

Leadership Competencies Explained in 4 bite-sized chunks

By Lyndsay Swinton

Leadership competencies definition: a model that represents the common traits and characteristics found in effective leaders, providing a common language for discussing leadership concepts, enabling consistent assessment, development and feedback within an organisation.

Your attitude towards leadership competency models probably depend on the organisation you are in, and the quality of leadership you encounter on a daily basis. If you're getting management love, then you probably value the process of being assessed and working towards improving your own management competencies. But if you are in a less than healthy workplace, you probably rightly feel put-out at being expected to "do as I say, not as I do" by your manager.

Here are the leadership competencies I developed for [Uncommon Knowledge](#), when we successfully achieved [Investors In People](#) accreditation, broken down into 4 bite sized chunks.

The 4 chunks are; Thought Leadership, Results Leadership, Relationship Leadership and People Leadership.

Key points:

- * The competencies do not all apply to all of the people – you pick and choose depending on the roles and responsibilities, and give a bigger or smaller weight to that competency.
- * Each leadership competency definition gives examples of wanted behaviour AND "not" wanted behaviour, making it easier to get feedback and then have a conversation where improvement is required.
- * It's key to a successful conversation about your or your team's leadership competence, to base discussion on real-life examples and not on aspirations.
- * You may use a leadership competency framework to arrive at a formal "score" for your performance at an annual appraisal.
- * The competency framework can help with both your current and future role and help you write your personal development plan

Thought Leadership

This is all about coming up with winning ideas, creating innovative solutions, understanding your business environment, and having the right professional or academic qualifications under your belt. Even the most junior manager can demonstrate Thought Leadership and have a personal development plan that pushes them through relevant qualifications, regularly reading quality blogs and article sites (like [Management For the Rest of Us](#) :o), or letting their imagination and ability loose.

Results Leadership

Most people are expected to get things done. At one extreme, you have the axe man sent in to “down-size” an organisation, taking casualties along the way. At the other, you might have the fuzziest person in the world but they simply can’t organise the proverbial in a brewery. Unless you are at the top of the ivory tower, it’s likely that this leadership competency carries the most weight for you.

Relationship Leadership

“No man is an island, entire of itself” applies in business. You must get on with people to get results. You never know who might be the key to your future success, so this competency is about how well you negotiate the relationship landscape.

People Leadership

This leadership competency doesn’t only apply to people with direct reports. People leadership is about making sure people know their goals, provide feedback and encourage people to grow and change with the business.

Grab a coffee and take some time to look through the [Uncommon Knowledge Leadership Competencies example pdf](#) for more detail on each of the four competencies. Writing and using your own version may seem like overkill in a tiny team or company but dismiss it’s value at your peril – how else can you articulate both how and what you want done?

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