



Rhondda Cynon Taf

Supervisory Competency Framework

(For first-line Managers and Team Leaders)



(January 2009)



Content

	Page
Explanatory Notes	3 – 5
The Competencies	6 -19
Overview	7
People	
1 Leading and Motivating	8 - 9
2 Working as a Team Member	10
3 Communicating Effectively	11
Tasks	
4 Incorporating Change	12
5 Managing Time	13
6 Being Accountable	14
7 Achieving Results	15
Culture and Values – The RCTCBC Context	
8 Focusing on Service Users	16
9 Encouraging Professional Development	17 - 18
10 Complying with Health and Safety	19



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 RCTCBC Worker:

4	3	2.5	2	1
Communicates clearly and concisely	<i>Generally communicates well (good standard rather than excellent)</i>	Uses communication that requires some checking by others	<i>Communication can be vague or unclear- would benefit from some development</i>	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 Supervisors Competency Framework



RCTCBC Supervisors - Competency Framework (Overview)

People

Leading and Motivating (1)

Values, motivates and empowers team members by setting a positive example and by recognising skills, strengths and achievements.

- Inspires, passionate, positive
- Celebrates, supports, develops, empowers, challenges
- Consistent, fair, values people
- Culture of open feedback

Working as a Team Member (2)

Works effectively with others, building strong relationships in order to achieve goals.

- Respect, trust, constructive relationships
- Involves and encourages, inclusive
- Interested, shares, team-focused, influences
- Across areas and beyond the Council, democratic accountability

Communicating Effectively (3)

Communicates key issues clearly and effectively; promotes a culture of open and honest communication; adapts their communication style and approach as necessary

- Courteous, polite, listens, receptive
- Informs, explains, openly shares, creates opportunities
- Clear, effective, timely

Tasks

Incorporating Change (4)

Creates a culture of openness and responsiveness to changes, whether coming from inside or outside the team.

- Instigates, drives, embraces
- Innovative, creative, receptive
- Encourages, supports and understands
- Modernising agenda, responsibility

Managing Time (5)

Plans and prioritises tasks efficiently and effectively in order to provide best possible value and service delivery.

- Creative, radical, different
- Delegates responsibility, robust plans
- Positive, anticipates
- Partnerships, joint commissioning

Being Accountable (6)

Takes personal responsibility for making decisions and acting on them, without necessarily passing them up to the next level.

- Decisive, empowered
- Confident
- Well-informed

Achieving Results (7)

Delivers high-quality outcomes on time by setting clear targets that relate to the bigger picture while focusing closely on what's important.

- Logical, organised, informed
- Motivated
- Clear aims
- Balanced with well-being

Culture and Values – The RCTCBC Context

Focusing on Service Users (8)

Genuinely puts needs of service users (internal or external customers) at the centre of decisions

- Understanding
- Makes a difference
- Responsive
- Local knowledge

Encouraging Professional Development (9)

Seeks to continually improve own professional development and supports others to do the same.

- Willing to learn
- Supportive
- Assessing capability

Complying with Health and Safety (10)

Takes responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the team through understanding and correctly applying the appropriate RCTCBC H&S policies.

- Vigilant
- Duty of Care
- Accessibility of Information



Leading and Motivating

Values, motivates and empowers team members by setting a positive example and by recognising skills, strengths and achievements.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Has an inspiring, positive 'action-focused' attitude	Can be positive and enthusiastic, but can be visibly affected by challenges	Always sees the problem or the negative, moans, does not inspire people
Creates a shared attitude that is positive and enthusiastic about work	Can be personally committed, but does not consistently transmit this to others	Undermines others' enthusiasm, commitment or belief in the value of work that is being done
Shares and celebrates all successes	Is either low key or inconsistent about celebrating successes	Ignores successes and others' contributions; only focuses on drawing attention to failures and mistakes
Openly values the skills and contributions of individual team members	Can take skills, knowledge and strengths for granted	Undervalues the skills, knowledge and strengths of their people
Trusts others to take responsibility for important tasks and gives them the necessary space, freedom and flexibility	Delegates single tasks or responsibilities within fairly rigid boundaries	Does not 'let go' of control, believes only they have the right answers
Gives constructive, timely feedback (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Tackles issues half-heartedly or only when they become serious problems	Avoids giving honest feedback, undermines other people's efforts, makes them feel incompetent
Is able to deliver difficult messages sensitively	Shows some awareness of the emotional impact of messages, but can prefer to focus on what needs to be said rather than how it should be said	Is blunt or overly forthright, leaving people feeling worried or undermined



Treats staff fairly and equally	Shows some preference for working more closely with certain people over the others	Treats one or more groups or individuals significantly worse than the others
Ensures that team members are aware of the social and environmental impact of their role	Provides limited information to team members on the social and environmental impact of their role	Does not provide team members with any information on the social and environmental impact of their role



Working as a Team Member

Works effectively with others, building strong relationships in order to achieve goals.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Builds lasting, positive & constructive relationships based on trust	Has some good relationships, but others that are more formal or distant	Prefers to remain detached from others. Is unapproachable
Promotes a strong team spirit of co-operation and shared responsibility	Team members co-operate, but only when necessary	Allows team members to work as individuals, in cliques or in competition
Builds a culture where free and open exchange of ideas and appropriate challenge is accepted and valued	Is responsible for maintaining a culture where certain people's views are heard and accepted, but not everyone's	Contributes to a culture where it is difficult to express ideas and views
Has a strong positive influence on joint decisions	Has more impact in some situations than others	Struggles to successfully influence joint decisions
Is always helpful and supportive in helping colleagues to achieve their goals	Helps with demanding situations, after completing own priorities	Is reluctant to give assistance
Promotes and demonstrates an ethos of equality and diversity	Complies with, but doesn't fully embrace, equality and diversity issues	Tolerates or demonstrates discriminatory behaviour
Seeks to prevent or overcome conflict	Can allow conflict to continue more than it should	Exacerbates or produces conflict
Asserts their own position but is willing to modify these after understanding those of other people	Can be stubborn in holding on to their own views before compromising	Sticks strongly to 'fighting their own corner'



Communicating Effectively

Communicates key issues clearly and effectively; promotes a culture of open and honest communication; adapts own communication style and approach as necessary.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Proactively shares ideas and knowledge with people to keep them up to date with developments	Provides information only when asked or when essential	Keeps people in the dark about issues that affect them
Uses styles of language that others can clearly understand	Adapts their style and language to suit some but not all groups	Expects everyone to understand their own preferred style and language
Communicates clearly and concisely	Communication requires some checking by others	Is unfocused and unclear and leaves others unsure of what was said or meant
Communicates confidently and with credibility, even when messages are difficult	Is less confident with some forms of communication	Lacks confidence or credibility
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	Uses inappropriate forms of communication for the messages being conveyed
Actively checks their own understanding of what others have said	Sometimes makes assumptions about what was meant without checking this further	Takes what is said at face value
Genuinely listens to others views, openly considering what they are saying	Gives people attention, although can show signs of impatience or inattention	Tends to disregard what people are saying
Actively creates regular opportunities for open discussions	Holds regular formal meetings according to fixed schedules	Keeps meetings to a bare minimum
Actively promotes a good flow of communication to allow quick resolution of issues or queries	Relies on natural communication flow for sharing of information	Is a barrier to communication flow



Incorporating Change

Creates a culture of openness and responsiveness to changes, whether coming from inside or outside the team.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Understands the need for change and responds positively to improvements	Doesn't always appreciate the need to change fully, only changes when easily able to do so	Doesn't see the need to move forward. Sees the old ways as the best
Is willing to critique proposals to ensure they are viable and so that they will work	Takes proposals at face value	Challenges proposals with assumptions that they are of little value
Has good ideas about how to move things forward in their own area	Implements rather than initiates change	Does not volunteer suggestions for improvements
Is able to 'sell' positive aspects of change to others	Assumes that others will appreciate the value of changes	Points out the negative aspects of change
Promotes a shared, open and positive team attitude towards change and flexibility	Lets team members keep their own attitudes towards change, whatever these are	Encourages people to ignore or resist proposed changes for as long as possible
Encourages and supports team members to put forward their suggestions and new ideas	Accepts others' suggestions, without explicitly encouraging contributions	Is a barrier to others' innovative ideas, highlighting potential issues
Ensures that proposals and ideas become operational realities	Agrees in principle to the need to change, but is slow to put measures into place	Makes little genuine attempt to alter the current ways of doing things, even when changes are agreed
Understands others' personal barriers to change and supports them accordingly	Assumes that people are as accepting of change as everyone else, working with resistance only when it becomes apparent	Imposes change on people without accounting for likely reactions



Managing Time

Plans and prioritises tasks efficiently and effectively in order to provide best possible value and service delivery.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Has a logical and organised approach to planning	Shows reasonable levels of planning; doesn't always stick to the plan	Takes an ad hoc or reactive approach to planning
Looks ahead to anticipate future issues and changing demands (Workforce Planning)	Appreciates the need for long-term plans but can get caught up in the 'here and now'	Seems to be constantly fire-fighting and dealing with the unexpected
Finds efficiency and resource savings without compromising service delivery (Workforce Planning)	Has found some efficiency savings, with a limited impact on service delivery	Makes no attempt to make savings or cuts corners and makes savings that damage service delivery
Is positive about what can be achieved with existing resources (Workforce Planning)	Usually attempts to resolve resource issues in a positive way	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
Uses the departmental business plan to set priorities	Prioritises according to sometimes informed, sometimes inaccurate feelings about what seems to be important	Shows no interest or appreciation of the bigger picture or key priorities
Works with others to plan the best ways forward	Only consults others on plans when absolutely necessary	Sets deadlines with poor assumptions about others' workloads or opinions
Sets up and adheres to useful processes for managing work efficiently	Uses processes, but not always effectively	Takes an unstructured approach to reaching objectives, encounters the same kinds of issues again and again



Being Accountable

Takes personal responsibility for making decisions and acting on them, without necessarily passing them up to the next level.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Has confidence to make decisions without guidance, asks advice from line manager only when necessary	Is generally able to make the right decisions, but seeks reassurance from line manager	Is nervous of committing to decisions; constantly seeks advice from their own line manager before making decisions
Uses consultation as a means to inform important decisions	Uses consultation to achieve consensus and agreement	Uses consultation to spread responsibility for difficult decisions
Makes well-informed decisions, and thinks ahead	Makes decisions that can be less 'sound', and may require modification as circumstances change	Makes decisions quickly, reacting to the 'here and now'
Is willing to think about possible solutions in different ways to what is commonly accepted	Makes decisions informed by what has gone before, but shows some innovation	Sees thinking differently as risky; is unwilling to step outside of the 'tried and tested'
Is willing to be decisive when necessary	Can identify valid reasons why decisions need to be put off	Fails to make everyday decisions, procrastinates
Makes decisions that benefit the team, department or Council as a whole	Makes generally reasonable decisions, some lacking in effectiveness	Reaches conclusions that have an adverse effect on team/department/Council
Understands the Council's approach to the environment and demonstrates consideration of social and environmental concerns in their day to day role	Demonstrates some understanding of social and environmental factors relevant to their role	Disregards social and environmental concerns in the execution of their role



Achieving Results

Delivers high-quality outcomes on time by setting clear targets that relate to the bigger picture while focusing closely on what's important.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Is motivated to improve on performance; identifies objectives that can stretch the team (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Focuses on achieving 'business as usual' goals	Does not have a strong drive to achieve results
Is willing to go 'above and beyond' when necessary	Can be complacent, believing that the work will get done without need for extra effort	Is rigid about job roles and unwilling to step outside of these constraints to get things done
Is able to work effectively under pressure	Can temporarily lose focus when under pressure	Can lose control when under pressure
Reviews outcomes in order to make improvements and learn from mistakes	Reviews outcomes but does not always fully implement improvements	Repeats the same mistakes. Does not act on lessons learnt
Consistently delivers high-quality outcomes	Overall, standard of delivery is acceptable	Delivers too many substandard outcomes
Has clear aims and objectives	Has goals that can lack clarity at times	Is not clear about goals or objectives
Balances achieving results with care for own health and well-being	Becomes stressed occasionally in the pursuit of achieving results but is usually able to manage	Becomes stressed and overworked in order to achieve results
Sees Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as providing clear expectations of goals for the team	Is aware of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), but doesn't always see the team's success as being linked to them	Is unaware of the importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Keeps tightly focused on timescales and meets all key deadlines	Can allow lower priority deadlines to slip	Often misses deadlines and allows things to drift



Focusing on Service Users

Genuinely puts needs of Service Users (internal or external customers) at the centre of decisions.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Understands customers' actual needs	Works with assumptions about what customers need, some right, some wrong	Has little or no interest in customers' actual needs
Ensures customers' needs are met by responding to them efficiently and effectively	Meets most needs, but not always as quickly as could be possible	Rarely meets need of customers
Provides and promotes highest standards of customer care and service	Provides acceptable, but unremarkable standards of customer care	Sees poor standards of customer care as acceptable
Has a positive attitude towards helping people, and is willing to go the extra mile	Delivers a professional service, as defined by their job role	Is discourteous or disregards customers
Leaves customers happy with the service they have received	Leaves customers satisfied but indifferent about the service received	Leaves customers frustrated or unsure about progress
Genuinely and consistently aims to make a difference to the individual citizen	Sees good service delivery only in terms of meeting basic outcomes	Makes no link between everyday work and the impact on Service Users
Promotes service and Council positively	Underestimates the value of creating a positive image externally	Has a negative impact on the profile and image of the Council and service
Has good local knowledge and awareness of community issues	Has moderate local knowledge, and is aware of certain issues	Has little interest in what's going on in the community



Encouraging Professional Development

Seeks to continually improve their own professional development and supports others to do the same.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Is eager or willing to learn new things	Is content to carry on as always, but uses training opportunities when they arise	Has no interest in self-development. Tends to revert to old habits after attending training
Recognises their own limitations, and adapts accordingly	Is content to work within their own limitations	Has little or no awareness of their own limitations or the need to adapt accordingly
Works towards increasing the capability of their team/staff (Workforce Planning / Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Lets people continue to operate with adequate levels of capability	Allows people to operate at lower levels of capability
Looks for areas for potential growth in individuals (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Assumes that those who wish to progress will develop themselves	Assumes that others have no inclination or room to develop
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, but doesn't make the most of, the skills, knowledge and strengths in the team	Does not acknowledge the skills, knowledge and strengths in the team
Links learning and development to business plans/service goals (Workforce Planning / Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Sees learning and development only in terms of addressing personal needs	Has no clear strategy for assigning training or development resources
Holds regular reviews with staff to identify their goals and areas for development (Performance Plus! / supervision / etc)	Meetings with staff do not explicitly target areas of capability gaps unless gaps are obvious	Only addresses development issues with staff when performance issues arise



Is personally supportive in enabling individuals to meet their development goals (Performance Plus! / supervision etc)	Broadly supports training and development initiatives, and could do more to appreciate how each individual will benefit specifically	Sees responsibility for development and training as sitting with HR
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Complying with Health and Safety

Takes responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and well being of the team through understanding and correctly applying the appropriate RCTCBC H&S policies.

An excellent RCTCBC Supervisor:

An ineffective RCTCBC Supervisor:

Is aware of all H&S procedures relevant to team, its responsibilities and potential risks	Is aware of what seem to be the most important H&S guidelines	Has little or no working knowledge of relevant H&S policies
Ensures that H&S manuals are up-to-date, accessible and that their team is aware of them	Is inconsistent and diligence in updating staff about H&S information	Takes little or no personal responsibility for ensuring accessibility to up-to-date H&S policy information
Genuinely accepts personal duty of care for team's health, safety and well-being	Sees self as responsible for implementing RCTCBC H&S policies only as formal part of job role	Takes little or no personal or formal responsibility for others' health, safety or well-being
Ensures that staff are aware of current and potential risks, hazards and H&S issues that might affect them	Shows some awareness of key hazards but has to be reminded to address H&S issues with their staff	Encourages risky behaviour, disregard for H&S guidelines or assumes the working environment is safe and risk free
Encourages staff to be vigilant for risks and hazards and acts on their observations	Takes notice of issues when brought to attention	Takes little or no notice of H&S issues that are raised by others
Puts measures in place that minimise risk of incidents	Puts measures in place that reduce likelihood of incidents, although these could be more stringent	Assumes that incidents will not occur and takes little or no preventative action
Ensures up-to-date reporting and recording of all incidents	Omits what are deemed to be less important incidents from reports	Has no provision to record or report incidents
Consistently shows consideration for and commitment to other people's health, safety and well-being	Is committed to other people's health, safety & well-being	Has an adverse impact on other people's health, safety and well-being