (2) Each record creating agency will nominate, in pursuance of provisions of the Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998, a Departmental Records Officer (DRO) who is not below the level of a Section Officer for overall records management of the organization as a whole and liaison with the National Archives of India.

103. **Stage of recording**—Files should be recorded after action on the issues considered thereon has been completed. However, files of a purely ephemeral nature (such as casual leave records or circulars of temporary nature) containing papers of little reference or research value may be destroyed after keeping for one year without being formally recorded.

104. **Procedure for recording** —
   (1) **Action for Recording** :
      After action on the issue(s) considered on the file has been completed, the dealing hand/ initiating officer, in consultation with his supervisory officer, should close and record the file in the manner prescribed below :
      (a) indicate the appropriate category of record (vide para 105 below) and in the case of category 'C', also specify the retention period and the year of review/weeding on the file cover; for non-file documents, indicate the number of years for retention on the front cover.
      (b) where necessary, revise the title of the file so that it describes adequately the contents at that stage;
      (c) get the file indexed (vide para 107 below) unless it is to be retained for less than 10 years from the date of closing.
      (d) extract from the file, copies of important decisions, documents, etc., as are considered useful for future reference and add them to the standing guard file/standing note/precedent book/reference folder, etc.;
      (e) remove from the file all superfluous papers such as reminders, acknowledgements, routine slips, working-sheets, rough work drafts, surplus copies, etc., and destroy them;
      (f) complete all references and, in particular, mark previous & later references on the subject, on the file cover;

Figure 2

'About us' section of the Ministry of Jal Shakti's official website, with highlighted activities, systems, and processes

भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA   SKIP TO MAIN CONTENT 🔍 Tᴛ 👤 ⛓ Language

जल शक्ति मंत्रालय
जल संसाधन, नदी विकास और गंगा संरक्षण विभाग
MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES,
RIVER DEVELOPMENT & GANGA REJUVENATION

Home 🏠 | About Us | Policy/Schemes | Media | Finance | International Cooperation | Acts/Tribunals | Citizens Corner | Dashboard | Tenders

Home › About Us › Mission/Vision/Functions

MISSION/VISION/FUNCTIONS

OUR VISION

Optimal sustainable development, maintenance of quality and efficient use of water resources to match with the growing demands on this precious natural resource of the country.

OUR MISSION

India is endowed with a rich and vast diversity of natural resources, water being one of them. Its development and management plays a vital role in agriculture production. Integrated water management is vital for poverty reduction, environmental sustenance and sustainable economic development. National Water Policy envisages that the water resources of the country should be developed and managed in an integrated manner.

FUNCTION

The Ministry of Water Resources is responsible for laying down policy guidelines and programmes for the development and regulation of country's water resources. The Ministry has been allocated the following functions:-

- Overall planning, policy formulation, coordination and guidance in the water resources sector.
- Technical guidance, scrutiny, clearance and monitoring of the irrigation, flood control and multi-purpose projects (major/medium).

Figure 3

List of highlighted keywords from WAO, manual of office procedures, and official MDO website (activities, systems and processes)

1. Maintenance of service book
2. Up-keeping of data
3. Web Based Cadre Management System
4. Sending proposals
5. Administrative and financial approvals
6. Issuing orders for monthly payment
7. Establishment
8. Creation of posts
9. Examining the requirement for appointment of consults

STEP 3

Group common keywords to determine potential competency labels and refine them to come up with standardised names. Remember these will become your competency labels!

In step 3, we focused on recurring activities, systems, and processes. To develop our competency labels, it is useful to club these under common labels and then refine them to come up with standardised names. This is useful because competency labels should indicate what the competency is about and how it is commonly known.

Figure 4 presents an example for this step. It borrows from the activities, systems, and processes listed in step 3 to identify and refine competency labels.

Figure 4

Identifying competency labels using WAO, manual of office procedures, and official MDO website

List of highlighted keywords (activities, systems, and processes)	Potential competency labels	Competency labels with standardised names
1. Maintenance of service book 2. Up-keeping of data 3. Web Based Cadre Management System 4. Sending proposals 5. Administrative and financial approvals 6. Issuing orders for monthly payment 7. Establishment 8. Creation of posts 9. Examining the requirement for appointment of consults	Record keeping Payment matters Recruitment	Record management Pay and allowances Talent management
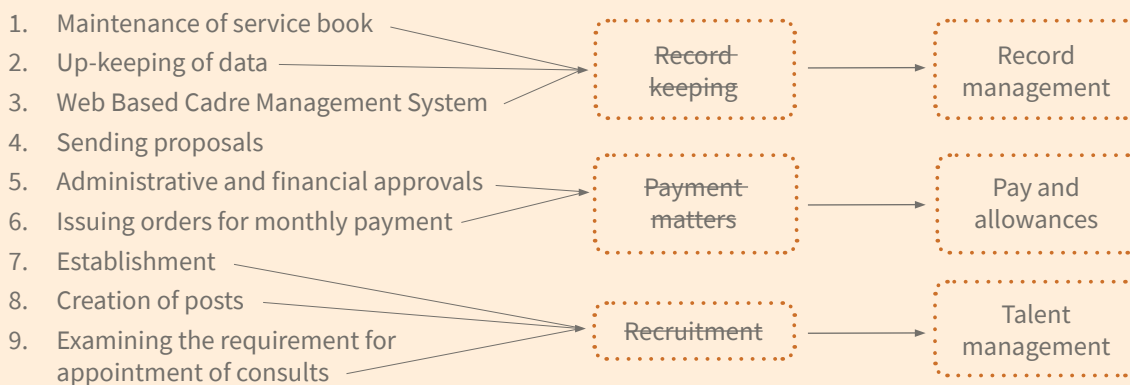
Identify broader themes/areas the competency labels sit within and refine them to come up with standardised names. Remember these will become your competency areas.

Remember, competency areas are a collection of competencies closely related to one another at a knowledge or subject level. To identify these, it is useful to group together common competency labels and determine the broader theme/area they sit within.

Figure 5 presents an example for this step. It borrows from competency labels in step 4 to identify and refine competency areas.

Figure 5

Identifying competency labels using WAO, manual of office procedures, and official MDO website

Competency labels	Potential competency areas	Competency areas with standardised names
Record management	~~Office procedures~~	Office management
Pay and allowances	~~Human Resources~~	Human Resource Planning
Talent management		
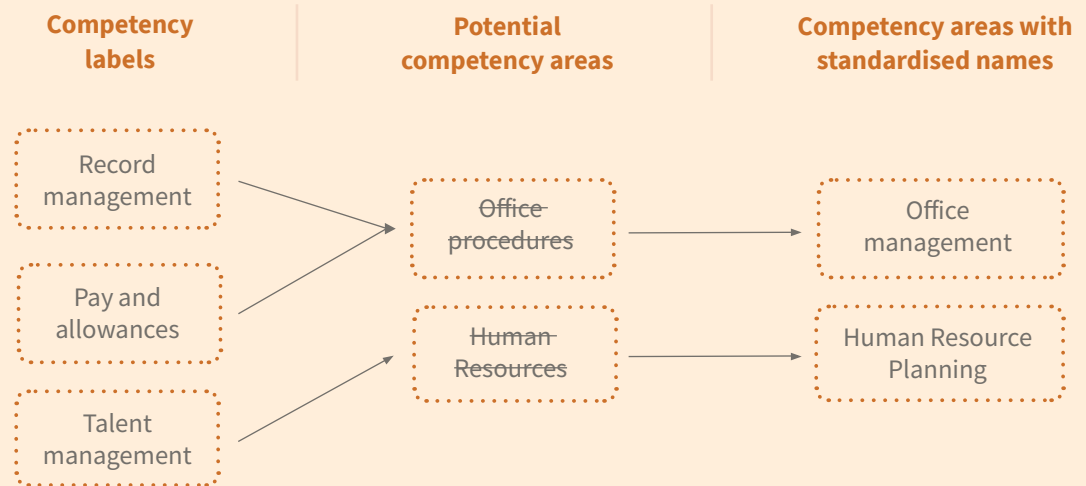
Determine competency types, considering the 3 types of competencies (behavioural, domain, and functional)

Refer to the definitions of behavioural, domain, and functional competencies in page 6 to identify the competency type. For example, we know record management; and pay and allowances are functional competencies because they will be applicable and present across a number of organisations, functions, and positions.

Tips for steps 4 and 5

A simple google search will help refine competency areas and labels. Typing your potential competency areas and labels into the google search bar will reveal existing labels and areas, and provide standardised names.

LET US LOOK AT OUR FINAL OUTPUTS FOR COMPETENCY LABELS, AREAS, AND TYPE

Competency area	Competency label(s)	Competency type
Office Management	Record management, pay and allowances	Functional
	Human resource planning	Domain

NEXT, LET US DEVELOP COMPETENCY PROFICIENCY LEVELS
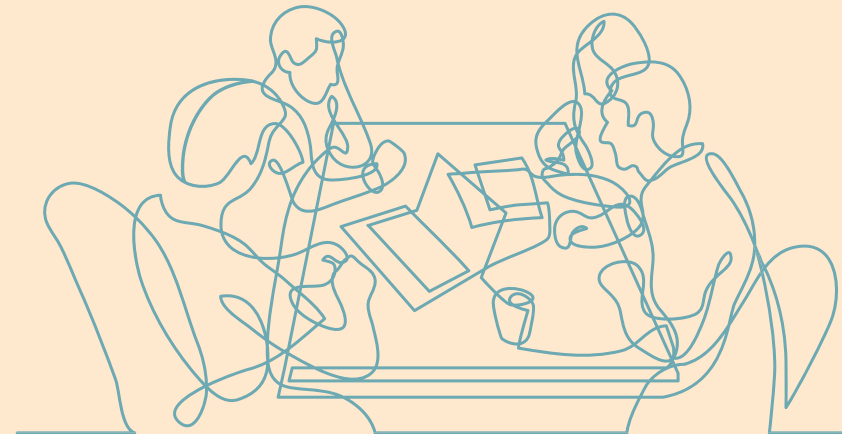
2.2 COMPETENCY LEVELS, LEVEL LABELS, AND LEVEL

DEFINITIONS

Competency level
The competency level is the proficiency level of the competency. It indicates the level of sophistication of the competency described. Competency levels are progressive in natur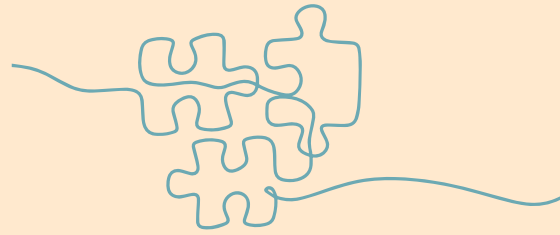e and normally given in an ascending order. For example, Level 2 is a more sophisticated use of a particular competency when compared to Level 1.

Competency level label
The level label provides an overview of the competency level and level description.

Competency level description
The competency level description is an observable description of each level of a given competency. The higher the number of descriptors, the greater the understanding of the proficiency level. It is recommended to have a minimum of three observable descriptors per level.

Competencies typically have 3-5 proficiency levels and each level should have a minimum of three descriptors that are observable by a third party. The five competency levels can be categorised as follows:

Table 3: Generic competency level labels and descriptions

Level	Level label	Level description
1	Basic	Possesses basic knowledge and skills related to some elements of the competency and is able to apply them with moderate supervision
2	Proficient	Able to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to most of the elements of the competency and apply them without the need for constant supervision
3	Advanced	Possesses strong knowledge and skills required for the competency and demonstrates an understanding of the interlinkages between competencies. Acts as an advisor on the topic, often producing manuals/notes to support colleagues
4	Expert	Demonstrates excellence in all capabilities related to the competency compared to best industry benchmarks within the country. Is a person of authority on practices and/or systems related to the competency and is widely consulted on the same.
5	Ustad	Demonstrates complete mastery of the competency and use of it in unprecedented ways. Has a fundamental, outsized impact on their field of knowledge with few other people having similar capabilities.

Recommended word/character limit for competency level label: 2-6 words or under 55 characters

SUMMARY OF STEPS

	How to develop competency level descriptions and level labels
Step 1	Conduct a competency review using must-have and good-to-have resources, with a focus on WAOs. Identify recurring activities across these resources and group common activities together
Step 2	Place the recurring activities into levels, keeping in mind that competency levels indicate the progressive nature and level of sophistication of the competency
Step 3	If applicable, add examples to the level descriptions activities to make them observable.
Step 4	Summarise competency level descriptions in 2-6 words to come up with level labels.

STEP 1

Conduct a competency review using must-have and good-to-have resources, with a focus on WAOs. Identify recurring activities across these resources and group common activities together.

It is important to conduct a thorough review because each resource will provide deeper insights into the individual descriptors required for each level. Recurring activities are defined as activities repeating across.

1. Must-have resources:

   a.   WAO

   b.   Official MDO website

   c.   Course descriptions, learning objectives, and modules via MOOCs, university programmes, etc.

   d.   Job descriptions

2. Good-to-have resources:

   a.   HR orders

   b.   Existing sector-specific competency frameworks

   c.   Recruitment notices

   d.   E-books, reports, white papers, and briefs available on Singularity University and Institute for the Future

Table 4 presents an example of a competency review conducted for the competency label 'Record Management.'Recurring activities are highlighted in matching colours. The review largely uses a WAO, but also borrows from: manual of office procedures, job descriptions, existing sector-specific competency frameworks, and competency-related courses.

STEP 2

Place the recurring activities into levels, keeping in mind that competency levels indicate the progressive nature and level of sophistication the competency. Ensure they begin with action verbs.Remember, these will ultimately become your level descriptors.

A useful way to begin this step is by going through the action verbs list (available in Appendix 1) to determine that levels the activities can fall into. The action verbs list is categorised into existing levels. For example, categorising and classifying records can fall into Level 2 since these are present in level 2 of the action verbs list.

Table 5 presents an example of how one activity can be placed across the levels, using action verbs from Appendix 1.

STEP 3

If applicable, add examples to the level descriptions activities to make them observable.

Adding examples will make the competency level descriptions more comprehensive, observable, and measurable.

Table 5 presents level descriptors with examples – refer to levels 1 and 2.

Table 4: Competency review for Record Management

Competency label: Record management
Competency review

1. Compliance of provisions of manual of office procedures in the department 2. Compliance with Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998 3. Maintenance of service book / personnel files 4. Maintaining records and data of ongoing schemes 5. Recording, reviewing, and destruction of old records 6. Recording, retention, retrieval, and weeding out 7. Review of records and their ultimate disposal 8. File indexing 9. Categorising records 10. Classifying and indexing records 11. Classification of records 12. Storage of records 13. Tracking of records 14. Provide accurate information about various department reports 15. Assess current record keeping systems 16. Monitor changes to the law in record management, and information processing 17. Apply and adapt records management standards and best practice effectively in the organisation's context 18. Develop, implement and review records 19. Develop, manage and coordinate records 20. Developing, maintaining, verifying and evaluating existing record systems 21. Establish various records management tools and techniques 22. Design a record management plan 23. Implement a record management plan	1. Annual inspections 2. Special drive every 6 months to record/review old files 3. Annually review / audit 4. Compilation of organisational history 5. Manage and preserve records created in the present and those inherited from the past for use in the present and future 6. Prioritise security and privacy of records 7. Record, track, and monitor documents 8. Digitise records 9. Manage records effectively through the documentation of all decisions and actions made 10. The effective maintenance of records throughout their lifecycle, including access, tracking and storage of records 11. Timely review of records and their ultimate disposal, whether this be transfer to archive for permanent preservation, confidential destruction or recycling 12. Repair damaged papers and records

Table 5: Placing one recurring activity across the competency levels, using action verbs *(italicised)*

Activity: Classifying records (personnel files, receipts, pension files) to index them for compilation of departmental index alphabetical order in a single series for the department as a whole	
Competency level	**Competency level description**
Level 1	Aware of record classifying and indexing systems, including provisions in the Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998
Level 2	Distinguishes between record categories at the stage of indexing (A – keep and microfilm, B – keep but do not microfilm, C – keep for specified period only)
Level 3	Supports record classifying and indexing systems within the department through index slips
Level 4	Assembles indexes in a stitched compilation that is available for all stakeholders
Level 5	Compiles and consolidates departmental indexes towards developing an organisational history

Tips for step 2

A useful tip for placing activities into competency levels is by identifying the extremes first i.e. place an activity into level 1 and 5 first. For example, compiling departmental indexes indicates a level 5 while being aware of indexing systems indicates level 1.

Identifying these extremes will help determine the scope of the competency, and make it easier to fill in the sophistication and progression for each level.

STEP 4

Summarise competency level descriptions in 2-6 words to come up with level labels.

Once you've developed all your competency proficiency levels using Steps 1-4, the level labels should

summarise each level in 2-6 words.

Table 6 presents an examples of level labels for 2 levels (highlighted in orange).

Table 6: Competency review for Record Management

Competency level	Competency level label	Competency level description
Level 1	Understands purpose of record management	» Aware of record classifying and indexing systems, including provisions in the Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998 » Understands how record management contributes to the achievement of an organisation's aims and objectives » Recognises different types of risk in relation to record keeping
Level 2	Distinguishes between record categories	» Distinguishes between record categories at the stage of indexing (A – keep and microfilm, B – keep but do not microfilm, C – keep for specified period only) » Describes the legal and statutory responsibilities relating to all non-classified records » Documents trends and best practices with regards to new records management systems and solutions

LET US NOW LOOK AT OUR FINAL OUTPUT

Competency label: Record management	
Competency level	**Competency level label**
Level 1: Understands purpose of record management	» Aware of record classifying and indexing systems, including provisions in the Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998 » Understands how record management contributes to the achievement of an organisation's aims and objectives » Recognises different types of risk in relation to recordkeeping
Level 2: Distinguishes between record categories	» Distinguishes between record categories at the stage of indexing (A – keep and microfilm, B – keep but do not microfilm, C – keep for specified period only) » Describes the legal and statutory responsibilities relating to all nonclassified records » Documents trends and best practices with regards to new records management systems and solutions
Level 3: Supports record classifying	» Supports record classifying and indexing systems within the department through index slips » Applies records management principles and practices to organisational aims and objectives » Maintains updated information on current record management systems and provides feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement
Level 4: Guides subordinates in record management	» Assembles indexes in a stitched compilation that is available for all stakeholders » Guides subordinates in procedural compliance with regards to evolving rules and regulations » Adapt and supports others in the development and introduction of new record management practices and procedures
Level 5: Monitors record management within the organisation	» Compiles and consolidates departmental indexes towards developing an organisational history » Supervises up-keeping and disposal of records, taking into account organisational aims and objectives » Monitors the progress of recording and reviewing of files and other relevant documents

WE WILL NOW DEVELOP COMPETENCY DESCRIPTIONS

2.3 COMPETENCY DESCRIPTIONS

DEFINITIONS

Competency level

The competency description covers the elements and the scope of the competency, as determined through:

1. **Recurring activities:** A competency description should indicate activities an expert in this competency would undertake (usually mentioned across a range of resources – WAOs, job descriptions, course objectives, etc.).

2. **Common objective, if any:** A competency description should indicate a common objective the competency is working towards.

Recommended word/character limit for competency descriptions: 280 characters

SUMMARY OF STEPS

How to develop competency descriptions	
Step 1	Identify key activities across your competency proficiency levels and their broader objective.
Step 2	Combine the key activities and objectives to arrive at a comprehensive competency description

LET US DELVE INTO THE INDIVIDUAL STEPS

STEP 1

Identify key activities across your competency proficiency levels and their broader objective

Think of the activities as a way to achieve the objective of the competency. One way to identify key activities is through the level labels, since they summarise the level descriptions in 2-6 words. Figure 6 presents an example of these activities and the objective.

Tips for step 1

To draft a comprehensive competency description, it's useful to also think of the value added by the key activities towards the objective of the competency. In other words, try to answer the question -

'What value do these activities add towards the objective of the competency?'

For example, the key activities for record management work towards information management but also help document organisational history. This could be the additional value they bring to the competency.

Figure 6

Key activities and objectives for the Record Management competency label
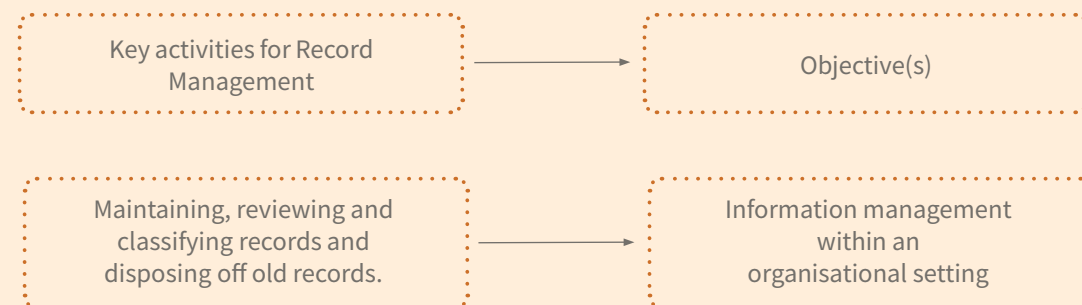
Key activities for Record Management → Objective(s)

Maintaining, reviewing and classifying records and disposing off old records. → Information management within an organisational setting

STEP 2

Combine the key activities and objectives to arrive at a comprehensive competency description
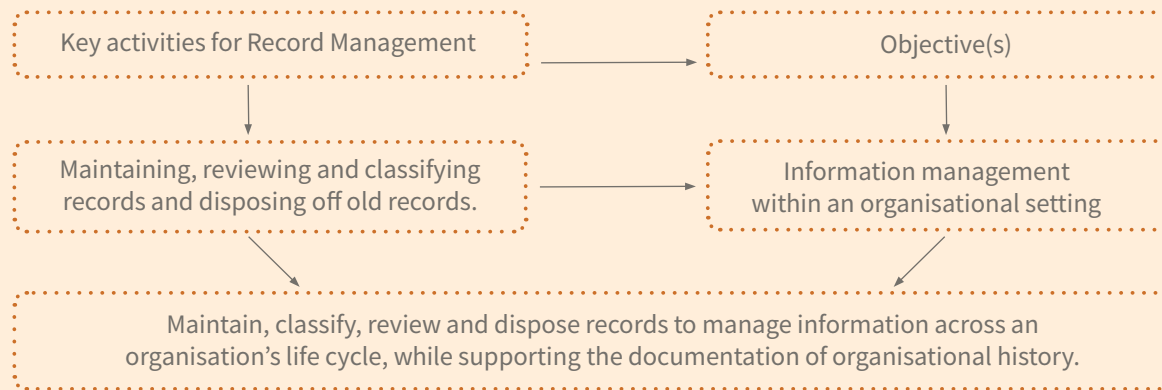
The objective(s) combine key activities and the objective into 1-2 sentences, while using action verbs (presented in Appendix 1).

Figure 7 presents an example of this.

Combining key activities and objectives for the competency description

Key activities for Record Management → Objective(s)

Maintaining, reviewing and classifying records and disposing off old records. → Information management within an organisational setting

Maintain, classify, review and dispose records to manage information across an organisation's life cycle, while supporting the documentation of organisational history.

LET US NOW LOOK AT OUR FINAL OUTPUT

Competency label: Record management
Competency description: Maintain, classify, review, and dispose records to manage information across an organisation's life-cycle, while supporting the documentation of organisational history.

LET US NOW LOOK AT OUR COMPETENCY WITH ALL SEVEN ATTRIBUTES

Below is a complete output for the Record Management competency label, with all seven attributes.

Table 7: **Final competency output**

Competency Label: Record Management	**Competency Description:** Maintain, classify, review, and dispose records to manage information across an organisation's life cycle, while supporting the documentation of organisational history	**Competency Type:** Functional **Competency Area:** Office Management

Competency Level and Level Label	Competency Level Description
Level 1: Understands purpose of record management	» Aware of record classifying and indexing systems, including provisions in the Public Records Act, 1993 and the Public Records Rules, 1998 » Understands how record management contributes to the achievement of an organisation's aims and objectives » Recognises different types of risk in relation to recordkeeping
Level 2: Distinguishes between record categories	» Distinguishes between record categories at the stage of indexing (A - keep and microfilm, B - keep but do not microfilm, C – keep for specified period only) » Describes the legal and statutory responsibilities relating to all non-classified records » Documents trends and best practices with regards to new records management systems and solutions
Level 3: Supports record classifying	» Supports record classifying and indexing systems within the department through index slips » Applies records management principles and practices to organisational aims and objectives » Maintains updated information on current record management systems and provides feedback on their strengths and areas for improvement
Level 4: Guides subordinates in record management	» Assembles indexes in a stitched compilation that is available for all stakeholders » Guides subordinates in procedural compliance with regards to evolving rules and regulations » Adapt and supports others in the development and introduction of new record management practices and procedures
Level 5: Monitors record management within the organisation	» Compiles and consolidates departmental indexes towards developing an organisational history » Supervises up-keeping and disposal of records, considering organisational aims and objectives » Monitors the progress of recording and reviewing of files and other relevant documents

SECTION 3

QUALITY ASSURANCE CHECKLIST

This section provides a series of questions to ensure the competency attributes are high-quality.

Once the competency is developed, it is recommended to go through the following checklist to ensure all the attributes are structured, relevant, and comprehensive. The checklist is divided by each attribute:

COMPETENCY LABEL

1. Does the competency label give an idea of what the competency is about?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Does the competency label fall within the recommended word/character limit, or as close to the limit as possible?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Does the competency label align with government vocabulary (if applicable)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Does the competency label nest within the competency area?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

Comments

COMPETENCY AREA

1. Does the competency area capture a collection of competencies that are closely related to one another at a knowledge/subject level?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Does the competency area align with MDO-related activities, workflows, processes, and/or systems?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Does the competency area fall within recommended word/character limits, or as close as possible to the limit?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

Comments

COMPETENCY TYPE

1. Does the competency fall into the specified competency type?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

COMPETENCY LEVEL DESCRIPTION

1. Are the competency level descriptions indicative of the increasing sophistication and progressive nature of competency levels?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Do the competency level descriptions have a minimum of three descriptors each?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Are the competency level descriptions observable by a third-party?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Do the competency level descriptions include government vocabulary (if applicable)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

5. Does the competency level description use action verbs?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

COMPETENCY LEVEL LABEL

1. Does the competency level label capture the competency level?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Does the competency level label fall within recommended word/ character limits, or as close to the limit as possible?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

Comments

COMPETENCY DESCRIPTION

1. Does the competency description describe the competency using the key activities and their objective(s)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. Does the competency description fall within the recommended word/character limits, or as close to the limit as possible?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

3. Does the competency description include government vocabulary (if applicable)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

4. Does the competency description use action verbs?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

Comments

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF ACTION VERBS

Level 1: Basic	Level 2: Proficient	Level 3: Advanced	Level 4: Expert	Level 5: Ustad
Suggests	Classifies	Differentiates	Improves	Implements
Contributes	Develops	Allocates	Monitors	Assesses
Duplicates	Practices	Organizes	Manages	Justifies
Attends	Provides	Proposes	Presents	Testifies
Understands	Conveys	Updates	Justifies	Compares
Comprehends	Advises	Transforms	Expands	Rationalizes
Supports	Interprets	Explains	Analyzes	Defends
Listens	Assists	Conducts	Oversees	Administers
Drafts	Writes	Reviews	Edits	Clarifies
Summarizes	Creates	Amends	Evaluates	Publicizes
Responds	Answers	Determines	Corrects	Resolves
Participates	Informs	Prepares	Encourages	Motivates
Utilises	Identifies	Adapts	Streamlines	Reforms
Describes	Discusses	Investigates	Designs	Values
Retains	Adjusts	Establishes	Instills	Champions
Maintains	Alters	Illustrates	Defends	Promotes
Recognises	Modifies	Advances	Prioritizes	Cultivates
Gathers	Documents	Incorporates	Applies	Leads

Level 1: Basic	Level 2: Proficient	Level 3: Advanced	Level 4: Expert	Level 5: Ustad
Reproduces	Defines	Formulates	Plans	Employs
Lists	Categorizes	Coordinates	Partners	Delegates
Labels	Synthesizes	Calculates	Solves	Advances
Names	Guides	Influences	Negotiates	Persuades
Orders	Chooses	Assembles	Appraises	Argues
Schedules	Indicates	Contrasts	Judges	Predicts
Recalls	Restates	Questions	Selects	Rates

J-PAL South Asia
AADI, 02
Balbir Saxena Marg
Hauz Khas, New Delhi 110016
India