

---

# Mapping Competency – A systematic approach for getting and retaining the talent

*Fakhra Naeem\**

## **ABSTRACT**

*The Indian economy has been growing at a skyrocketing speed from the last couple of years but from the last few months economy has been facing the greatest downturn in the business. Most of the big as well as small chunk of the organisations have started shedding of flab by lay off, downsizing, separation and hence compressed the number of manpower worked in organisations. Every organisation gets affected by this downturn and in today's world it's become essential to build on competitive activities of business.*

*There has been much of discussion on such issues, as how to combat with the crisis and what competencies an organisation needs to have in order to compete? Mapping competencies is the solution of this existing problem and with the help of this an organisation would be able to recuperate. Competency mapping is the process of identification of the capabilities and potentialities required to perform successfully a given job or role or a set of tasks. Competency based human resource is the best HR practices which is applicable at every level. Competencies are used as the key criteria for implementing the application. Maximum number of organization has been implementing competency based application at the micro and macro level. Competency Models enable Business and Industry to provide an understanding of what will be measured in performance appraisals and employ individual into appropriate assignments in addition to this facilitate learning and development which in turn enhance productivity and growth.*

In the era of high technology and intense competition, it is mandatory for the organization to exploit the available talent and competencies. For sustainable competence advantage, organizations have to device ways to identify, evaluate and utilize the competences that make growth possible. The competency movement requires a lot of time, dedication and money and, before an organization embarks on this journey it has to be very specific about the business goals, capability building imperatives and core competencies of the organization. By introducing competency mapping, an organization would be in better shape

and able to realize the vision and mission of the organization. For instance, an organization can introduce competence and job profile framework with the help of competence assessment; can create career development plans for the employees. In addition to

**\* Ms. Fakhra Naeem**

*Asst. Professor*

*New Delhi Institute of Management*

*60 Tughlaqabad Institutional Area, New Delhi -62*

*E-mail: Fakhra.naeem@gmail.com*

---

this an organization can identify the talent amongst the employees and can be utilized the talent in a better manner. Organization with the help of competence mapping can identify the gap and can bridge the gap by training and development methods. And with the availability of key competencies, an organization can simulate restructuring, reengineering and diversification as well. Organization can create challenging job profile based on the available competence.

Competency mapping is a process an individual uses to identify and describe competencies that are the most critical to success in a work situation or work role. Competency profiling is typically a method for identifying specified skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour necessary to fulfilling a task, activity or for career advancement. Competency mapping facilitates recruiting, selection processes, performance appraisal, career development and succession planning. Competency building aims to better fit the top management people to their position. It also helps to close the gaps between the expected and the actual competency level.

Competency mapping is essential to the organization so that organization would not hire the wrong people. So that it would be easier for the organization to select required talent by proper synchronization of job with the competence level. In a nutshell Competency Mapping is a matrix which has details of required traits or skills for a particular role or position along with the solution. Competency Mapping is also known as

Competency Profiling, it analyses attributes of a person for doing job successfully. Those attributes are: Knowledge, Skills, Attitude, Trait and Motives. A conceptual study has been conducted in order to develop a competency model for the product as well as service based organization.

#### **Literature review:**

Competencies refer to areas of professional practice (Gonczi et al 1990. Winter & Maisch 1996) and are generally articulated in terms of knowledge, skills, and attributes on specific tasks of the practice. Competencies are specific personal qualities that are "causally related to effective and/or superior

performance" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 23), are common across many settings and situations, and endure for some time (Delamare Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). Businesses are increasingly adopting competency models, which prove their value as a human resources management tool (McLagan pat 1996). Sharp Electronics Corporation, the North American sales and marketing subsidiary of Osaka, Japan-based Sharp Corporation, was among the first wave of companies to adopt competency models and later on Shell, Zensar and other IT organisations have started implementing competency mapping at most. A competency model is a descriptive tool that identifies the competencies needed to operate in a specific role within a(n) job, occupation, organization, or industry. Simply stated, a competency model is a behavioral job description that must be defined by each occupational function and each job (Fogg, 1999). Depending on the work and organizational environment, a group of 7 to 9 total competencies are usually required of a particular job and depicted in a competency model (Shippman, et. al., 2000).

Competencies are the collection of traits necessary for achieving the target in a specific job or work role in a particular organization. Traits are the combinations of knowledge, skills, and attributes that are described in terms of specific behaviors, and are demonstrated by star performers in those jobs or work roles.

Attributes include: personal characteristics, traits, motives, values or mental models that impact an individual's behavior. Competencies in organizations tend to fall into two broad categories:

**Personal Functioning Competencies or Generic Competencies** : These competencies include behavioural traits, which are not tied to a specific work function or industry; often focus such competencies which are considered essential for all employees regardless of their function or level. For instance- strong communication competency, listening, leadership and team building etc.

**Professional / Functional / Technical competencies** : Professional competencies relate to the professional's knowledge, access, technology and management, and the ability to use this knowledge as a basis for providing the highest quality professional.

---

Functional /Technical potentialities are indicators of specific competencies which are considered essential to perform any job in the organization within a defined technical or functional area of work .e.g.: Human Resources, Engineering, finance, production and operation etc. These competencies include specific success factors within a given area function or industry.

### **Managerial Competencies**

Competencies which are considered essential for employees with managerial or supervisory responsibility in any functional area including directors and senior posts. Which includes controlling, mentoring, counseling and consultancy etc.

### **Top Competencies**

Top competencies are the vital few competencies (four to seven, on average) that are the most important to an individual in their ongoing career management process. It is also related to the star performers' competencies.

Although the definition above for "competency mapping" refers to individual employees, organizations also "map" competencies, but from a different perspective. Organizations describe, or map, competencies using one or more of the following four strategies:

1. Organization-Wide (often called as "core competencies" or those required for organization success and development)
2. Job Family or Business Unit Competency Sets.
3. Team competency.
4. Job role/Position specific competency.

### **MAPPING PROCESS**

Competency mapping process starts with the proper understanding of organization's vision and mission, refer to below mentioned chart it also includes the proper understanding of the specific business units including Business Plan & Goals, Culture, People, Technology and emphasis on adopted team strategies

such as Leadership, Communication, Conflict Management, Interpersonal skills, project Orientation, Self - Managed Teams (SMT). In addition to this, the role competencies have also been defined as like ability, Autonomy, multitasking, Task identity, Performance evaluation & rewards and performance development. This process is basically comprised of three phases. In the very first phase, organisation's experts or consultants simply overhaul the organizations potentialities and USP's and hence, prepare a matrix of competencies organization wide.

After considering the strategy framework of the available competencies, the professionals identified the core competencies relevant to their specific areas with the interest of stake holders' and market positioning of the organization. Further organization evaluates the available competencies and identifies the gray areas of the organization. This stage has been termed as competency framework and the second phase is competency identification, which includes the recognition of competencies at micro and macro level and prepares a checklist of needed potentialities.

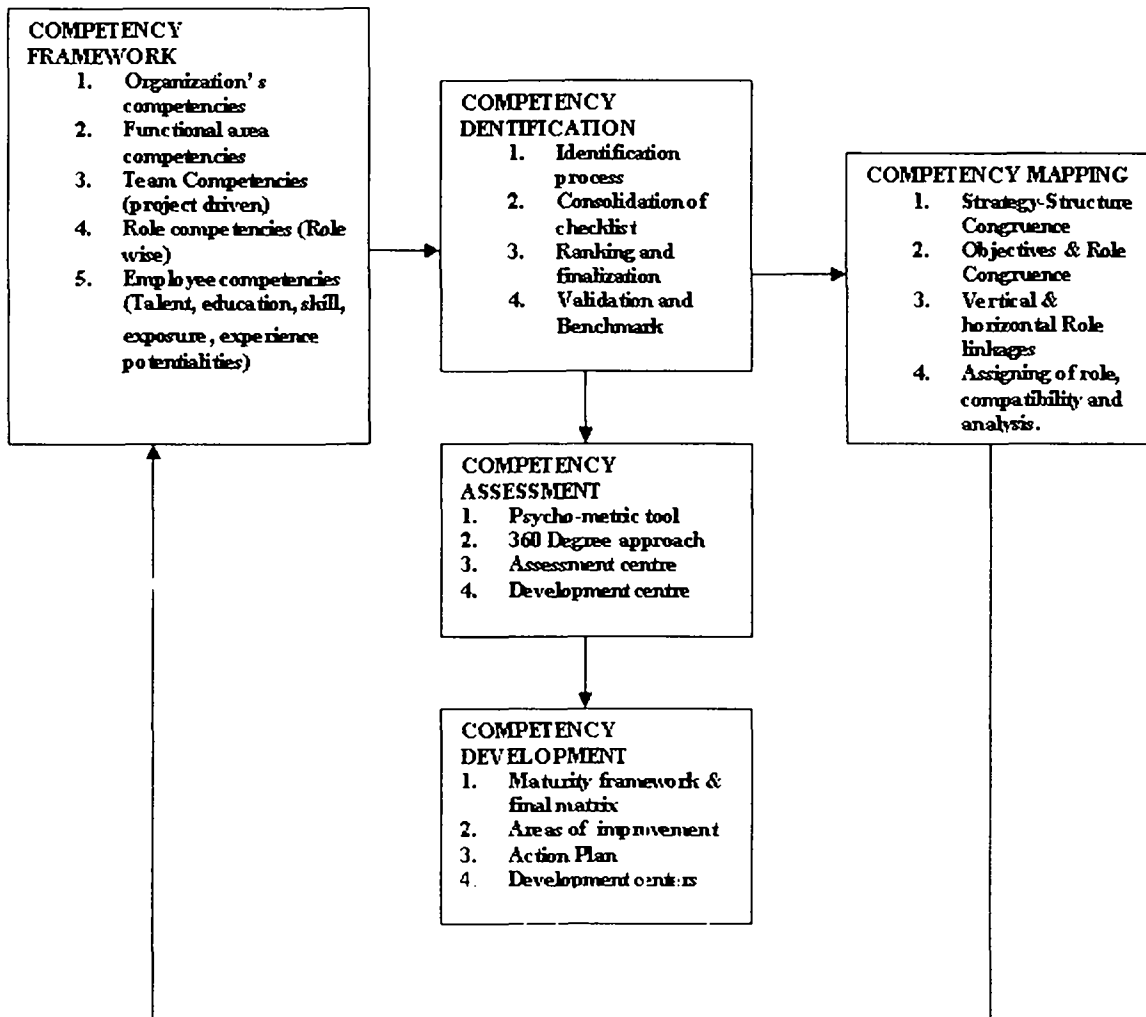
In addition to the above mentioned strategy the organization also identify the star performers. These performers are exceptionally good or outstanding employees, who set the benchmark in the organization. Benchmarking provide a disciplined approach for comparing the performance of our process against best in class criteria. And further analyse the other's employee's performance against the start performers.

### **Tools for evaluation**

Behavioural Event Interview/ Structured Interview or counseling.

### **Job Position Determination**

Refers to the position which is under the lens i.e. the focused position needs to be overhauled, resultant, positions to be mapped are identified. A preliminary project plan is developed during this step to ensure that all the key stakeholders are involved in the process and that the appropriate activities and communication plans are established to support the development of the competency mapping.



**Data Collection** –Next step of process involves, the information gathered to identify the attributes and competencies required for each position. Data is collected to determine the skills, potentialities, attributes, and personal traits required for success for the position to be mapped. The data can be collected through face-to-face interviews with job content experts, head of the department, managers, focus groups with incumbents, immediate supervisor, internal and external customer interviews. And a checklist is prepared to check the available talent.

A role and job description matrix is formed based on the identified attributes and competencies framed for each job position based on the analysis of collected information. In addition to this, optimal areas

of performance are identified according to organizational and market requirements. The outcome of this step is the blueprint of the competency mapping and hence, rank the job positions as per the importance.

**Validation:** The developed map is reviewed, evaluated and ensure that it will fulfill the current and future needs of the organization. Competencies, attributes, and their corresponding descriptions are evaluated for how accurately they describe performance requirements and to ensure that they are aligned with and support the organization's objectives and external environment.

**Implementation** When competency matrix have

---

been validated and finalized, the competency matrix then presented to the team with an action plan for the implementation. Gaps in competency levels, if any, are identified and appropriate training and learning action plans are evolved for developing those lacking competencies among the employees.

The Tool will be identified in order to implement the proposal. As needs change and new concepts and practices emerge, the model can be updated to reflect the constantly changing world. The models can be tailored for individual or corporate use. Different attributes may be selected or omitted by the employee based on his or her role in the particular organization and in a particular role. It has been observed that competency categories related to personal attributes and leadership qualities and broad business perspective are common to almost all employees. The functional competencies based on the functional area in which the employee works.

**The strategy is to be used by Employees:**

- To take charge of their careers by focusing attention on skills needed to remain relevant, competitive and forward thinking and to remain innovative and creative.
- To design a personalized career development plan and succession plan that ensures that they reach their highest professional strata.

**Selection of Training and development program**

- Assist in identifying qualities and competencies that are relevant to the organization.
- In conjunction with the self-assessment tool, to identify gaps between employee competencies and employer needs and job specifications.
- Design employee career development plans aligned to corporate needs.
- Try to reduce the gap between available and expected competencies.

**Competency Mapping Timings** – When the individual and organization performance is dying or the organizational performance curve starts sloping downward or when innovation is fading and no creativity is found then it is an alarming to the organization. So, to overcome with such contingencies it is advisable to conduct competency mapping, which

covers the whole core competencies of the organization. Core Competencies comprised of the professional and personal competencies- These core competencies are absolutely essential for every professional.

**The other strategy involves –**

1. Identification of the competencies, based on competency frame work.
2. Competency Measurement –Tools are different depending on the need and importance.
3. Required competencies for each job - Be specific with the job description.
4. Dictionary of occupational titles: dictionary which involves detail description of the competency based on the indicators. Care should be taken that the indicators should be measurable and gives objective judgment. The analysis based on the study of the BEI Reports/ Structured Interview reports.

**Assessment methods**

1. Methods of assessment can be either through assessment centers or 360 degree appraisal.
2. If assessment centre is the choice for assessment then tools has to be ready beforehand:
  - I. Tools should objectively measure the entire competency required.
  - II. Determine the type of the tools for measuring competency
  - III. Prepare the schedule for assessment
  - IV. Training to the assessor should indicate their thorough understanding of the competencies and the tools and also as to how the behaviour has to be documented.

Development Centre- If the development centre is the alternative then first-rate the executives for the improvement and identifies the key performance areas where the gap is found and lastly suggest the measure for the development of the professionals and abridge the gap.

Usually assessment centre organised two or three day's program which would involve giving a brief feedback to the participant about their competencies that has been assessed and where they stand to. Last stage involves detailed report of the competencies as-

---

essed and also the development plan for the developmental areas.

### Conclusion

Competency model is a viable tool that can be utilized to prepare the current and future workforce and retain skilled workers to meet the job requirements and other needs of employers. Competency models are an assistive device for individuals to focus on their current competencies and refocus or enhance their competencies as necessary. Competency Mapping & Assessments is a process designed to consistently measure and assess staff performance as it relates to the expectations of the organization. In good organizations competency mapping existed already. Traditionally HR Directors and their top management have always paid attention to competencies and incorporated them mostly in their appraisal systems. For example when L&T, LIC or NDDB, NOCIL, HLL, Bharat Petroleum etc. revised their Performance appraisal systems they focused on the assessment of competencies. Role analysis was done and role directories prepared by the Indian Oil Corporation in mid eighties.

Competency mapping is important and an essential practice. Every well managed or learning organization should have well defined jobs and list of competencies required to perform each role effectively. Such list should be used for recruitment, performance management, promotions, placement and training needs identification and also for other HR activities. Competency score cards may also be developed for competency mapping at different levels. The proposed framework helps us to conclude that competencies in an organisation need to be continuously developed. Unless managements and HR heads have holistic expectations from their HR departments, the competency movement is unlikely to succeed as it requires lot of time, dedication and money. Before an organization embarks on this journey it has to be very clear about the business goals, capability building imperatives and core competencies of the organization. The competency mapping process needs to be strongly integrated with these aspects.

### Reference :

- Boyatzis, R. E. (1982). *The competent manager: A model for effective performance* New York:Wiley.
- Delamare Le Deist, F. & Winterton, J. (2005). What is competence? *Human Resource Development International*, 8(1), 27-46.
- Fogg, C. D. (1999). *Implementing your strategic plan: How to turn "intent" into effective action for sustainable change* New York: American Management Association.
- MClagan pat (1996), *Competency models: Great ideas revisited/* <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P3-9144058.html>
- Shippman, J. S., Ash, R. A., Battista, M., Carr, L., Eyde, L. D., Hesketh, B., Kehoe, J. Pearlman, K., & Sanchez, J. I. (2000). The practice of competency modeling. *Personnel Psychology*, 53, 703-740.