Rhondda Cynon Taf

Middle Management Competency Framework

(January 2009)

Content

Competencies – Explanatory Notes

What are 'Competencies?'

The competencies in this document describe how really 'excellent' staff would work in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCTCBC). They don't describe specific tasks that people do as part of their job, (job descriptions do this). Instead they describe *how* someone who is really effective would do those things, and *what else* they would do in addition to those things. Working in a way that is described by the competencies doesn't necessarily mean doing 'more' in terms of work, but it can mean working differently.

All positions within RCTCBC are included in this framework. There are 9 main job families:

- Strategic Management (Heads of Service and above)
- Middle Management
- Supervisors / Team Leaders (1st line managers)
- Administrators
- Ancillary workers
- Care and Community
- Frontline and Customer Care staff
- Skilled Manual Workers
- Technical, Specialist and Professional staff

The decision tree on page 5 will help you to identify which job family your job is most likely to be in. If you have any questions regarding which competency framework is most suitable for your role, please discuss this with Human Resources (HR) or your line manager.

By using competencies to define what 'excellent' performance looks like for everyone, and encouraging people to work in these ways, RCTCBC is more able to deliver levels of service that will really make a difference to our Community.

Understanding Your Competencies

The overview shows a summary of all the competency framework headings on 1 page. There are a number of competency areas that have been identified as being key for all workers in RCTCBC and although the actual demonstration of these may vary for different jobs, these competencies are important for everyone. The key competencies are:

- **Working with other people** (this also includes in a team or in a partnership)

- **Communicating Effectively**

- **Focusing on Service Users** (this also includes looking after their interests, earning their trust, working with service users and meeting service user needs)

Each of the competencies is broken down into a list of specific behaviours which has three columns. On the left column of each list are the things that other people would be able to see you doing if you were 'excellent' at your job. On the right, are the negative versions of those behaviours which give examples of ineffective behaviour. Between the two extremes, an adequate, basic, level of performance is described.

The three descriptions for each type of behaviour **illustrate points 1, 2, 2.5, 3, 4 and 5 sliding scale**. You might feel that you don't sit in any particular 'box', all the time. However, because there is a **range of behaviour** between the positive and negative behaviours, it is possible for someone to sit between the points. Or, you may show both positive and negative sides of the same behaviour at different times, for example depending on who you are working with.

This is shown in the example below:
Here is an extract from the *Communicating Effectively* competency, with the in-between behaviours added in grey to show the full scale:

An excellent RCTCBC Worker: An ineffective RCT CBC Worker:

4	3	2.5	2	1
Communicates clearly and concisely	*Generally communicates well (good standard rather than excellent)*	Uses communication that requires some checking by others	*Communication can be vague or unclear- would benefit from some development*	Is unfocused and unclear and leaves others unsure of what was said or meant

If you need help understanding what the scales and behaviours mean in relation to your job, please discuss them with your line manager.

The health and safety of our staff and service users and valuing diversity are core to all our values in RCTCBC and are either expressed as specific competencies or are integrated into individual frameworks.

How the Competencies Will Be Used

This set of competencies will be used within RCT's Performance Plus! system to help everyone in the Council to see where they are in relation to 'excellent' performance.

This set will also be used to measure candidates' suitability when they are applying for jobs like yours at RCT, to make sure the best people are selected. They can also be used to define training and development content.

Although these sets of competencies describe qualities of 'excellent' workers, it is accepted that it would not be realistic to expect anyone to show all the positive behaviours, across all of the competencies, all of the time. However, there is an

expectation that people strive towards this ideal. The competencies should therefore be seen as something to aim towards, and to help you to clearly understand where your strengths lie and where you may need further development.

RCTCBC Middle Managers Competency Framework

RCTCBC Middle Managers - Competency Framework (Overview)

People

Developing and Motivating People (1)
Values and empowers team members and consistently works to develop staff. Recognises and uses skills and strengths within the team and tackles poor performance effectively
- Inspires, passionate, positive
- Supports, develops, empowers, challenges
- Consistent, fair, values people

Working in Partnerships and Teams (2)
Consistently engages and involves others through their teams, networks and partnerships. Uses positive relationships with others to achieve goals
- Respect, trust, constructive relationships
- Involves and encourages, inclusive
- Interested, shares, team-focused

Communicating Effectively (3)
Creates a culture of openness and honesty. Communicates information clearly and effectively and adapts their own style when necessary
- Courteous, polite
- Informs, explains, openly shares
- Listens, receptive
- Clear and effective
- Assertive, willing to challenge

Managing Change (4)
Creates a culture that is open to change and new ideas to improve services. Takes on new challenges and supports others through times of change
- Positive and proactive
- Innovative, creative, receptive
- Supports and understands

Tasks

Implementing Strategy (5)
Understands corporate strategy and is able to implement strategy in their service area. Translates strategy for others and ensures that everyone knows their role in achieving organisational goals.
- Understands strategic priorities
- Ensures staff understand their roles
- Policies and procedures in context

Managing Resources (6)
Aims to provide best value and quality services by utilising resources efficiently and effectively
- Takes opportunities
- Anticipates, plans, evaluates
- Reduces waste
- Shares budgets and responsibility

Achieving Results (7)
Consistently aims to achieve the best possible results. Uses information to plan and prioritise effectively to meet deadlines and overcome problems. Ensures that results are achieved whilst considering the health and well-being of themselves and others
- Planned, organised, prioritises
- Continuous improvements, focus
- Adds value, effective, strong work-ethic
- Takes responsibility, balance with well-being

Culture and Values –
The RCTCBC Context

Focusing on Service Users (8)
Takes personal responsibility for service delivery that genuinely puts Service Users at the centre and truly consults. Aims to provide services that are accessible and make a difference to citizens

- Genuine, consults, understands
- Diplomatic, proactive, responds
- Fair and accessible
- Valued, respected

Political Knowledge and Awareness (9)
Manages the political interface sensitively and effectively; has a good knowledge and understanding of political systems within and outside the Council

- Clear, justified recommendations
- Fully informs, involves, positive
- Sensitive, aware
- Knowledge and understanding

Developing and Motivating People

Values and empowers team members and consistently works to develop staff. Recognises and uses skills and strengths within the team and tackles poor performance effectively.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

Inspires others by being passionate and enthusiastic and having a positive 'action-focused' attitude. Leads by example	Is mainly positive and enthusiastic	Always sees the problem or the negative, moans or looks troubled, does not inspire people
Demonstrates trust and confidence in their staff	Has a level of trust and confidence in their staff	Does not show trust or confidence in staff
Empowers staff by delegating appropriately with support. Gives responsibility	Delegates appropriately but is sometimes quick to retake control	Does not 'let go' of control, tends to interfere and tell staff what to do
Actively demonstrates that they value their staff	Generally shows their staff that they value them	Does not demonstrate value or show appreciation of their staff
Promotes and demonstrates consistency and fairness when dealing with staff or their issues	Is generally fair and consistent when dealing with staff	Has 'favourites', treats people unequally and unfairly
Actively shares knowledge and experience with others to develop the service	Generally share their knowledge and experience	Uses knowledge as power, keeps knowledge or experience to themselves
Sets clear, achievable goals and objectives for team members and reviews these regularly (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Sets clear, achievable goals and objectives and occasionally review's them	Does not set clear, achievable goals and objectives, or 'moves the goal posts'

Invests time to hold regular one-to-ones to support staff (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Holds occasional one-to-ones	Doesn't hold or frequently cancels one-to-ones
Identifies and makes the best use of the skills (including literacy and numeracy skills), knowledge and strengths of the team (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Is aware of, the skills, knowledge and strengths of the team	Does not acknowledge the skills, knowledge and strengths of the team
Addresses poor performance through raising and resolving issues swiftly (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Tackles poor performance when problems are raised	Does not address or deal with poor performance
Actively looks to develops people for both the immediate and the longer term, and provides opportunities for development according to need (Workforce Planning)	Identifies development areas for current needs	Ignores the development needs of team members, or only considers it at time of review
Ensures that team members are aware of the social and environmental impacts of their role through regular updates and meetings	Provides some information to team members regarding the social and environmental impacts of their role	Does not provide team members with information regarding the social and environmental aspects of their role

Working in Partnerships and Teams

Consistently engages and involves others through their teams, networks and partnerships. Uses positive relationships with others to achieve goals.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

Builds lasting, positive and constructive relationships with a wide variety of people	Has some positive relationships, but others that are more reactive or less functional	Does not form positive relationships with others, forms unconstructive relationships or takes a reactive approach
Demonstrates respect for and trust in others	Demonstrates respect for and trust in some people but not consistently	Is disrespectful, rude and suspicious of others
Has an excellent knowledge of and interest in local and national networks	Has limited knowledge of, or interest in, local and national networks	Has poor knowledge or no interest in local and national networks
Always works towards understanding and resolving differences in agendas, objectives and expectations	Has some understanding of the differences but puts their own needs and agendas first	Does not attempt to overcome differences in agendas, objectives or expectations
Understands and promotes the benefits of working with others towards achieving objectives	Understands the benefits of working in partnerships but does not promote this to others	Does not promote the benefits of working together e.g. prefers to work in isolation, promotes others to do the same, uses networking to gossip or meet old friends rather than achieve objectives
Is happy to share information and resources and knows what information can be shared	Does not always share information and resources with others	Does not share information appropriately e.g. keeps information and resources to themselves or shares confidential information
Promotes and demonstrates respect for equality and diversity	Complies with, but doesn't fully embrace, equality and diversity issues	Tolerates or demonstrates unethical or unequal behaviours
Puts forward their own position but compromises when necessary in order to move forward	Sometimes compromises	Does not compromise in order to move forward e.g. Sticks strongly to 'fighting their own corner' or backs down too easily

Communicating Effectively

Creates a culture of openness and honesty. Communicates information clearly and effectively and adapts their own style when necessary.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

An excellent RCTCBC Manager:		An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:
Is courteous and polite in all communication	Is usually polite and courteous in communications but is occasionally abrupt or inappropriate	Is not courteous or polite in all communication e.g. is disrespectful impolite or uses inappropriate language
Gets the right messages to the right people quickly and keeps people informed	Shares information as events unfold	Does not get the right messages to the right people at the right time e.g. keeps things to themselves or communicates too late
Thinks about and consistently uses the most appropriate form of communication	Uses the quickest, or their own preferred method of communication rather than the best one	Does not use the most appropriate forms of communication or overly relies on one format e.g. email
Actively creates regular opportunities for open discussion and passing on information e.g. team meetings	Waits for others to provide opportunities for open discussion or passing on information	Passes on information haphazardly or unfairly via informal meetings e.g. cigarette breaks or relies on others to communicate important messages
Makes communications clear, articulate and easy to understand	Does not always ensure that communications are easy to understand	Presents information in ways that people do not understand or waffles
Listens to others, is receptive and actively checks they've understood the message	Sometimes listens and/or checks understanding and sometimes makes assumptions	Doesn't listen to others or check their own understanding of what's been said
Adapts their style and language to suit different groups of people	Adapts their style and language to suit some but not all different groups	Expects everyone to understand their own preferred style and language
Is aware of how others may interpret information and accounts for this including cultural / language differences	Makes some allowances for differences in how people may understand or interpret information	Assumes everyone will understand and interpret information the same way

Managing Change

Creates a culture that is open to change and new ideas to improve services. Takes on new challenges and supports others through times of change.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

An excellent RCTCBC Manager:		An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:
Is positive in expressing the Council's vision for the future and promotes the Community Plan	Mainly expresses themselves positively about the Council's vision for the future in promoting the Community Plan	Expresses negativity about the Council's vision for the future and puts down the Council and the Community Plan to staff
Understands and embraces the need for change in order to respond effectively to future challenges	Embrace change fully, when there is a clear need to do so	Doesn't see the need to adapt, change or move forward, is 'stuck in their ways'
Takes on new challenges, processes and procedures; moves out of their comfort zone	Accepts new processes and procedures but sometimes needs reminding to implement changes	Resists change - new challenges, processes and procedures
Shows that they understand how people feel during change and supports them through it	Does not consistently seek to understand how people feel during change or support them through change	Does not support others through change e.g. imposes change on others without considering how they may feel or uses others' feelings to avoid change
Encourages others to be innovative and takes forward good ideas from their team	Does not always encourage others to be innovative or move forward others' ideas	Does not encourage others to be innovative e.g. is a barrier to innovative ideas, only uses own ideas, does not encourage or support innovation
Is proactive about coming up with new ideas and looking for creative solutions	Only reacts to other people's ideas rather than initiating change	Doesn't come up with new ideas, lacks creativity or innovation
Has a positive attitude towards trying new things	Is willing to give things a try	Sees change as extra work, doesn't want to make the effort
Makes new ideas and initiatives work for them and their team practically	Is inconsistent in supporting new ideas and initiatives with practical solutions	Doesn't support new ideas and initiatives with practical solutions

Implementing Strategy

Understands corporate strategy and is able to implement strategy in their service area. Translates strategy for others and ensures that everyone knows their role in achieving organisational goals.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

An excellent RCTCBC Manager		An ineffective RCTCBC Manager
Has a good and up to date knowledge of relevant statutory duties and legislation for their area	Has adequate knowledge of relevant statutory duties and legislation for their area	Has weak, incomplete, irrelevant and out of date knowledge of statutory duties and legislation
Has a good knowledge and understanding of the 'bigger picture' issues and trends and their implications pays specific attention to the social and environmental impact that the Councils' business has on society	Shows some awareness of broader issues and trends and their implications	Only sees issues from a narrow perspective e.g. just their own role or team
Demonstrates a good understanding of key strategic priorities by incorporating them into team objectives	Demonstrates some understanding of strategic priorities	Demonstrates little knowledge of strategic priorities and does not make the link to team objectives
Ensures that staff understand how their role actively contributes to delivering the strategy	Mainly ensures staff know how their roles are related to corporate strategy	Does not ensure their staff understand how what they do contributes to the delivery of strategy
Develops and promotes the use of good policies and procedures to ensure consistency and clarity in delivery	Uses policies and procedures that are consistent	Does not develop or use clear and consistent policies and procedures
Contributes positively to the development of policy	Has some influence in the development of policy	Does not contribute or contributes negatively to development of policy

Appreciates why decisions have been made and sees them in the wider context	Questions decisions for clarity of purpose	Accepts decisions unequivocally
Promotes a sense of 'corporate identity'	Focuses on their own area of work	Undermines corporate decisions and 'goes their own way'
Produces and promotes clear and well written policies, guidelines and other documentation	Produces policies, guidelines and other documents that are mostly clear and well written	Produces policies, guidelines and other documents that are unclear and poorly written
Regularly challenges service delivery to ensure a more sustainable future to improve the quality of peoples lives and the environment	Occasionally challenges service delivery to ensure a more sustainable future to improve the quality of peoples lives and the environment	Never challenges service delivery to ensure a more sustainable future to improve the quality of peoples lives and the environment
Ensures that social and environmental concerns are included in the overall business strategy	Shows regard for social and environmental concerns when preparing overall business strategy	Does not ensure that social and environmental concerns are included in the overall business strategy

Managing Resources
Aims to provide best value and quality services by utilising available resources efficiently and effectively.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

Continually evaluates and responds to service needs to increase efficiency, quality and value of delivery (Workforce Planning)	Evaluates services to assess, quality and value of delivery	Doesn't evaluate services, allows continuing inefficiencies, poor quality and value, does not address shortcomings
Utilises existing resources effectively and positively (Workforce Planning)	Usually utilises resources effectively and positively	Moans about lack of resources and uses this as an excuse not to try
Ensures that resources are managed with consideration to the environment and strives to reduce wastage	Shows some consideration to reducing wastage and damage to the environment	Does not manage resources with sufficient consideration to the environment or wastage
Shows that they have a good understanding of team's workload and takes this into consideration when planning	Does not always show that they understand the team's workload or take this into consideration	Does not take team workload into consideration when planning
Produces robust business plans using sound commercial criteria e.g. costs, business cycles	Produces basic business plans with some supporting basis	Produces poor business plans not based on commercial criteria
Seeks out and acts on opportunities for income generation	Acts on opportunities for income generation	Misses opportunities for income generation
Projects or foresees changes to spending early and adapts business plans accordingly	Adapts business plan once changes to spending have been identified	Does not adapt business plan to react to changes
Manages budgets within the fixed cash limits	Identifies where overspend is inevitable and notifies finance or escalates this appropriately	Ignores budgets or has poor understanding of managing budgets

Achieving Results

Consistently aims to achieve the best possible results. Uses information to plan and prioritise effectively to meet deadlines and overcome problems. Ensures that results are achieved whilst considering the health and well being of themselves and others. Takes responsibility for making decisions in order to achieve results.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

An excellent RCTCBC Manager		An ineffective RCTCBC Manager
Achieves and surpasses improvements in service delivery	Achieves adequate standards in service delivery	Does not achieve improvements in service delivery e.g. makes excuses for poor performance or blames others
Seeks information from a range of sources to make decisions	Makes decisions based on information that they already have or is easily available	Doesn't use information to make decisions
Knows when to stand by their decisions and when to be flexible	Usually knows when to stand by decisions and when to be flexible	Doesn't know when to stand by their decisions and when to be flexible e.g. changes decisions too easily, is too stubborn or avoids making decisions
Is willing to 'go the extra mile' to complete important tasks	Will 'go the extra mile' when necessary	Only does what is absolutely necessary
Anticipates issues that may arise and is proactive about tackling them	Tackles issues when they arise or when they are told to	Does not tackle issues that arise
Is very organised and efficient	Is reasonably organised and efficient	Is disorganised and chaotic
Remains focused on outcomes and meeting deadlines	Is usually focused on outcomes and meeting deadlines	Misses deadlines
Follows through on agreed actions in implementing action plans	Usually follows through on agreed actions in implementing action plans	Does not follow through on agreed actions in implementing action plans

Balances achieving results with care for their own health and well-being	Can occasionally become stressed in the pursuit of achieving results but is usually able to manage	Allows themselves to become stressed and overworked in order to achieve results
Consistently shows consideration for and commitment to other people's health, safety and well-being including mental health	Shows patchy and variable thought and commitment to other people's health, safety & well-being including mental health	Avoids responsibility for or has an adverse impact on other people's health, safety and well-being including mental health

Focusing on Service Users

Takes personal responsibility for service delivery that genuinely puts Service Users at the centre and truly consults. Aims to provide services that are accessible and make a difference to citizens.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

Actively seeks to consults with Service Users to determine what they want from the Council and to understand what really matters	Consults and usually uses this information to guide practice	Does not consider Service Users to be relevant
Genuinely and consistently aims to make a difference to the individual citizen	Only sees good service delivery in terms of meeting basic outcomes	Makes no link between everyday work and the impact on service users
Effectively and diplomatically manages and exceeds customer expectations	Manages customer expectations effectively	Encourages customer to have unrealistic expectations of service delivery
Proactively seeks, listens to and reacts positively to feedback from Service Users / customers	Listens to and reacts to feedback from Service Users / customers	Doesn't listen to feedback from Service Users / customers or responds negatively
Has a good range of public material and consultation tools to maximise engagement	Uses a range of public material and consultation tools	Engagement with Service Users is blocked by poor public material and consultation tools
Ensures services are accessible and are provided fairly	Provides accessible and equitable services	Does not consider whether services are fair or accessible
Promotes a culture where all customers are valued and treated with respect	Ensure that customers are valued and treated with respect	Promotes a culture where customers are not valued and are treated with disrespect
Empowers staff to deal with responses on the frontline and provides support where necessary	Mainly empowers or supports staff to deal with responses on the frontline	Does not empower or support staff to deal with responses on the frontline

Political Knowledge & Awareness

Manages the political interface sensitively and effectively; has a good knowledge and understanding of political systems within and outside the Council.

An excellent RCTCBC Manager: An ineffective RCTCBC Manager:

Makes clear, well-justified recommendations to elected Members	Leaves elected Members to makes decisions by providing information only	Provides inadequate or incorrect information to elected Members
Gives politicians the full picture and educates them about service areas to aid their decision making	Provides information about current issues rather than giving the broader picture	Allows politicians to make decisions based only on ward issues rather than the bigger picture
Is aware of political sensitivities but maintains non-political objectivity	Has a limited awareness of political sensitivities, occasionally considering the wider impact of decisions and actions	Is politically insensitive, decisions and actions have a potentially damaging impact
Involves politicians at an early stage to gain support	Could involve politicians earlier or more consistently	Involves politicians at the last possible moment
Works to maintain positive relationships with politicians and treats politicians as internal customers	Maintains functional relationships with politicians	Upsets or antagonises politicians and provides poor internal customer service
Demonstrates a good understanding of the political process within the Council	Demonstrates an adequate understanding of the political process within the Council	Demonstrates little or no understanding or an incorrect understanding of the political process
Has up-to-date local and national political knowledge and awareness	Has a moderate understanding of local and national political issues	Actively disengages from political issues