

Emphasizing Essential Leadership Competencies

Engagement Profile: Competency Modeling



Background

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the second largest department in the federal government, employs more than 300,000 people and is responsible for administering benefits to veterans, their families, and survivors. Benefits include health care, home loan guarantees, insurance, vocational rehabilitation and employment, education, and burial and memorial support.

Catalyst

VA faces several challenges, including an increase in the scope and complexity of service needs from veterans and changing demographics in the veteran population. VA undertook an ambitious transformation effort designed to improve its services, including defining the essential competencies needed by current and aspiring leaders. Competencies serve as the core of an integrated strategy that aligns human capital systems to better meet mission needs. VA had competency models, but many of these differed in maturity and structure, making it difficult to link them to training and other development activities. Moreover, the implementation of an automated talent management system requires a unified approach to competency modeling.

Challenge

VA seeks a common approach to competency management and to develop and promulgate guidance on a standardized process for creating, validating, and implementing competencies. An enterprise approach to competency management will facilitate the integration of competencies into the talent management system and will ensure a common framework for career development and other human capital activities. VA Learning University (VALU) engaged PDRI, a CEB Company, to take the lead in developing a competency management approach for the department, establishing guidance for implementing competencies, and validating critical competency models. This initiative will ensure that VA has the talent required to meet its mission in the future.

Contact Us to Learn More

Phone: +1-703-276-4680

E-Mail: info@pdri.com

Web: pdri.com

pdri
a CEB Company

Emphasizing Essential Leadership Competencies

Engagement Profile: Competency Modeling (Continued)

Solution

Common VA competencies have provided a firm foundation on which to build an integrated and strategically aligned HR system to support the entire employment life cycle. Since the initial launch of this effort, VA has made significant progress toward creating an enterprise approach to developing all employees and leaders. We supported VA in achieving the following outcomes:

- Competency management strategy and guidance for developing and validating competencies
- Enterprise-wide competencies as well as proficiency standards for five leadership levels: team leader, first-line leader, intermediate leader, senior leader, and executive
- Communications plan for implementing enterprise-wide competencies
- Comprehensive registry of development activities linked to competencies, allowing employees to create self-directed learning plans consisting of no- or low-cost, on-the-job development options
- Online educational materials including job aids and tools for understanding and applying competencies
- Evaluation strategy designed to measure the impact of competency implementation
- Core values for revision and implementation across the department
- Talent management system support and guidance

Outcomes

The employee and leadership competency models provide the foundation for VA's development programs. Using the models, current and aspiring leaders can clearly see how one's expected level of skill increases at each career stage. By setting a common standard for behavior and performance for all employees, and linking competencies to training and development opportunities, VA has begun the transformation that will help employees better meet the complex needs of veterans and grow in their careers with VA.

Contact Us to Learn More

Phone: +1-703-276-4680

E-Mail: info@pdri.com

Web: pdri.com

pdri
a CEB Company