

# SHRM

## Competency Model<sup>®</sup>



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## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in SHRM's professional HR competency model. SHRM is proud to present you with the full competency model in this document. Through professional development and continuous improvement, any HR professional can contribute to his or her organization's success in a meaningful way. We have conducted several rounds of model development and content validation to provide specific behaviors that define proficiency at each stage of an HR professional's career. This competency model is designed to serve as a resource for HR professionals interested in developing proficiency within each critical competency, from professionals just entering their HR career to those at the executive level. In other words this competency model can help you, the HR practitioner, develop a road map to achieve your HR professional goals. This competency model is intended to be used for developmental purposes only. Selection decisions should not be based upon this model.

Competencies are individual characteristics, including knowledge, skills, abilities, self-image, traits, mindsets, feelings, and ways of thinking, which, when used with the appropriate roles, achieve a desired result. Competencies contribute to individual exemplary performance that creates reasonable impact on business outcomes. SHRM's Competency Model for HR professionals is presented in this document. SHRM's Competency Model comprises nine primary competencies.

- Human Resource Expertise
- Relationship Management
- Consultation
- Leadership and Navigation
- Communication
- Global and Cultural Effectiveness
- Ethical Practice
- Critical Evaluation
- Business Acumen

For each competency, we provide an overall definition, sub-competencies associated with the primary competency, behaviors demonstrated by individuals highest in proficiency on that competency, and behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant career stage should engage to be successful.

## Background Information

To create this model, SHRM followed the best practices identified by the Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology (SIOP) taskforce on competency modeling and job analysis (see Campion et al., 2011; Shippmann et al., 2000).

Developing a competency model occurs in three phases. The first phase is model development, the second phase is content validation, and the third phase is criterion validation. SHRM developed the initial model based on a) a thorough review and synthesis of the relevant literature and b) input from over 1,200 HR professionals during 111 focus groups in 29 cities across the world. Together with the content validation, discussed next, the perspectives of HR professionals from 33 different nations were represented.

Content validation refers to the empirical investigation that asks subject matter experts to provide ratings regarding the accuracy, relevance, and importance of the competency model's content. The model then is refined based on these data. The content of the SHRM Competency Model was validated through a survey with over 32,000 respondents.

Criterion validation refers to the empirical investigation of the relationship between model elements and critical business and HR outcomes. This is done by collecting ratings of employee performance from multiple sources, including measureable outcomes and self, peer, and supervisor ratings of employee performance. These ratings are directly linked to the competency model using an assessment of competency-based proficiency (i.e., a competency assessment) and serve as metrics of performance for the various elements of the competency model. SHRM began such an investigation in 2013.

Campion, M.A., Fink, A.A., Ruggeberg, B.J., Carr, L., Phillips, G.M., & Odman, R.B. (2011). Doing competencies well: Best practices in competency modeling. *Personnel Psychology*, 64, 225-262.

Shippmann, J.S., Ash, R.A., Battista, M., Carr, L., Eyde, L.D., Hesketh, B., Keyhoe, J., Pearlman, K., Prien, E.P., & Sanchez, J.I. (2000). The practice of competency modeling. *Personnel Psychology*, 53, 703-740.

Each competency consists of five distinct elements, title, definition, sub-competencies, behaviors, and proficiency standards. These elements are discussed in the key below.

<b>KEY</b>	
<b>TITLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the title of the competency</li> </ul>
<b>DEFINITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the overall definition of the competency</li> </ul>
<b>SUB-COMPETENCIES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency</li> </ul>
<b>BEHAVIORS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are behaviors demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency</li> </ul>
<b>PROFICIENCY STANDARDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>These are standards for proficiency at the four career stages (early, mid, senior, and executive). Each proficiency standard represents a Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.</li> </ul>

### HR Professional Levels

SHRM’s Competency Model distinguishes between four different career levels: early, mid, senior, and executive. As HR titles and organizational needs vary across the field (across organizations, across cultures, etc.), SHRM has operationalized the various career levels. Descriptions of the various levels are provided on the following page. The same descriptions were used during SHRM’s 2012 Competency Validation Survey in order for respondents to self-identify career level based on a shared framework.

## Characteristics of HR Professional Career Levels

An **“Early Level”** HR professional is characterized in the following way:

- Is a specialist in a specific support function, or is a generalist with limited experience
- Holds a formal title such as, but not limited to, HR assistant, junior recruiter, or benefits clerk

**EARLY LEVEL**

**For example:** Jamie is relatively new to the HR profession and has just over 1 year of experience as an HR professional. While Jamie is a specialist that supports a specific function in the HR department, Jamie has generalist colleagues with similar levels of experience and responsibility who support specific functions in the HR department. Jamie has responsibilities such as, but not limited to, supporting HR initiatives, executing tasks passed down from management, and operating at the tactical and transactional levels. Jamie and colleagues at Jamie’s level hold titles such as, but not limited to, HR assistant, junior recruiter, and benefits clerk.

A **“Mid Level”** HR professional is characterized in the following way:

- Is a generalist, or is a senior specialist
- Manages projects or program
- Holds a formal title such as, but not limited to, HR manager, generalist, or senior specialist

**MID LEVEL**

**For example:** Tyler has around 5 years of experience as an HR professional. While Tyler is an HR generalist, Tyler has colleagues with similar levels of experience and responsibility who are senior HR specialists. Tyler has responsibilities such as, but not limited to, managing projects, programs, and initiatives, implementing plans passed down, and delegating tasks to early-level staff. Tyler and colleagues at Tyler’s level hold titles such as, but not limited to, HR manager, HR generalist, and HR specialist.

A **“Senior Level”** HR professional is characterized in the following way:

- Is a very experienced generalist or specialist
- Holds a formal title such as, but not limited to, senior manager, director, or principal

**SENIOR LEVEL**

**For example:** Adison is a seasoned HR professional with around 10 years of experience. While Adison is a very experienced specialist, Adison has colleagues with similar levels of experience and responsibility who are very experienced generalists. Adison has responsibilities such as, but not limited to, developing and leading implementation plans and analyzing business information. Adison and colleagues at Adison’s level hold titles such as, but not limited to, director or principal.

An **“Executive Level”** HR professional is characterized in the following way:

- Typically is one of the most senior leaders in HR
- Holds the top HR job in the organization or VP role

**EXECUTIVE LEVEL**

**For example:** Helen is the organization’s most senior HR professional with 15 years of experience. As a member of the organization’s executive committee, Helen serves as an organizational leader and designer of human capital strategy. While Helen knows of individuals with similar responsibilities at other organizations who have more years of experience as an HR professional, Helen and individuals at a similar level hold titles such as, but not limited to, chief human resource officer or vice president.

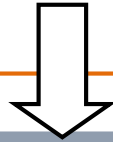




# Competency 1: Human Resource Expertise

## Definition

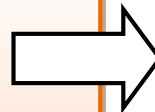
The knowledge of principles, practices, and functions of effective human resource management.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

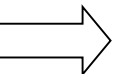
- Strategic Business Management
- Workforce Planning and Employment
- Human Resource Development
- Compensation and Benefits
- Risk Management
- Employee & Labor Relations
- HR Technology
- Global and International Human Resource Capabilities
- Talent Management
- Change Management



## Behaviors

(These are behaviors demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Remains current on relevant laws, legal rulings, and regulations
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of general HR practices, strategy, and technology
- Demonstrates a working knowledge of critical human resource functions including:
  - Strategic Business Management;
  - Workforce Planning and Employment;
  - Human Resource Development;
  - Compensation and Benefits;
  - Risk Management (including safety, environmental health, quality, security, etc.);
  - Employee and Labor Relations;
  - HR Technology; and
  - Global and International HR.
- Prioritizes work duties for maximum efficiency
- Develops and utilizes best-practices
- Delivers customized human resource solutions for organizational challenges
- Seeks professional HR development
- Seeks process improvement through numerous resources
- Utilizes core business and HR-specific technologies to solve business challenges



# Competency 1: Human Resource Expertise

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Identifies ways to improve operational efficiency
- Routes stakeholder questions to the appropriate area
- Uses judgment to determine when to consult with higher-level management on problems or other issues
- Provides service to stakeholders
- Generates and, when appropriate, implements solutions within designated area of responsibility
- Employs standard operating procedures and policies when performing HR transactions
- Reports workplace risk management issues to leadership (e.g., safety, health, etc.)
- Develops knowledge of general HR practices and technology
- Executes transactions with minimal errors
- Follows relevant laws and regulations
- Works under the general direction of a more experienced HR professional
- Uses relevant HR technology systems for administrative and service needs
- Demonstrates a willingness to learn

## MID LEVEL

- Serves as the HR subject matter expert to managers
- Conducts investigations of workplace policy violations
- Manages day-to-day HR functions
- Implements change based on proven change-management techniques
- Applies policies and procedures across organization
- Interprets both policies and changes to policy
- Applies compliance knowledge to protect organization
- Oversees risk management issues (e.g., safety, health, legal issues, etc.)
- Implements solutions within designated area of responsibility
- Seeks ways to proactively improve organizational processes and outcomes
- Implements HR technology plans
- Applies experience and expertise to research solutions
- Reports trends to senior leadership
- Recommends policy changes to support business needs

Proficiencies by Career Level 

# Competency 1: Human Resource Expertise

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

- Provides expertise to support staff development
- Implements HR operational strategy
- Partners with executive-level staff throughout the organization to get input on HR decisions
- Ensures the delivery of high-quality HR processes
- Evaluates potential issues or service needs and operationalizes strategic response
- Determines best practices to support organizational direction
- Designs strategy for organizational culture
- Mentors HR professionals and others within the organization
- Recommends methods for integration of HR services with organizational initiatives
- Recommends HR technology decisions
- Develops policies and procedures consistent with organizational values and goals
- Analyzes functional programs
- Assesses compliance risks

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Establishes criteria for compliance responsibilities
- Assumes responsibility for HR and business outcomes
- Assesses strategic organizational HR needs
- Educates and advises executive team on strategic HR issues as a factor in decision-making
- Applies broad-based HR knowledge to business needs in a proactive manner
- Ensures alignment of HR policies and procedures with organizational values and goals
- Influences direction and creates a vision for the HR team
- Aligns the delivery of HR services to proactively integrate with organizational initiatives
- Assesses business situations and develops strategies to improve organizational performance
- Provides balanced long-term and short-term strategic vision
- Evaluates potential issues or service needs and proactively develops strategic response
- Designs proactive strategic initiatives
- Oversees HR issues involving legal and financial risk to organization
- Provides vision for achieving mission objectives through human capital strategy
- Evaluates strategic position in relation to internal and external forces
- Sets HR technology strategy

## Competency 2: Relationship Management

### Definition

The ability to manage interactions to provide service and to support the organization.



### Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

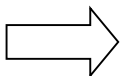
- Business Networking Expertise
- Visibility
- Customer Service (internal and external)
- People Management
- Advocacy
- Negotiation and Conflict Management
- Credibility
- Community Relations
- Transparency
- Proactivity
- Responsiveness
- Mentorship
- Influence
- Employee Engagement
- Teamwork
- Mutual Respect



### Behaviors

(These are behaviors demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Establishes credibility in all interactions
- Treats all stakeholders with respect and dignity
- Builds engaging relationships with all organizational stakeholders through trust, teamwork, and direct communication
- Demonstrates approachability and openness
- Ensures alignment within HR when delivering services and information to the organization
- Provides customer service to organizational stakeholders
- Promotes successful relationships with stakeholders
- Manages internal and external relationships in ways that promote the best interests of all parties
- Champions the view that organizational effectiveness benefits all stakeholders
- Serves as an advocate when appropriate
- Fosters effective teambuilding among stakeholders
- Demonstrates ability to effectively build a network of contacts at all levels within the HR function and in the community, both internally and externally



# Competency 2: Relationship Management

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Listens effectively to potential issues before reacting with solutions
- Serves as frontline liaison with vendors/suppliers
- Refers potentially difficult interactions to manager
- Seeks opportunities to interact with stakeholders
- Provides outstanding customer service experience to employees and other stakeholders
- Facilitates the resolution of transactional conflicts that arise
- Provides basic information for resolution of conflicts
- Develops a network of contacts both within the organization and with external partners serving the organization
- Networks with HR peers, both internal and external to organization
- Demonstrates effective interpersonal skills
- Develops a strong and positive reputation both internally and externally as a neutral and approachable HR representative
- Prevents transactional conflicts when possible
- Provides first point of contact for employee questions
- Communicates and demonstrates support for HR decisions passed down even if not consistent with own point-of-view

## MID LEVEL

- Oversees transactional and/or preliminary stage of employee relations issues
- Assists early-level HR professionals in building networks with higher-level leaders in the organization
- Recognizes potential employee relations issues in a proactive manner and either resolves the issue or moves the concern to senior leaders
- Mediates difficult interactions, escalating problems to higher level when warranted
- Develops network of contacts of internal and external stakeholders including frontline managers, HR peers, and job candidates
- Develops a reputation as a neutral and approachable HR professional serving employees and the organization
- Oversees interactions with vendors/suppliers to maintain service quality
- Ensures early-level HR professionals are providing customer-oriented service
- Ensures that HR decisions from senior leaders are understood and communicated by HR representatives
- Fosters positive team environment among staff
- Identifies staff networking opportunities and venues
- Assists senior HR professionals in the facilitation of difficult interactions among stakeholders
- Develops new partnerships with employees and frontline managers
- Facilitates conflict resolution meetings



# Competency 2: Relationship Management

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

- Provides opportunities for employees to interact and build relationships
- Provides career mentorship to mid-level career professionals
- Develops and coordinates HR relationship management objectives and resources
- Mediates difficult employee relations and/or other interactions as a neutral party
- Develops policies and practices for resolving conflicts
- Resolves escalated conflicts among stakeholders
- Develops new partnerships and maintains existing partnerships with vendors, employees, and supervisors to maximize value to the organization
- Manages challenging issues in union and non-union environments
- Negotiates with internal and external stakeholders including vendors, staff, and leaders
- Builds consensus and settles disputes internal to HR on policy and practice decisions
- Oversees customer service objectives and outcomes
- Designs programs and policies to cultivate a strong customer service culture in the HR function
- Engages mid-level and early-level staff by building relationships
- Facilitates difficult interactions among organizational stakeholders to achieve optimal outcomes
- Develops a network of contacts including senior leaders, operational teams, staff, peers, suppliers/vendors, and community leaders across organizations

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

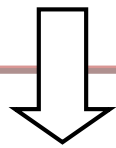
- Designs strategies for improving relationship management performance metrics
- Networks with and influences legislative bodies, union heads, and external HR leaders
- Develops and champions organizational customer service strategies and models
- Negotiates with internal and external stakeholders to advance the interests of the organization
- Designs strategies to ensure a strong customer service culture in the HR function
- Creates conflict resolution strategies and processes throughout the organization
- Oversees HR decision-making process to ensure consistency with HR and business strategy
- Develops strategic relationships with internal and external stakeholders
- Fosters a culture that supports intra-organizational relationships throughout organization (e.g., silo busting)
- Designs strategic opportunities and venues for employee networking and relationship building
- Proactively develops relationships with peers, clients, suppliers, board members, and senior leaders

# Competency 3: Consultation

SHRM COMPETENCY MODEL

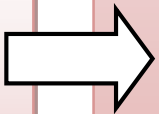
## Definition

The ability to provide guidance to organizational stakeholders.



## Sub Competencies (competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

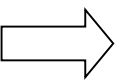
- Coaching
- Project Management (Vision, Design, Implementation, and Evaluation)
- Analytic Reasoning
- Problem-solving
- Inquisitiveness
- Creativity and Innovation
- Flexibility
- Respected Business Partner
- Career Pathing/Talent Management/People Management
- Time Management



## Behaviors (These are behaviors demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Applies creative problem-solving to address business needs and issues
- Serves as an in-house workforce and people management expert
- Analyzes specific business challenges involving the workforce and offers solutions based upon best practice or research
- Generates specific organizational interventions (e.g., culture change, change management, restructuring, training, etc.) to support organizational objectives
- Developing consultative and coaching skills
- Guides employees regarding specific career situations

Proficiencies by Career Level





# Competency 3: Consultation

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Develops a proactive perspective on consulting projects
- Conducts initial investigation for HR-based transactional issues
- Gathers, and when appropriate, analyzes facts and data for business solutions
- Raises issues and/or identifies patterns requiring transactional HR solutions
- Identifies stakeholder needs and refers as appropriate
- Provides a summary of pertinent facts and information to mid-level and senior HR leaders
- Manages work time efficiently

## MID LEVEL

- Conducts initial investigation of HR issues
- Evaluates and measures current processes
- Leads the implementation of business solutions
- Champions implementation of strategic initiatives
- Performs investigations on challenging issues
- Manages projects within allotted time and budget
- Gathers facts, information, and data to inform HR policy and develop solutions
- Coaches direct reports and others throughout organization utilizing HR expertise
- Develops HR and business process improvement solutions
- Devises short-term immediate solutions in partnership with stakeholders
- Participates in creation of HR interventions
- Serves as a team leader for organizational initiatives and projects
- Provides guidance to managers regarding HR practices
- Identifies threats to the business and recommends effective solutions



# Competency 3: Consultation

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

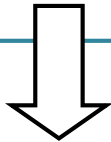
- Supports business unit leaders on major HR projects
- Provides guidance to managers and business unit teams
- Oversees HR investigations
- Ensures that HR and business solutions are on-time, on-budget, and high quality
- Designs creative business solutions utilizing HR expertise/perspective
- Coaches frontline managers and business unit leaders on HR- and business-related issues
- Aligns solutions [interventions] with business strategy and advocates for solution implementation
- Offers business solutions in a proactive manner
- Designs long-term business solutions in partnership with HR customers

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Creates talent management strategies by utilizing creative business solutions to align with and drive the business strategy
- Listens to business leaders' challenges
- Develops vision for critical solutions to organizational human capital challenges
- Identifies opportunities to provide HR and business solutions that maximize return-on-investment for the organization
- Uses appropriate analytic tools to provide other leaders input on strategic decisions
- Identifies creative solutions for the organization and its business units
- Supervises HR investigations with legal counsel
- Recognizes excessive HR liabilities and provides proactive strategic guidance for remediation
- Coaches executives on people-management issues
- Designs strategic HR and business solutions

## Definition

The ability to direct and contribute to initiatives and processes within the organization.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

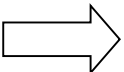
- Transformational and Functional Leadership
- Results and Goal-Oriented
- Resource Management
- Succession Planning
- Project Management
- Mission Driven
- Change Management
- Political Savvy
- Influence
- Consensus Builder



## Behaviors

(These are most typically demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Exhibits behaviors consistent with and conforming to organizational culture
- Fosters collaboration
- Understands the most effective and efficient way to accomplish tasks within the parameters of organizational hierarchy, processes, systems, and policies
- Develops solutions to overcome potential obstacles to successful implementation of initiatives
- Demonstrates agility and expertise when leading organizational initiatives or when supporting the initiatives of others
- Sets the vision for HR initiatives and builds buy-in from internal and external stakeholders
- Leads the organization through adversity with resilience and tenacity
- Promotes consensus among organizational stakeholders (e.g., employees, business unit leaders, informal leaders) when proposing new initiatives
- Serves as a transformational leader for the organization by leading change



# Competency 4: Leadership and Navigation

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Listens actively to identify potential challenges or solutions
- Builds credibility with stakeholders
- Makes HR transactional decisions within established policies and guidelines
- Assists with the implementation of initiatives and escalates issues
- Demonstrates flexibility, adaptability, and initiative
- Acts consistently with and represents the culture of the organization
- Seeks new ways to improve and recommends improvements to HR processes, transactions and outcomes
- Develops knowledge of internal policies and procedures for responding to transactional issues
- Provides detail-oriented support in the administration of organizational programs and initiatives
- Gains the knowledge and skill to implement organizational processes and initiatives
- Serves as a team member for passed down projects

## MID LEVEL

- Manages programs, policies, and procedures to support the organizational culture
- Demonstrates flexibility, adaptability, and initiative
- Develops skills in managing resources available to meet planned objectives
- Supports critical large-scale organizational changes
- Serves as point person on projects and tasks
- Makes policy interpretations and practice decisions
- Implements plans using results-oriented goals for measuring success
- Serves as the principal liaison to frontline managers for HR strategies, philosophies, and initiatives within the organization
- Develops leadership presence with management support at the business unit level
- Develops political savvy when implementing initiatives
- Serves as manager of organizational initiatives within units
- Operationalizes projects and initiatives as set forth by the higher-level plan



# Competency 4: Leadership and Navigation

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

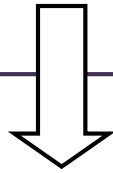
- Establishes programs, policies, and procedures to support the organizational culture
- Promotes HR capabilities to organization
- Leads project plans for timely completion
- Translates the vision, mission, and strategy into projects and initiatives with milestones and delivery schedules
- Manages the resources available effectively to meet planned objectives for initiatives
- Makes departmental/functional decisions
- Develops clear action plans with results-oriented goals for measuring success
- Drives alignment and buy-in at all levels in business units across organization
- Serves as a change agent for the organization

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Leads HR staff in maintaining or changing organizational culture
- Works with other executives to design, maintain, and champion the mission, vision, and strategy of the organization
- Identifies the need for and facilitates strategic organizational change
- Ensures alignment between the human capital vision, mission, and organizational business strategy
- Serves as the influential voice for HR strategies, philosophies, and initiatives within the organization
- Develops the organizational strategy for achieving the human capital vision and mission
- Manages risk, opportunities, and gaps in business strategy
- Oversees critical large-scale organizational changes with the support of business leaders
- Ensures appropriate accountability for the implementation of plans and change initiatives
- Sets tone for maintaining or changing organizational culture
- Champions the HR function and organizational mission and vision
- Gains buy-in for organizational change across senior leadership with agility

## Definition

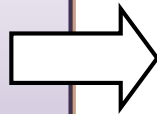
The ability to effectively exchange information with stakeholders.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

- Verbal Communication Skills
- Written Communication Skills
- Presentation Skills
- Persuasion
- Diplomacy
- Perceptual Objectivity
- Active Listening
- Effective Timely Feedback
- Facilitation Skills
- Meeting Effectiveness
- Social Technology and Social Media Savvy
- Public Relations

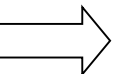


## Behaviors

(These are most typically demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Provides clear, concise information to others in verbal, written, electronic, and other communication formats for public and organizational consumption
- Listens actively and empathetically to the views of others
- Delivers critical information to all stakeholders
- Seeks further information to clarify ambiguity
- Provides constructive feedback effectively
- Ensure effective communication throughout the organization
- Provides thoughtful feedback in appropriate situations
- Provides proactive communications
- Demonstrates an understanding of the audience's perspective
- Treats constructive feedback as a developmental opportunity
- Welcomes the opportunity to discuss competing points of view
- Helps others consider new perspectives
- Leads effective and efficient meetings
- Helps managers communicate not just on HR issues
- Utilizes communication technology and social media

Proficiencies by Career Level



# Competency 5: Communication

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Demonstrates support for HR organizational initiatives in communication with stakeholders
- Promptly responds to stakeholder concerns via written, verbal, or electronic communication
- Produces accurate and error free communication
- Produces top quality reports and documents
- Communicates policies, procedures, culture, etc. to new and existing employees
- Resolves employee issues or directs appropriately to other resources
- Uses discretion when communicating sensitive information
- Notifies upper management of appropriate issues or concerns

## MID LEVEL

- Delivers well-organized, impactful presentations
- Facilitates and transfers knowledge
- Translates organizational communication strategies into practice at the operational level
- Effectively facilitates staff professional development programs
- Communicates and implements policies on social media
- Listens actively to understand stakeholder concerns at the operational level
- Delivers constructive feedback
- Informs senior management of operational concerns or issues
- Coaches frontline employees on organizational and interpersonal communications
- Fields issues with senior management guidance
- Crafts clear messages that inform frontline HR staff of relevant organizational information

Proficiencies by Career Level



# Competency 5: Communication

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

- Communicates strategy and initiatives to business unit leaders and HR staff
- Communicates plans for ensuring the alignment between organizational HR initiatives and organizational strategy
- Fosters the organizational vision for HR practice and policy
- Solicits feedback and buy-in on HR initiatives from organizational stakeholders
- Disseminates HR and other executives' messages to stakeholders
- Creates channels for open communication across and within levels of responsibility
- Negotiates with vendors and staff to reach best possible outcomes
- Engages in conversations with stakeholders using appropriate communication modes and methods to achieve desired outcomes
- Oversees culture communication strategy

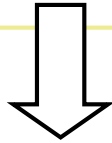
## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Articulates the alignment between organizational HR initiatives and organizational strategy
- Communicates the corporate mission and vision to other stakeholders
- Creates strategy for a culture that fosters efficient and effective interactions and decision-making
- Crafts messages to be delivered to stakeholders regarding high-visibility organizational issues
- Negotiates with stakeholders to reach best possible outcomes
- Solicits feedback and buy-in from executive-level stakeholders
- Develops strategy for organizational systems of communication
- Delivers strategic messages supporting HR and business
- Builds support and inspires confidence through clear communications
- Communicates HR vision, practices, and policies to other stakeholders
- Comfortably communicates with audiences of all sizes



## Definition

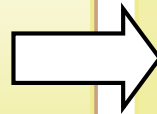
The ability to value and consider the perspectives and backgrounds of all parties.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

- Global Perspective
- Diversity Perspective
- Openness to Various Perspectives
- Empathy
- Openness to Experience
- Tolerance for Ambiguity
- Adaptability
- Cultural Awareness and Respect



## Behaviors

(These are most typically demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Has a strong set of core values while operating with adaptability to particular conditions, situations, and people
- Maintains openness to others' ideas and makes decisions based upon experience, data, facts and reasoned judgment
- Demonstrates nonjudgmental respect for other perspectives
- Works effectively with diverse cultures and populations
- Conducts business with an understanding and respect for the differences in rules, customs, laws, regulations, and business operations between own culture and all cultures
- Appreciates the commonalities, values, and individual uniqueness of all human beings
- Possesses self-awareness and humility to learn from others
- Embraces inclusion
- Adapts perspective and behavior to meet the cultural context
- Navigates the differences between commonly-accepted practice and law when conducting business in other nations
- Operates with a global, open mindset while being sensitive to local cultural issues and needs
- Operates with a fundamental trust in other human beings
- Takes the responsibility to teach others about the differences and benefits that multiple cultures bring to the organization to ensure inclusion
- Incorporates global business and economic trends into business decisions



# Competency 6: Global and Cultural Effectiveness

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SHRM COMPETENCY MODEL

### EARLY LEVEL

- Possesses general knowledge of local cultural issues
- Respects differences and promotes inclusion on a transactional level
- Possesses general knowledge of organization's policy and philosophy toward diversity and inclusiveness
- Possesses general awareness and understanding of cultural differences
- Assists with implementation of diversity/culture programs in local settings
- Demonstrates willingness to develop and grow understanding of global and cultural effectiveness
- Demonstrates awareness and appreciation for the global multi-dimensional and diverse perspectives in organization's line of business
- Develops some general knowledge of local and global economic trends

### MID LEVEL

- Implements and audits organizational/HR practices to ensure global/cultural sensitivity
- Implements global initiatives, programs, and policies while appropriately tailoring to local segment needs
- Provides training on culture trends and practices for expatriate workforce
- Maintains advanced knowledge of cultural differences within the region and potential borders
- Designs, recommends, and/or implements diversity/culture programs
- Resolves conflicts due to cultural differences
- Maintains local, global and cultural knowledge/experience
- Employs cultural sensitivity in communicating with staff
- Maintains expert knowledge focused on a particular component/segment of the global organization
- Maintains general knowledge of local and global economic trends



# Competency 6: Global and Cultural Effectiveness

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

- Oversees execution of programs, practices, and policies that make the strategic connection between diversity and inclusiveness practices with organizational success
- Develops expert knowledge of global economic trends and best practices
- Maintains expert global and cultural knowledge/experience
- Fosters culture of inclusiveness within organization
- Champions diversity with external stakeholders (e.g., diverse suppliers)
- Develops policies that are consistent and fair to members of all backgrounds
- Provides mentoring/training on cultural trends and practices to all levels of organization
- Implements initiatives to ensure global effectiveness in strategic business units
- Aligns and manages local, regional, and global advantages
- Develops diversity and cultural enhancement programs
- Implements culture of inclusion through processes and systems
- Implements and audits practices to ensure global/cultural sensitivity

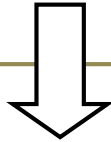
## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Sets the strategy to leverage global competencies for competitive HR advantages
- Uses global economic outlook to determine the impact on the organization's human capital strategy
- Maintains expert global and cultural knowledge/experience
- Maintains expert knowledge of global economic trends
- Understands global labor markets and associated legal environments
- Fosters the organization's cultural norms
- Proves the return-on-investment of a diverse workforce
- Manages contradictory or paradoxical practices, policies, and cultural norms to ensure cross-cultural harmony and organizational success
- Integrates perspectives on cultural differences and their impact on the success of the organization
- Sets the vision that defines the strategic connection between diversity and inclusiveness practices for employees and organizational success
- Builds cross-cultural relationships and partnerships

# Competency 7: Ethical Practice

## Definition

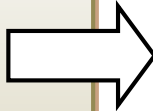
The ability to integrate core values, integrity, and accountability throughout all organizational and business practices.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

- Rapport Building
- Trust Building
- Personal, Professional, and Behavioral Integrity
- Professionalism
- Credibility
- Personal and Professional Courage

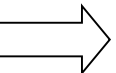


## Behaviors

(These are most typically demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Maintains confidentiality
- Acts with personal, professional, and behavioral integrity
- Responds immediately to all reports of unethical behavior or conflicts of interest
- Empowers all employees to report unethical behavior or conflicts of interest without fear of reprisal
- Shows consistency between espoused and enacted values
- Acknowledges mistakes
- Drives the corporate ethical environment
- Applies power or authority appropriately
- Recognizes personal bias and others' tendency toward bias, and takes measures to mitigate the influence of bias in business decisions
- Maintains appropriate levels of transparency in organizational practices
- Ensures that all stakeholder voices are heard
- Manages political and social pressures when making decisions

Proficiencies by Career Level



# Competency 7: Ethical Practice

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Supports training programs regarding ethical laws, standards, and policies
- Demonstrates accountability for actions
- Behaves in a manner consistent with the difficult decisions made by management
- Identifies potential conflicts of interest
- Follows policies consistently
- Documents and escalates reports of unethical behavior to management
- Maintains employee confidentiality throughout appropriate business processes
- Maintains knowledge of internal organizational controls
- Maintains awareness of ethics laws, standards, legislation, and trends that may affect organizational HR practice
- Supports HR policies, procedures, and guidelines
- Establishes one's self as a credible and trustworthy source for employees to voice concerns

## MID LEVEL

- Maintains general knowledge of ethical laws, standards, legislation, and trends that may affect organizational HR practice
- Reinforces difficult decisions that align with organizational strategies and values
- Establishes one's self as a credible resource for all issues involving employees and management
- Develops and supports systems for reporting unethical behavior
- Enforces policies consistently
- Establishes one's self as a credible and trustworthy source for employees to voice concerns
- Influences others to behave in an ethical manner
- Performs as an ethical role model and positively influences managerial integrity and accountability
- Implements training programs regarding ethics laws, standards, and policies
- Takes immediate and appropriate action regarding reports of unethical behavior or conflicts of interest
- Audits and monitors adherence to policies and procedures
- Creates processes to ensure confidentiality and privacy of employee information and company data



## Competency 7: Ethical Practice

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

### SENIOR LEVEL

- Establishes oneself as a credible and trustworthy source for employees to voice concerns
- Maintains contemporary knowledge of ethics laws, standards, legislation, and emerging trends that may affect organizational behaviors and practice
- Establishes HR team as a credible and trustworthy resource within the organization
- Supports executive's and makes own difficult decisions that align with organizational strategies and values
- Oversees processes to protect the confidentiality of employee information
- Responds promptly and appropriately to reports of unethical behavior
- Evaluates potential ethical risks and liabilities to the organization
- Serves as a role model of ethical behavior by consistently conforming to the highest ethical standards and practices
- Develops systems for employees to report unethical behavior for implementation
- Sets organizational standards for confidentiality of employee and privacy of company data
- Withstands political pressures when implementing and enforcing policies and procedures
- Briefs executives on any reports of unethical behavior or conflicts of interest that might threaten the organization
- Ensures access to ethical standards and policies for all employees across business units

- Develops ethical policies and procedures for implementation
- Champions organizational values
- Establishes self as a credible resource for all issues involving employees and their management

Proficiencies by Career Level 

# Competency 7: Ethical Practice

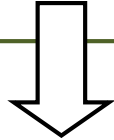
**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Empowers senior leaders to maintain internal controls and create an ethical environment to prevent conflicts of interest
- Maintains contemporary knowledge of ethics, laws, standards, legislation, and emerging trends that may affect organizational HR practice
- Establishes one's self as a credible and trustworthy source for employees to voice concerns
- Challenges other executives and senior leaders when potential conflicts of interest arise
- Withstands politically motivated pressure when developing strategy
- Sets the standard for being a role model of ethical behavior by consistently conforming to the highest ethical standards and practices
- Balances organizational success and employee advocacy when creating strategy
- Develops HR policies and internal controls to minimize organizational risk from unethical practice
- Creates HR strategy that holds employees accountable for their actions
- Makes difficult decisions that align with organizational strategies and values
- Communicates the vision for an organizational culture where espoused and enacted values align
- Maintains a culture that requires all employees to report unethical practices and behavior
- Aligns all HR practices with ethics, laws, and standards

## Definition

The ability to interpret information to make business decisions and recommendations.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

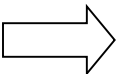
- Measurement and Assessment Skills
- Objectivity
- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Curiosity and Inquisitiveness
- Research Methodology
- Decision-making
- Auditing Skills
- Knowledge Management



## Behaviors

(These are most typically demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Makes sound decisions based on evaluation of available information
- Assesses the impact of changes to law on organizational human resource management functions
- Transfers knowledge and best practices from one situation to the next
- Applies critical thinking to information received from organizational stakeholders and evaluates what can be used for organizational success
- Gathers critical information
- Analyzes data with a keen sense for what is useful
- Delineates a clear set of best practices based on experience, evidence from industry literature, published peer-reviewed research, publicly available web-based sources of information, and other sources
- Analyzes information to identify evidence-based best practices
- Identifies leading indicators of outcomes
- Analyzes large quantities of information from research and practice





# Competency 8: Critical Evaluation

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Gathers facts and analyzes data using systematic methods (e.g., surveys, focus groups, etc.)
- Develops knowledge in the use of data, evidence-based research, benchmarks, HR and business metrics to facilitate decision-making
- Reports on data entry and key metrics
- Develops basic working knowledge of statistics, research methods, measurement concepts, and metrics
- Identifies sources of data and information and learns where to find the most relevant information for solving problems
- Conducts data entry and tracking of statistics and metrics
- Collects and synthesizes data through surveys, focus groups, research, and other methods
- Engages in preliminary analysis of collected data and reports findings to senior HR staff

## MID LEVEL

- Maintains working knowledge of measurement concepts, data collection, and analysis
- Maintains working knowledge of statistics and metrics
- Asks critical questions to prepare and interpret data studies/metrics
- Conducts assessments to address problems and implements solutions within business units
- Evaluates information gathered through research conducted
- Conducts effective program evaluation
- Maintains knowledge in the use of data, evidence-based research, benchmarks, HR and business metrics to make critical decisions
- Identifies patterns in data and raises relevant issues to higher-level management
- Differentiates best practices that will work for own organization/business unit
- Ensures quality work product
- Executes case and pilot studies to evaluate to address specific problems and questions
- Analyzes data and reports findings and trends
- Maintains objectivity during critical evaluation processes
- Analyzes data and seeks root causes
- Masters research methods and applies them to work

Proficiencies by Career Level 

# Competency 8: Critical Evaluation

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

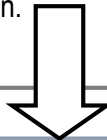
- Creates and/or dissects organizational issues, changes, or opportunities
- Maintains advanced knowledge in the use of data, evidence-based research, benchmarks, HR and business metrics to make critical decisions
- Maintains advanced knowledge of statistics and metrics
- Provides training and mentoring to upper and lower level employees on critical evaluation
- Develops best practice through rigorous research and application of practice in own organization
- Differentiates between tested and untested solutions
- Possesses advanced knowledge and ability to interpret data and make recommendations
- Leads research and evaluation and provides resources for specific issues studied
- Asks critical questions needed to evaluate data
- Manages effective evaluations of organizational programs and interventions
- Implements case and pilot studies to address specific problems
- Validates processes to ensure that they meet desired and reliable outcomes
- Identifies critical messages from research, pilot study findings, or best practices
- Integrates findings to select best course of action

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Maintains expert knowledge in the use of data, evidence-based research, benchmarks, HR and business metrics to make critical decisions
- Maintains expert knowledge and ability to interpret data and make recommendations
- Makes decisions with confidence based on analysis of available information to drive business success
- Sets the direction of HR and the organization through evaluation of risks, economic and environmental factors
- Seeks information in a strategic, systematic manner to use in decision-making
- Analyzes information needed to direct, evaluate, and use data and other information to make effective decisions
- Sponsors process improvement initiatives using evidence-based solutions
- Communicates the impact on organizational strategy of relevant and important findings from data analysis
- Applies, translates, and interprets findings from evaluations towards building effective and creative policies within organizational context
- Utilizes external/environmental awareness and experience in decision-making
- Challenges assumptions and critically examines all initiatives and programs
- Provides strategic view to direct and prioritize decision-making

## Definition

The ability to understand and apply information to contribute to the organization's strategic plan.



## Sub Competencies

(competencies related to and/or subsumed by the relevant general competency)

- Strategic Agility
- Business Knowledge
- Systems Thinking
- Economic Awareness
- Effective Administration
- Knowledge of Finance and Accounting
- Knowledge of Sales and Marketing
- Knowledge of Technology
- Knowledge of Labor Markets
- Knowledge of Business Operations/Logistics
- Knowledge of Government and Regulatory Guidelines
- HR and Organizational Metrics/Analytics/Business Indicators

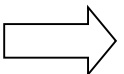


## Behaviors

(These are most typically demonstrated by individuals at the highest level of proficiency on the indicated competency)

- Demonstrates an understanding of the strategic relationship between effective human resource management and core business functions
- Demonstrates a capacity for understanding the business operations and functions within the organization
- Understands the industry and business/competitive environment within which the organization operates
- Makes the business case for HR management (e.g., Return On Investment/ROI) as it relates to efficient and effective organizational functioning
- Understands organizational metrics and their correlation to business success
- Uses organizational resources to learn the business and operational functions
- Uses organizational metrics to make decisions
- Markets HR both internally (e.g., ROI of HR initiatives) and externally (e.g., employment branding)
- Leverages technology to solve business problems

Proficiencies by Career Level



# Competency 9: Business Acumen

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EARLY LEVEL

- Demonstrates basic knowledge of business lines and products/services
- Gathers, assembles, and reports HR metrics, Key Performance Indicators, and labor market trends
- Possesses operational/processing expertise for assigned tasks
- Develops basic knowledge of HR Metrics
- Identifies inefficiencies and provides process improvement recommendations
- Develops basic knowledge of competitor organizations
- Develops familiarity with business terms and acronyms
- Develops knowledge and understanding of value of cost-benefit analysis

## MID LEVEL

- Maintains functional knowledge of organizational business units
- Gathers, assembles, and reports HR metrics and labor market trends
- Utilizes appropriate business terms and vocabulary in interactions with employees and leaders
- Develops skill in building business cases for HR projects and initiatives
- Maintains knowledge of HR metrics and business metrics including Key Performance Indicators and relationships with one another
- Develops HR marketing messages to both internal and external audiences
- Maintains working knowledge of business lines as well as competitive market
- Manages project and initiative budgets
- Analyzes data for HR metrics to make recommendations
- Defines critical activities in terms of value added, impact, utility derived from cost-benefit analysis
- Manages process improvement initiatives
- Implements organization-wide business practices/operations
- Develops the ability to apply the principles of finance, marketing, economics, sales, technology, and business systems to internal HR processes and policies
- Implements HR and business technology plans to solve business problems and needs



# Competency 9: Business Acumen

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## SENIOR LEVEL

- Evaluates all proposed business cases for HR projects and initiatives
- Maintains advanced knowledge of key industry and organization metrics - 'knows the business'
- Aligns HR strategy, goals, and objectives to overall business strategy and objectives
- Develops HR business strategies to drive key business results
- Demonstrates fluency in the language of business administration and senior leaders
- Creates an action plan for managing talent within the confines of the labor market
- Develops strategy for HR marketing messages to both internal and external audiences
- Communicates organizational impact of metrics
- Determine goals, plans, and budget requirements
- Develops business strategy with top leaders of the organization
- Uses knowledge of business and HR Metrics to make business decisions
- Maintains knowledge of economic factors and economic environment impact on industry and organization operations
- Recommends business practice/plan improvements
- Ensures all HR initiatives have ROI that adds to organizational value
- Builds business cases for HR projects and initiatives

- Demonstrates a working knowledge of the labor market and its relation to organizational success
- Develops organization-wide business practices/operations
- Develops HR and business technology plans to solve business problems and needs
- Benchmarks the competition and other relevant comparison groups
- Uses the language of business administration and senior leaders
- Evaluates critical activities in terms of value added, impact and utility derived from cost-benefit analysis
- Maintains broad-based knowledge of the organization and its operations
- Applies consistently the principles of finance, marketing, economics, sales, technology, and business systems to internal HR processes and policies
- Develops business acumen of team
- Sets policies and procedures/practices to support organizational success
- Maintains a systems-thinking perspective when making business decisions
- Maintains advanced knowledge of business lines and products/services, as well as the competitive market
- Implements solutions with analysis of impact on ROI, utility, revenue, profit and loss estimates, and other business indicators



# Competency 9: Business Acumen

**Proficiency Standards by Career Level** - Behavioral standards in which an HR professional at the relevant level should engage to be successful.

## EXECUTIVE LEVEL

- Evaluates all proposed business cases for HR projects and initiatives
- Benchmarks the competition and other relevant comparison groups
- Communicates direction on local and global labor market and its relation to organizational success
- Maintains expert knowledge of business lines and products/services, as well as the competitive market
- Develops HR business strategies to drive key business results
- Maintains expert knowledge of economic factors and economic environment impact on industry and organization operations
- Evaluates critical activities in terms of value added, impact, and utility derived from a cost-benefit analysis
- Maintains expert knowledge of key industry and organization metrics - 'knows the business'
- Sets HR and business technology strategy to solve business problems and needs
- Serves as strategic contributor to organizational decision-making regarding fiscal, product/service lines, operations, human capital, and technological areas
- Influences government policy and proposed regulations
- Develops business strategy with top leaders of the organization
- Defines strategy for managing talent within the confines of the labor market

- Ensures all HR initiatives have ROI that adds to organizational value
- Assesses risk (SWOT) of business initiatives as it pertains to human capital, ROI, and shareholder accountability
- Aligns HR strategy, goals, and objectives to overall business strategy and objectives
- Demonstrates fluency in the language of business administration and senior leaders
- Develops solutions with analysis of impact on ROI, utility, revenue, profit and loss estimates, and other business indicators
- Examines all organizational problems with a sense for integrating HR solutions designed to maximize ROI, profit, revenue, and strategic effectiveness



### **Closing Message**

Thank you again for your interest in SHRM's professional HR competency model. We hope that you found this competency model interesting and useful.

We welcome comments and feedback, and we are happy to answer any questions or address any concerns you might have.

Feel free to contact us via [Competencies@shrm.org](mailto:Competencies@shrm.org) or 800-283-7476 x3366.

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