

Resource Hub – Behaviour frameworks

All too often the behaviours and values needed for job success are poorly defined or misunderstood. This presents all sorts of problems when it comes to enhancing performance. Here are a few pitfalls to watch out for (beyond simply not having any kind of behaviour framework!)..

- Your competencies and values do not complement each other, or were developed in isolation.
- You are using an old competency or values framework, with no idea whether it meets current or future needs.
- Your behaviours or values are too generic to gain insight into how to apply them – labels such as ‘communication’, ‘respect’ and ‘trust’ are often left open to behavioural interpretation.
- Your appraisal/review processes only look at setting/achieving objectives, with no regard for how you get there.
- Behavioral feedback is not commonplace.
- Colleagues struggle to understand what they need to do to get promoted or to be successful in other areas of the organisation.
- Recruitment processes are unstructured or designed in an ad-hoc way.
- The links between organisational strategy and your behaviour framework are unclear.

Ensuring behaviour counts

Decide what will work best for your organisation and your roles

Values – These are important as they shape our beliefs and attitudes, with the caveat that you need to be clear about what they will look like when played out within your organisation. They are fairly enduring across different functions, so are particularly helpful if your job roles are quite diverse and you need the organisation to gel more.

Core competencies – These are shared sets of behaviours that are important across all roles, even if they might, for example, be demonstrated in different ways at different levels. They often provide a common language for giving feedback and talking about behaviour and can be complemented by values.

Specialist competencies – These relate to specialist aspects of roles, for instance ‘financial management’ for those working with budgets, or ‘mitigating risk’ for those managing operations or overseeing strategy. Often a competency framework will be developed with a menu of specialist competencies, which may/may not be relevant to any one given role.

Embed your behaviour framework into a range of HR tools/processes

Role profiles – Ensure these go beyond simply describing tasks or responsibilities and also highlight the person specification and how you expect role holders to behave.

Recruitment – Know how you will measure the behaviours on a role profile in order to make good selection decisions.

Appraisal® – Ensure colleagues can focus on behaving in the right way and are given credit for this, even if, for example, they weren't able to achieve an out of date objective.

Learning and development opportunities – Link these to the types of behaviours you require. For example, if ‘Influencing’ is a critical competency for your leaders, ensure the development opportunities look at how to enhance the relevant behaviours.

Succession planning/promotion – Ensure your behaviour framework supports a clear progression through the organisation, so that you know you are developing individuals in line with the demands of potential roles.

Restructuring – Defining the future behaviours required in any kind of restructuring situation, and knowing how to measure these, is critical to shaping an organisation in the best way possible, particularly if downsizing is on the agenda.