

SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO USING UVIC COMPETENCIES

UVIC COMPETENCY MODEL

www.uvic.ca/competencymodel



Contents and overview

INTRODUCTION

S-1

As employees will most likely be introduced to the UVic Competency Model through conversations with you as the immediate supervisor, it is important that you are familiar with the model and associated resources available on the UVic Competency website so you can share it with new employees and use it in your conversations with continuing employees throughout the employment lifecycle.

CREATING OR UPDATING JOB DESCRIPTIONS

S-2

When drafting job descriptions for new positions or updating existing job descriptions, consider how each competency applies to the role, and which of the competencies might be included in either the duties or the qualification sections of the job description.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

S-3

Every employee you hire has the potential to be a multi-million dollar decision. We might think we are hiring temporary help, or a part-time receptionist, but many of our longest serving employees started out that way! The competencies can help you identify hiring criteria to build into your selection process that will help you identify those candidates that fit the requirements of the position, and fit at UVic.

ONBOARDING NEW EMPLOYEES

S-4

Employees come to UVic with skills and experience. Some may not have worked in a university setting before, and may find UVic a unique organizational culture. As their supervisor you can use the competencies and accompanying Resource Guides to help your new employees acclimatize to UVic and discover what it means to work here.

DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES

S-5

Supervisors looking for ways to support employee development will find that the UVic Competency Model can help identify areas where some improvement might be needed, and it can also identify areas for strong employees to expand their knowledge and skills beyond the job requirements. The Performance and Development Cycle (PDC) is also an opportunity to make the UVic Competency Model a regular part of your ongoing conversations with employees.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

S-6

As the model was designed to identify those behaviours that support UVic's success, providing recognition to employees based on their demonstration of competencies just makes sense. Make the connection between what employees do on a day-to-day basis and the success of the organization as a way of motivating employees to ensure those behaviours continue.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

S-7

When supporting an employee to develop leadership and supervisory skills, you may wish to discuss how some competencies may be demonstrated differently in a leadership role than as an individual contributor. You may also use competencies to identify areas of development that support succession planning goals.

USING COMPETENCY RESOURCES IN YOUR ROLE AS A SUPERVISOR

S-8

Some competencies will be directly relevant to the day to day work of the employee and some may be less obvious. Use the Competency Resources to have conversations with your employees about each competency, how it might be demonstrated and how it could be developed.

INTRODUCTION

DEFINITION AND BACKGROUND

A competency model describes the knowledge, skills and attributes employees demonstrate when successfully contributing to an organization’s strategic objectives. The UVic model describes competencies that make UVic unique. This model is aspirational, recognizing that pursuing our strategic objectives will always require us to lean into the edge of learning, growth and discovery. The model was updated in 2024 to align with new UVic [strategic planning documents](#).

APPLICATION

This model applies to staff and administrative leaders and is a foundation for many of the HR processes and systems used by managers including: selection tools, performance and development reviews, career and succession planning and employee development. While the model has not been designed specifically to apply to faculty roles, it can be used by any employee at UVic. Conversations about the competencies normally occur as part of the annual Performance and Development Cycle and associated goal-setting conversations. Most employees will select one or two competencies to develop at a time. The model is aspirational and developmental, and UVic has many supports, resources and learning opportunities available to support learning and development over time.

STRUCTURE

The UVic Competency Model offers a high-level view of what it means to work at UVic. It aligns with and supports but does not replace information found in job descriptions, collective agreements and UVic policies and procedures. The four competency themes describe UVic’s strategic priorities and are stated in “we” language, while the 13 competency behaviours use “I” language—emphasizing the shared accountability required between the organization and the individual to achieve UVic’s strategic goals.

The model is presented visually as a nested graphic to demonstrate how each competency builds on the others.

The model is intentionally non-hierarchical, recognizing that each employee will connect with, demonstrate and develop competencies and behaviours differently according to their position and department, team, and personal goals. The model and accompanying Resources are intended to encourage employees to ask the question “How does this show up for me?” rather than offer a prescriptive application for all.



DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT

The competencies are enabled by but do not replicate foundational skillsets, such as personal effectiveness, interpersonal communication, collaboration, and supervision and leadership skills. These skills have been built into HR’s [Employee Learning Programs](#).

Employees and their supervisors are encouraged to identify one or two competencies to develop at a time, in a way that is relevant and appropriate to the individual, rather than attempting to take it all on at once.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Competency Model Website:

<https://www.uvic.ca/hr/manager-support/performance-coaching/competency-model/>

CREATING OR UPDATING JOB DESCRIPTIONS

When drafting job descriptions for new positions or updating existing job descriptions, consider how each competency may apply to the role, and which of the competencies might be included in either the responsibilities or the qualification sections of the job description.

Remember the competencies are not prescriptive, so consider how they could be reflected in the specific job description you are creating to ensure the document clearly identifies the knowledge, skills and abilities required in your area to support the university's overall success. The Competency Resources offer sample statements of how an employee might demonstrate each competency and sample questions for interviews or for performance coaching.

When updating or writing a new job description your HR Advisor can help you to incorporate the UVic competencies to ensure your staff recruitment process attracts the right candidates.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Hiring Sharepoint for Managers/Supervisors:

<https://uvic.sharepoint.com/sites/HRMngrSupport>

Competency Resources

uvic.ca/competencymodel

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The competencies can help you identify hiring criteria and interview questions to build into your selection process to identify those candidates that meet the requirements of the position, and align with UVic's values and priorities. Employees may not come to UVic with all competencies fully developed. The competencies are aspirational and developmental. Employees should be given time and opportunities to learn and develop competencies over time, and not try to do it all at once.

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

Indigenous Acumen: *How have you taken initiative to increase your knowledge, awareness and understanding of the impact of Canadian policies and practices related to Indigenous people?*

Cultural Humility: *What aspects of your own culture, upbringing and lived experience shape your values and perspectives?*

Take Responsibility: *What can you do to respect and uphold the rights of Indigenous People in your work?*

PEOPLE PLACES AND PLANET

Address Barriers: *What is one thing you can do in your role to help create a welcoming inclusive environment for students, employees or community members?*

Commit to Sustainability: *What is one thing you can shift that would contribute positively to UVic achieving its sustainability goals?*

Focus on Wellness: *How do you look after yourself when experiencing stress and how do you know when you need to set boundaries or seek help?*

CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

Navigate Conflict Effectively: *How comfortable are you in receiving differing perspectives from your own? How do you stay open and minimize defensiveness?*

Engage with Challenges and Opportunities: *How do you shift your thinking to see a problem from a different perspective?*

Innovate Courageously: *How do you remain positive when new ideas don't work out the way you wanted them to?*

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Cultivate Partnerships: *Think of a unit or department you would like to work with more closely. How could you initiate a deeper connection?*

See the Larger System: *What opportunities do you have in your daily work to learn more about the contributions and accomplishments of other UVic departments?*

Connect to Purpose: *What inspires you about UVic and connects you to our community?*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Recruitment resources and for Hiring Managers/Supervisors

<https://uvic.sharepoint.com/sites/HRMngrSupport>

Other sample interview questions

<https://uvic.sharepoint.com/sites/HRMngrSupport/SitePages/Step%202-Review%20and%20evaluate%20applicants.aspx#determine-criteria-and-interview-questions>

ONBOARDING NEW EMPLOYEES:

The onboarding period is an important season in which to welcome employees into our UVic community. This first impression is a chance to enroll them in our vision, connect their work to a greater sense of purpose in the organization, and establish foundational practices. This time is also when employees form important relationships with their supervisors, colleagues and those we serve. In this sense, the onboarding period is a time when employees are oriented to how our competencies are lived out every day.

Be sure to include the competency model in your early conversations with employees and include them in development goals through the probation or trial period.

Employees come to UVic with skills and experience, but some may not have worked in a university setting before and may find UVic a unique organizational culture. The competencies and accompanying Resources can help new employees acclimatize to UVic and discover what it means to work here. There are many resources and learning opportunities to develop competencies over time. Employees are not expected to take it all on at once.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Onboarding website <https://www.uvic.ca/hr/manager-support/onboarding>

Employee Orientation Toolkit <https://www.uvic.ca/hr/assets/docs/ld/EmpOrientToolkit-FINAL.pdf>

New Employee Handbook <https://www.uvic.ca/hr/assets/docs/onboarding/employee-handbook.pdf>

DEVELOPING EMPLOYEES

When looking for ways to support employee development, the UVic Competency Model can help identify areas for growth and can also identify areas for high performing employees to expand their knowledge and skills beyond the job requirements. Development conversations normally happen as part of the Performance and Development Cycle, but conversations about employee development can happen any time.

Below are some ideas for how to use the competency model to support individual or team development:

- **Select** one competency as a team development goal, whether as a team strength or area for development. Share activities and celebrate success, then pick another competency.
- **Focus** employee development goals on the competencies. This may be more appropriate for employees who are already strong in their work-related tasks, duties and projects as a way of acknowledging and supporting that employee's strong work performance.
- **Use** competency language to communicate a development need to an employee having difficulty understanding why they need to develop new skills or knowledge.
- **Seek** a variety of development opportunities for you and your employees including self-directed learning, experiential work assignments, as well as classroom-based learning opportunities offered through the Employee Learning Calendar.
- **Lead** by example by sharing how you are developing the competencies in your professional capacity

THE PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

Competencies can help focus goals, provide an opportunity for coaching and feedback, and offer a useful framework for providing recognition. The [Performance and Development Cycle \(PDC\)](#) is an opportunity to make the competency model a regular part of your ongoing conversations with employees. Competencies can help bring these conversations up out of the day-to-day duties of the job and identify development goals that are more related to personal development or to developing a better understanding of the university as a whole.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Competency Resources Guides including Sample coaching questions

uvic.ca/competencymodel

TIPS FOR USING COMPETENCIES AT EACH STAGE OF THE PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CYCLE

STEP 1 – LOOKING FORWARD: GOAL SETTING CONVERSATIONS



- Review Competencies as part of your step one conversations
- Jointly determine which competencies are fundamental to the role and which may be more of a personal development goal
- Trying to develop all the competencies at once isn't realistic. Select a few to develop this performance cycle and set goals for each.

STEP 2 – CHECKING IN: FEEDBACK & COACHING CONVERSATIONS



- Use questions from the Resource Guides during your regular check-ins to highlight the competencies in the employee's work and to jointly develop a better understanding of how they show up in this role
- Provide feedback based on the competencies the employee has chosen to focus on, and look for ways to provide feedback and recognition on other competencies when you see them being demonstrated

STEP 3 – LOOKING BACK: SUMMARIZING & NEXT STEPS CONVERSATIONS



- Document progress related to competency development in the Step 3 PDC form
- Acknowledge and celebrate achievements that align with competencies
- Discuss other competencies to focus on for the next PDC cycle

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

PDC website www.uvic.ca/pdc

www.uvic.ca/competencymodel

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Often employees demonstrate competencies without even knowing what the competencies are. Making the connection between what employees do on a day-to-day basis and the success of the organization is a great way to motivate employees and to ensure those behaviours continue.

Providing recognition to employees based on their demonstration of competencies helps to further identify the behaviours that support UVic's priorities.

TIPS FOR USING THE COMPETENCIES TO RECOGNIZE EMPLOYEES

- **Pick** a competency for each team meeting and ask team members to share where they have seen each other demonstrating this competency at work.
- **Ask** your employees during your one-on-one check-in meetings which competencies they believe they have connected to most since the last time you met? Ask about what they did and why they think it is important?
- **Frame** positive feedback through the competency model. *For example, if a client gives positive feedback about the way the employee proved support to a student, find a connection to one of the competencies that feedback demonstrates.*
- **Ask** employees at team meetings (or one on one check-ins) what they enjoy the most about their work. Find a way to connect that back to the competency model to show how their work aligns with UVic priorities.
- **Use** competency language to craft performance feedback or messages of thanks and recognition.
- **Nominate** an employee for a Campus Kudos award and use language from the competency model in the nomination.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

HR Recognition and Awards website

<https://www.uvic.ca/faculty-staff/pay-benefits/recognition-and-service/index.php>

Recognition Toolkit

<https://www.uvic.ca/hr/manager-support/performance-coaching/recognition-toolkit/index.php>

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

When supporting an employee to develop leadership and supervisory skills, you may wish to discuss how some competencies may be demonstrated differently in a leadership role than as an individual contributor. You may also use competencies to identify areas of development that support succession planning goals.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE COMPETENCIES TO SUPPORT YOUR SUCCESSION PLANNING

- **Discuss** with employees who show an interest in leadership roles how each competency is demonstrated in their current role, then how that competency would show up in a leadership role. Ask them: *What might be different and why?*
- **Identify** the competencies you think would be most useful for an employee to develop to demonstrate leadership potential. Provide that feedback to the employee. Consider: *How can you coach and support employees to put a development plan in place?*
- **Review** the roles in your unit that have high succession risk due to pending retirements, high turnover rates, a shrinking labour market or specialized skillsets. Ask yourself: *What competencies are most relevant to those roles? Consider: How can you encourage your team to develop in those areas so that you will have a stronger candidate pool for high-risk vacancies?*
- **Help** employees make the connection between competencies and the success of UVic. Discuss strategic connections for each competency. Ask: *How does this impact the leadership needs of the department or unit?*
- **Ask** an employee who shows potential for leadership to identify a leader that best demonstrates each competency at a leadership level. Ask them: *Why did you choose this leader? How does this leader demonstrate each competency? How does this leader inspire you to develop as a leader?*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Think Succession Toolkit www.uvic.ca/succession

Look for leadership Learning Opportunities in Learning Central:

https://www.uvic.ca/hr/learning-development/learning_central/index.php