

## Competency Set – Middle Management

### Task-Focused Competencies

#### **Intellectual Rigour**

Definition: Brings an intellectual rigour to the work, applying systematic and analytic thinking to issues. Ensures that propositions and programs are critically appraised and evaluated.

Elements:

- Accuracy and speed of information management.
- Critical thinking and appraisal skills.
- Problem analysis and resolution.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Processes complex information from a range of sources accurately and quickly.
- Sees the underlying patterns in information and correctly projects trends and implications.
- Cuts through to the heart of complicated situations.
- Plans and tracks budget spend with accuracy and attention to detail.
- Is quick to size up the balance of benefit in a proposition.
- Breaks a complex issue or problem down into a set of more manageable sub-issues.
- Critically reviews and evaluates proposals for new activities and services.
- Identifies the strengths and weaknesses of proposals and improves their underlying rigour.
- Applies a logical and evidence based approach to working out management issues.

#### **Service Planning and Positioning**

Definition: Plans services that effectively meet the critical needs of the main customer base. Promotes and positions the service to maximise uptake while ensuring alignment with the overall organisation strategy.

Elements:

- Clarity on the service proposition.
- Positioning the service to maximise customer uptake.
- Ensuring that service is aligned fully with organisation strategy.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Keeps in touch with the business environment and anticipates issues.
- Identifies current and future customer needs.
- Positions the service to make the maximum impact and provide the maximum value.
- Aligns the services with the organisation strategic direction.
- Clearly defines the service proposition and positions it to attract potential customers.
- Looks for opportunities to grow the service and broaden its impact.
- Maintains a good awareness of potential competitors and identifies the Teagasc advantage points.
- Ensures that the service is seen in a good light at senior levels within the organisation.

## **Organising Effective and Efficient Delivery of Business Objectives**

**Definition:** Organises and manages the business area to achieve effective and efficient delivery against the business plan. Ensures that there are high standards of governance and stewardship in operation.

### **Elements:**

- Effective organisation of the core business activities.
- Delivers best value services.
- Ensuring stewardship and governance standards.

### **Behavioural Anchors:**

- Plans and defines the critical activity levels for the services (including key performance indicators as appropriate).
- Identifies the key priorities within the operational/business plan.
- Defines and acquires the required resources to deliver the service.
- Plans and manages the budget effectively.
- Manages all core activities in a way that delivers best value (i.e. achieves the correct balance between maximising output and minimising costs).
- Ensures proper stewardship of resources (i.e. puts in place a clear risk management process where appropriate).
- Ensures proper governance in all service activity areas and relationships.
- Leads or oversees the planning of major events and campaigns.
- Delivers major projects to time, resource and quality standards.

## **Focus on Customer, Quality and Standards**

**Definition:** Sets a high standard for the core business delivery areas. Puts in place effective processes to measure and improve the standards and quality of the core business areas. Promotes a culture/ethos of continuous improvement.

### **Elements:**

- Defining service and quality standards.
- Putting the focus on quality improvement.
- Ensuring customer response tracking.

### **Behavioural Anchors:**

- Sets high standards for all core business areas.
- Benchmarks against appropriate comparisons and identifies improvement areas.
- Puts in place core process reviews and other improvement tools.
- Operates an effective system to get regular and comprehensive customer feedback.
- Organises systems and processes to get regular feedback on the service and acts on this feedback.
- Works to streamline service activities and processes wherever possible.
- Promotes a culture and systems for continuous improvement.
- Ensures that staff receive training in quality improvement tools and techniques.
- Works to maximise synergies between functional areas of the business.

## **Managing for Change and Innovation**

**Definition:** Positively highlights the necessity for adaptation and new approaches in service delivery. Promotes an open and flexible response to change and encourages creativity and innovation.

### **Elements:**

- Positive promotion of change including giving personal examples of flexibility.
- Effective and consultative working through of change.
- Promotion of creativity and innovation.

### **Behavioural Anchors:**

- Identifies the need to change or adapt services in a timely way.
- Promotes the necessity for innovation and change.
- Brings a positive attitude to bear on the delivery of change and service developments (i.e. champions change).
- Makes a persuasive case for the adoption of new approaches or methods.
- Involves staff positively in working out the best ways to implement change.
- Manages change in a well structured and effective way.
- Supports staff through change and transition.
- Personally gives a positive example and acts as a role model for flexibility and adaptability.
- Promotes creativity and innovation training.

## Interpersonal Competencies

### **Strives for Results**

**Definition:** Manages with a strong focus on the critical result areas, intervening incisively to address performance problems. Achieves and exceeds targets and celebrates this with the team.

#### Elements:

- Clear focus on goal achievement.
- Relentless attention to current performance against targets.
- Incisive and effective addressing of performance problems.

#### Behavioural Anchors:

- Identifies the business critical targets and goals and pays most attention to these.
- Sets ambitious goals for the business area.
- Tracks and reviews progress in a systematic and timely way.
- Uses key performance indicators in an effective manner to track and quality assure work.
- Uses the PMDS process to manage performance in a systematic but dynamic way.
- Intervenes incisively when performance is off track.
- Shows determination and persistence in following through on performance issues.
- Highlights and recognises achievements.
- Consistently meets or exceeds targets.
- Problem solves issues in a resourceful way.

## **Gives Visible Leadership**

Definition: Sets out the purpose, value and critical focus of the service in a compelling and enthusiastic way. Puts time and effort into recognising and motivating staff. Elicits commitment from staff through positive example and integrity.

### Elements:

- Setting out a clear and compelling purpose, direction and focus.
- Highlighting and recognising the contribution of staff.
- Eliciting commitment through consultation, integrity and enthusiasm.

### Behavioural Anchors:

- Develops a compelling vision or statement of purpose and direction for their particular business area.
- Highlights the positive contribution that the business makes.
- Communicates a sense of urgency and the need for full commitment (i.e. demonstrates a positive and “can do” attitude at work).
- Gives a strong, clear and frequent message about “getting the essentials right”.
- Gives praise and recognition where services or staff deliver well.
- Leads by example.
- Takes the initiative when a sense of direction or greater clarity is required.
- Manages staff in a consultative and involving way that elicits a contribution back.
- Shows a high level of fairness and integrity in how he/she deals with staff issues.
- Represents the service with high credibility at public external events, high profile events and within the organisation.

### **Promotes Teamwork and Cross-Functional Collaboration**

Definition: Manages in a highly involving and participative way that promotes effective teamwork. Promotes collaboration across business areas to maximise the service value. Builds and sustains effective networks (both internally and externally).

Elements:

- Promoting a strong teamwork culture.
- Promoting cross-functional synergies that add business values.
- Builds and sustains a wide range of effective working relations.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Practises a high involvement management style that elicits strong team involvement.
- Promotes effective teamwork through regular team meetings and performance review sessions.
- Identifies and constructively addresses conflict within or across teams.
- Is proactive in providing support and assistance to colleagues.
- Makes an effective and constructive contribution to the senior management of the organisation.
- Builds and sustains strong stakeholder relationships (relationships with key constituents and customers).
- Liaises widely within the local industry on issues.
- Looks for opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across the business.
- Promotes projects and services that maximise the synergy between different parts of the business.
- Develops and sustains a wide network (both internally and externally).

### **Effective Communication and Influencing Skills**

Definition: Communicates in a clear, concise and persuasive way that gets key messages across effectively to others. Lobbies effectively to build support for proposals.

Elements:

- Ensuring effective communication in all directions.
- Effective communication across a variety of media and contexts.
- Strong listening and clarification skills.

Behavioural Anchors:

- Acts as an effective information channel (e.g. upwards, downwards and lateral).
- Communicates and reports in a concise, informative and accurate manner.
- Presents in a compelling manner to a range of audiences.
- Makes a well argued case (i.e. persuades and influences others to his/her point of view).
- Uses a variety of communication methods to get effective messages across.
- Demonstrates strong listening and clarification skills.
- Chairs meetings in a skilled and contribution facilitating way.
- Lobbies effectively both internally and externally.

## **Personal Qualities Competencies**

### **Personal Mastery and Commitment**

**Definition:** Works in a highly organised way that delivers on the priority areas. Deals effectively with high demand and maintains a high level of commitment to organisational goals.

#### **Elements:**

- Effective organisation of own work.
- Resilience to pressure, criticism and setbacks.
- Projects commitment and confidence.

#### **Behavioural Anchors:**

- Organises own work in an effective and time efficient manner.
- Distinguishes clearly between priorities and spends most time on the critical issues.
- Is able to keep a number of issues progressing at the same time.
- Manages workload demands to avoid unrealistic expectations (i.e. can say no to unrealistic demands/paces work to maintain effective delivery).
- Maintains an effective standard of work under conditions of high demand.
- Absorbs criticism and responds to complaints in a professional manner.
- Retains composure and poise in difficult interpersonal situations.
- Finds way to manage tensions associated with the job.
- Maintains a positive commitment to the organisation and its objectives.
- Conveys an air of poise and confidence that reassures others.

## **Promotes Knowledge Transfer, Learning and Development**

Definition: Promotes the critical contribution of knowledge transfer to the future success of the organisation. Puts in place systems, processes and programs to facilitate knowledge transfer. Promotes and champions continuous professional development ensuring that staff stay abreast of the latest development and technologies.

### Elements:

- Ensuring that their area of responsibility keeps abreast of all relevant developments.
- Investing in and targeting knowledge transfer as a critical business priority.
- Promoting training and continuous professional development.

### Behavioural Anchors:

- Keeps abreast of developments in the field and the wider business environment.
- Keeps up to date with changing technologies and their potential applications.
- Puts resources into the critical knowledge management and knowledge transfer areas for the business.
- Builds knowledge transfer into business goals and targets.
- Promotes and encourages activities that increase cross-functional and inter-disciplinary knowledge transfer (i.e. put a structured process in place to support and promote knowledge transfer).
- Develops systems and processes to ensure that his/her areas keep abreast of new developments.
- Regularly reviews the training and development status of his/her area.
- Champions the learning and research agenda
- Actively engages in own personal and professional development
- Actively seeks feedback on own performance and encourages others to do the same