



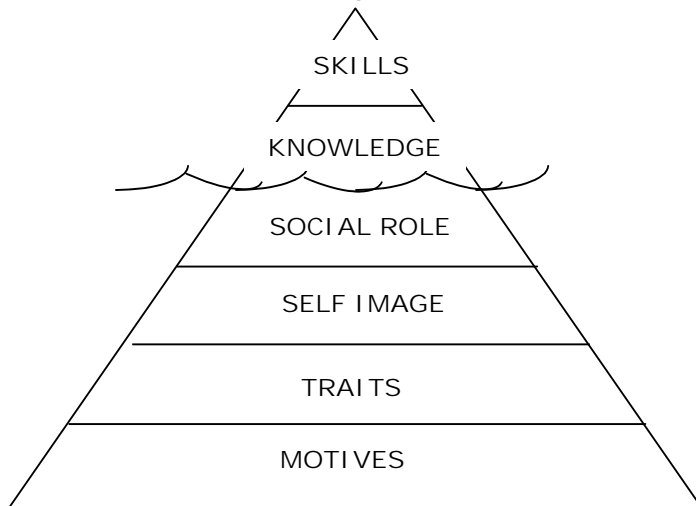
HR Top Tips

Introduction to Competencies

What is a competency and why are they important?

A competency is an underlying characteristic of an individual that has been shown to cause or predict superior job performance. Competencies describe the difference between average performance and superior performance.

A competency is what superior performers do more often, in more situations, with better results than average performers.



Skills and knowledge form the tip of the iceberg.

The underlying elements of competence are less visible but they largely direct and control surface behaviour.

Social role and self-image exists at a conscious level; traits and motives exist further below the surface.

SKILLS: an individual's behavioural demonstration of proficiency of expertise – the ability to do something well. Examples: effectively interviewing and selecting the best job application; ability to write useful spreadsheet macros.

KNOWLEDGE: usable information that an individual has in a particular area. Examples: understanding what motivates one's employees.

SOCIAL ROLE: a pattern of behaviour in an individual that is reinforced because he/she is a member of a social group or organisation – "the outer self". Examples: being either a leader or a follower; seeing oneself as a motivator and developer of people.

SELF IMAGE: the way in which a person sees himself or herself. This might or might not be the way they are perceived by others. Examples 'being honest and straight-forward' when in fact they might be seen by as 'blunt or direct' by some.

TRAITS: a relatively enduring characteristic of an individual's behaviour. Examples: being a good listener; having a good memory.

MOTIVES: thoughts that drive, direct and select an individual's behaviour. Examples: wanting to achieve individually; wanting to influence the behaviour of others.