



Competency Framework

Grades 9 and above

Leadership Family

Leadership Competencies

Cluster One - Personal Qualities

Self Belief

- The inner confidence that you will succeed and you can overcome obstacles to achieve the best outcomes for service improvement.

Features of this quality include:

- Relishing a challenge.
- Being prepared to stand up and be counted.
- Working beyond the call of duty, when this is required.
- Speaking up if this is needed. In doing so, their integrity and their motivation for service improvement will sustain them.

Stage 1 - Acts with confidence

- Manages own anxieties and appears confident to others.
- Has the courage to make full use of the formal authority of the role.
- Gives it a go, however difficult / impossible a task or confrontation may seem.

Stage 2 - Is confident in own ability

- Sees self as a 'can do' person, and is positive about own ability to succeed.
- Draws on own relevant experience.
- Is optimistic about achievement of goals even when the going is tough.

Stage 3 - Takes on challenges

- Rises to, and relishes, a range of challenges.
- Feels able to succeed and is prepared to stand up and be counted.
- Has the confidence to involve others in support of a particular goal.

Stage 4 - Relishes challenge

- Takes on very stretching challenges that others may back away from.
- Is able to challenge others in positions of power in pursuit of a specific goal.
- May be a 'lone voice' challenging the status quo, but will always be able to back up their position with evidence that the action is aimed at achieving service improvement.

Negative Indicators - Doubts own capability or is arrogant

- Feels overwhelmed by the pace and scale of change. May see self as a victim.
- Is hesitant or gives in when faced by opposition. Holds back from challenging others; or are arrogant and overly confident, ignoring the views of others in taking particular courses of action.

Self-Awareness

- Knowing your own strengths and limitations and understanding your own emotions and the impact of your behaviour on others in diverse situations.

Features of this quality include:

- Being aware of their own emotions.

- Being aware of their personal impact on others, particularly when they are under pressure as they have an understanding of the 'triggers' to which they are susceptible.

Stage 1 - Registers own emotions

- Is aware of their own feelings.
- Notices when their emotions are aroused.

Stage 2 - Understands own emotions

- Understands the nature and causes of their emotional reactions to particular situations.
- Recognises how challenges to their personal values are likely to trigger certain responses in them.

Stage 3 - Understands own strengths and limitations

- Understands the likely implications and impact of their emotions, both on self and others in a range of situations.
- Knows their own strengths, and limitations, in providing leadership that makes a difference to staff, customers and stakeholders.

Negative Indicators - Fails to consider own emotions

- Does not stop to understand own emotions.
- May be surprised by own reactions to certain situations; and, does not set time aside for personal reflection.
- Does not recognise or acknowledge the impact of own behaviour on others.

Self-Management

- Being able to manage your own emotions and be resilient in a range of complex and demanding situations.

Features of this quality include:

- Being tenacious and resilient in the face of difficulty.
- Being able to cope with an increasingly complex environment – with the blurring of organisational boundaries and the requirement to work in partnership.

Stage 1 - Shows restraint

- Carefully manages own responses and reactions when faced with demanding situations.
- Remains calm in a crisis.
- Resists the temptation to take over; for example, when leadership has been delegated to others or when working in collaboration with other partners.

Stage 2 - Manages own emotions

- Takes conscious steps to manage own emotions and pressure when necessary.
- May withdraw from a stressful situation temporarily, creating time out for reflection or recuperation, or seeking support from peers/learning set.

Stage 3 - Demonstrates resilience

- Manages their own energy, pacing their efforts for the long haul.
- Recognises others' anxieties and problems, and encourages them to find ways of dealing constructively with their stress; models a healthy work/life balance.
- Is able to absorb and deal constructively with criticism, seeking support as necessary.

Negative Indicators - Loses control

- May lose control in stressful situations; for example, may become aggressive, 'freeze', or run away from difficult decisions.
- May suffer from 'burn out' without recognising the warning signs or seeking help in advance.

Drive for Improvement in Public Services

- A deep motivation to improve performance in public services and thereby to make a real difference to the community

Features of this quality include:

- A deep sense of vocation for public service driven by an identification with the needs of the community
- A belief in the importance of the democratic control of public service and providing accountable services to the community and their representatives
- A primary focus on achievement of goals for the greater good of others, and not the leader's own reputation or self-betterment.
- Investing their energy in bringing about service improvements – even to the extent of wanting to leave a legacy which is about effective partnership, inter-agency working and community involvement.

Stages 1 - Targets effort for service improvement

- Stays focused on the goal of service improvement and resists being sidetracked.
- Takes time to be personally helpful and constructive to others in achieving the goal.
- Puts the needs of others first where these are concerned with service improvement.

Stage 2 - Aims to make a difference with stakeholders

- Invests effort in making a difference to how services are planned and delivered.
- Works with and for key stakeholders inside and outside of the organisation to achieve positive outcomes.
- Sees own organisation as only one amongst a number of stakeholders needing to work collaboratively to services in a coherent and integrated way.

Stage 3 - Sustained resilience

- Invests sustained effort in making a significant impact on improvement in the local area and securing positive outcomes for stakeholders inside and outside the organisation.
- Looks to the longer term, seeking to leave a legacy of improved services with enduring benefits for stakeholders.
- Puts own experience and expertise at the disposal of others in the wider company context, for the greater good.

Negative Indicators - Wants personal recognition

- Is driven by a need for personal kudos and recognition alone, seeking the limelight, rather than by achievement of goals for the greater good.

Personal Integrity

- A strongly held sense of commitment to openness, honesty, democracy inclusiveness, loyalty and high standards in undertaking the leadership role.

Features of this quality include:

- Believing in a set of key values borne out of broad experience of, and commitment to, the company which stands them in good stead, especially when they are under pressure.
- Insistence on openness and communication, motivated by values about inclusiveness and getting on with the job.
- Acting as a role model for public involvement and the dialogue that all staff, including the front line, need to have with service users.
- Resilience that enables them to push harder, when necessary, in the interests of developing or improving the company.
- Recognition of the importance of supporting collective leadership through loyalty to colleagues

Stage 1 - Acts consistently

- Behaves consistently with own stated values and beliefs.
- Delivers on what they have promised, or is open about their own shortcomings.
- Models and promotes the organisational values – i.e. *'walks the walk.'*

Stage 2 - Chooses transparency

- Creates an environment of openness, cutting through ambiguity to provide clarity in communication.
- Requires and expects others to be equally as open in their communication, with staff, customers and stakeholders.
- Uses plain language in communication to demystify.

Stage 3 - Shows personal courage

- Stands up for what is right in terms of leading and developing services, even when it is difficult to do so, and there may be a personal cost in doing so.
- Acts as a role model for involvement of staff and other stakeholders, even where this results in challenges to how things are done.
- Is prepared to support others who are acting consistently with core values.

Negative Indicators - Takes the line of least resistance

- Responds to pressure by not standing up for own values and beliefs.
- Demonstrates behaviour that is counter to core values of openness, inclusiveness and honesty.

Cluster Two - Setting Direction

Seizing the Future

- Being prepared to take action now to shape and implement a vision for the future development of services.

Features of this quality include:

- Making the most of current opportunities to bring about improvements
- Being able to interpret the likely direction of change
- Using their insights into the broad strategic direction of sections to help shape and implement the approaches and culture in the organisation, and to influence developments across the wider public / industry sectors.
- Underpinning their vision and action with a strong focus on local needs.
- Being prepared to undertake transformational, rather than just incremental, change where this will achieve improvement.

Stage 1 - Acts decisively

- Reacts to current issues and problems and does so decisively.
- Acts quickly and decisively in a crisis or other time-sensitive situation.

Stage 2 - Thinks and acts up to 3 months ahead

- Anticipates and takes action to avoid an approaching problem that might interfere with effective service delivery.
- Makes the most of current opportunities to bring about incremental improvements that are of benefit.
- Looks ahead within a 3-month time frame.

Stage 3 - Thinks and acts 4–12 months ahead

- Sees how service developments fit into the bigger picture for service improvement.
- Takes action to realise service improvements in the short term.

Stage 4 - Thinks and acts over a year ahead

- Thinks through and actions decisions, goals and priorities that can further the stated strategy for service improvement over the next year or so.
- Identifies the implications and risks of alternative courses of action; goes out to make these work, looking beyond existing organisational boundaries.
- Takes action to improve service delivery, the benefit of which should be fully realised in the medium-term (1year +).

Stage 5 - Thinks and acts for the future

- Looks to the future and is able to see current opportunities and linkages that others may struggle to see; acts on these.
- Generates, tests and implements a range of innovative approaches to move a situation on, understanding the broader trends in improvement and service delivery.
- Thinks and acts with a long-term, futuristic perspective.

Negative Indicator - Is locked in the present

- Fails to think about the consequences of actions in the future.
- Is preoccupied with the present and the operational detail, failing to balance this out with a longer-term view.
- Resists new ideas and approaches.

Intellectual Flexibility

- The facility to embrace and cut through ambiguity and complexity and to be open to creativity in leading and developing services.

Features of this quality include:

- Being receptive to fresh insights and perspectives from diverse sources, both internal and external to the company (driven by the values of inclusiveness and service improvement).
- Understanding that change may have to be radical to achieve improvement.
- Being open to innovative thinking and encouraging creativity and experimentation in others too.

Stage 1 - Considers new information and perspectives

- Is open to new information and views from diverse standpoints, including different professional areas.
- Modifies own thinking, and sets of assumptions, to take account of new and diverse viewpoints.

Stage 2 - Integrates information

- Makes sense of disparate information; sees patterns and trends.
- Finds and uses existing models, for example of how organisations work, to help integrate things into a whole.
- Is adept at moving between significant detail on the ground and the big picture.

Stage 3 - Clarifies complexity

- Crystallises key points from a mass of disparate information and makes sense of complex situations.
- Comes up with new ways of explaining something complex, or seeing beyond the obvious, so that others are able to understand it; this may include the use of analogies.
- Encourages others to be innovative, in finding ways of developing service improvements

Negative Indicators Fails to integrate information

- Fails to make connections and relate things to a wider context.
- Cannot see the 'wood for the trees'.
- Ignores information from diverse, or 'non standard', sources.

Broad Scanning

- Taking the time to gather information from a wide range of sources.

Features of this quality include:

- Making it a priority to know about how services are being delivered and what the experience of the community is on the ground.
- Being persistent in getting the key facts of a situation.
- Having systematic ways of informing themselves about key developments.

Stage 1 - Personally investigates

- Gets out personally to find out directly from those who are involved what is happening.
- Checks what is happening on the ground, asking others about their experience of services.

Stage 2 - Looks more widely for information

- Probes to find out more about what is actually happening.
- Asks questions to get to all the facts, and to get to the heart of an issue.
- Accesses local networks for information and to benchmark own services.

Stage 3 - Seeks diverse viewpoints

- Has systematic ways of keeping self-informed, or keeping in touch, through wider networks.
- Keeps abreast of national developments in social care through active involvement in national networks.
- Commissions research to probe particular local issues.

Negative Indicators - Focuses narrowly

- Has a narrow range of vision – misses important developments within the company, locally, or nationally.
- Is haphazard, rather than systematic, in scanning for information.

Contextual Astuteness:

- Showing an ability to understand diverse interest groups and power bases, the wider community, and the dynamics between them, so as to lead company services more effectively.

Features of this quality include:

- Understanding the climate and culture in the company and in the wider business environment.
- Knowing who the key influencers are – both internally and externally to the organisation – and how to go about involving them, as required.
- Being attuned to strategy and policy at a national and local level and being able to plan a way ahead that takes account of these strategies.

Stages 1 - Uses informal networks

- Identifies key people inside and outside the organisation who can help to influence or get things done
- Uses own networks to gain information or communicate

Stage 2 - Understands culture and climate

- Understands what is and is not possible in a given local or national climate, in terms of service provision.
- Is keenly aware of group norms and the way things have been customarily done.
- Uses this understanding of how things have been done in the past to manage and pace the changes required to bring about local service improvements.

Stage 3 - Understands all aspects of the decision making process

- Understands the formal mechanism and complex relationships that make up the decision making process of the company
- Is well aware of the relevant interest groups, networks and groupings, and uses this understanding to get things done in terms of service improvements and service delivery.

Stage 4 - Understands long-term, underlying issues

- Understands the underlying social, political and historical factors shaping local and national realities of services, and uses this understanding to get things done.
- Knows who the key influencers are and how to go about involving them to shape and deliver change across the wider public / industry sector.

Negative Indicators - Lacks 'antennae'

- Fails to tune in to what is really going on across the company and environment context.
- Tends to over-rely on formal processes and structures.
- Does not understand or work with the informal networks and process within the organisation.

Drive for Results

- A strong commitment to making service performance improvements and a determination to achieve positive service outcomes for the public.

Features of this quality include:

- Setting ambitious targets which may exceed the minimum standard required and taking calculated risks – all with the aim of delivering added value to the company.
- Focusing their own, and others', energy on what really makes a difference, rather than being constrained by methods which were used in the past.
- Actively seeking out opportunities to improve delivery of service through partnership and new ways of working.

Stage 1 - Strives to deliver local targets

- Takes actions that lead to the delivery of set company targets.
- Shows determination to meet the objectives set by others.
- Keeps track of and measures outcomes against own standards, over and above those set by others.

Stage 2 - Places a focus on improving performance

- Takes actions that lead to quantifiable service improvements.
- Encourages others to find ways of delivering services that will better serve the needs of staff, customers and stakeholders while meeting local targets.

Stage 3 - Sets and meets challenging goals

- Sets self and others stretching goals, over and above those required to meet national standards and targets, where these will help to improve local services.
- Takes the necessary actions to meet these goals; identifies and applies measures to track and quantify achievement.
- Overcomes obstacles to achieving goals and uses failure as an opportunity to learn.

Stage 4 - Sustains focus

- Is unceasing in their determination to achieve goals over time; resists any pressure to be deflected from this attainment.
- Is prepared to challenge others and address poor performance where this is impacting effective service delivery.
- Takes calculated risks, based on learning and experience, to achieve longer-term service improvements.

Negative Indicators - Fails to focus effort

- Spreads efforts too thinly and dilutes own, and others', impact by focusing on too many – or the wrong – priorities.
- Continually 'fire fighting' rather than applying learning from past situations.

Cluster Three- Delivering the Service

Leading Change through People

- Communicating the vision and rationale for change and modernisation, and engaging and facilitating others to work collaboratively to achieve real change.

Features of this quality include:

- Gaining the support of others by ensuring that they understand the reasons behind the change.
- Sharing leadership – with the team and others in the company and in partner organisations.
- Encouraging others, especially front line staff, to find new ways of delivering and developing services and to take the lead in implementation of change.
- Demonstrating a highly visible, authoritative and democratic leadership style which is underpinned by strongly held values around equality, diversity and openness.
- Taking a collaborative or facilitative approach in working in partnership with diverse groups.
- Enabling teams, within the organisation and across the community, to work effectively together.
- Helping to unblock obstacles, identifying and securing resources, and taking care of teams and of the individuals within them.

Stage 1 - Manages the team

- Sets up regular communications with the team (e.g. through team meetings or a newsletter) and makes sure the team is kept informed on what is happening.
- Explains the reasons behind key decisions.
- Is visible as the leader of the team.

Stage 2 - Secures the right resources and support

- Secures needed support or development for the benefit of both individuals and the team as a whole.
- Facilitates the effectiveness of a group by obtaining and providing them with the right resource or information.

Stage 3 - Creates the right team conditions

- Creates the conditions that enable a team to perform at its best – provides the right structure and gets the right people doing the right things.
- Gets input from others with the intent of promoting the effectiveness of the group or process.
- Acts to build team spirit so as to promote team effectiveness.

Stage 4 - Articulates a compelling vision of change

- Communicates the vision and brings it alive – describing what the future needs to look like in terms of service improvements and modernisation.
- Gives people a sense that change is achievable and that their contribution matters.
- Explains the rationale for changes and key company priorities.

Stage 5 - Mobilises people's energy and commitment

- Gets buy-in and commitment to the vision within the organisation and across the local context, involving diverse groups.
- Inspires people to contribute to and lead change initiatives.
- Creates momentum and excitement about what needs to be done.

Stage 6 - Makes change inclusive and effective

- Aligns efforts and shares leadership to achieve the vision of integrated service change.
- Removes obstacles to the working of the team in the organisation and in cross boundary working. Identifies and secures resources as required.
- Encourages others to drive forward change. Enables teams to succeed in making change.

Negative Indicator - Abdicates leadership responsibility

- Fails to provide clarity and direction or to lead others to achieve a vision.
- Does not step up to the leadership role.
- Passes the buck when faced with leadership responsibility.

Holding to Account

- The strength of resolve to hold others to account for agreed targets and to be held accountable for delivering a high level of service.

Features of this quality include:

- Setting clear targets and standards for performance and behaviours, ensuring the processes are in place to support individuals in achieving these standards.
- Insisting upon improved performance if standards are slipping
- Creating a climate of support and accountability, rather than a climate of blame.
- Holding people to account for what they have agreed to deliver.
- Being prepared to be held to account by others for what they have contracted you to do as the leader.

Stage 1 - Assigns clear accountability

- Provides others with clarity of purpose and direction, developing individual and team performance contracts.
- Ensures clear protocols are developed, e.g. for corporate governance and for the co-ordination of services.

Stage 2 - Sets boundaries for accountability

- Sets the parameters for how others are to act.
- Ensures that the processes are in place to support individuals in achieving standards and to learn from their mistakes or failures.
- Is prepared to be held openly to account for own agreed goals.

Stage 3 - Promotes a high performance culture

- Holds others directly accountable for delivering what has been agreed, both within and outside of the organisation.
- Intervenes swiftly and consistently when performance is slipping, using the appropriate processes.
- Challenges and confronts conflict, especially where this is impacting on service delivery and standards, and contributes to brokering agreement.

Negative Indicator - Lets poor performance drift

- Fails to identify and address performance issues.
- Challenges people about their performance inappropriately and / or inconsistently.
- Places blame and provides no support for failure.

Empowering Others

- Striving to facilitate others' contributions and to share leadership, nurturing capability and long-term development of others.

Features of this quality include:

- Having the humility to work in the background, creating the space for others to take the lead on particular issues and to grow in confidence and capability.
- Being able to spot potential and support the development of people across the organisation.
- Taking personal responsibility for ensuring that diversity is respected and that there is genuine equality of opportunity.
- Fostering the development of others across the community so that improvement and service development agendas can be created and owned by the communities themselves.
- Engaging and involving users in service improvement.
- Developing relationships with service users which are equal, open and honest, and modelling the power sharing which is required if solutions are truly to be at the discretion of the customer and stakeholder.

Stage 1 - Encourages and supports

- Gives explicit encouragement and makes self-available for support, especially when others have experienced a setback; listens empathetically.
- Uses mistakes as an opportunity for learning.
- Seeks dialogue with staff, customers and stakeholders as a means of learning.

Stage 2 - Stands back

- Deliberately lets others take the lead and the credit by stepping to one side, to grow their capability and confidence.
- Allows freedom with accountability.
- Actively promotes the role of staff, customers and stakeholders in shaping services and influencing decisions about services.

Stage 3 - Fosters independence

- Coaches others, challenging and asking questions to help them work out the answers for themselves.
- Provides space for others to be creative and to take risks so that they can develop their own capabilities and approaches.
- Shares power within the organisation, and across networks; and, develops constructive relationships with staff, customers and stakeholders which are focused on their true involvement in, and consultation on, service decision-making.

Negative Indicator - Dominates

- Takes over and dominates proceedings.
- Does not make space for others to contribute or grow.

Effective and strategic influencing:

- Being able and prepared to adopt a number of ways to gain support and influence diverse parties, with the aim of securing improvements.

Features of this quality include:

- Getting results by working in partnership, within the company and with a wide range of other agencies and individuals over whom they have no formal authority.
- Influencing relationships which are critical to achieving change in terms of service improvement.
- Being able to cope with ambiguity, as organisations continue to change role and shape, and the agenda for change gathers pace.
- Employing a range of influencing strategies – ones that will work for the long term and bring about change in the company.

Stage 1 - Uses direct logical persuasion

- Points out the costs and benefits associated with a particular course of action.
- Tries to persuade using one or two well-reasoned arguments.
- Relies on facts and figures to convince others of a certain course of action.

Stage 2 - Calculates an impact

- Deliberately plans an approach, or steps in an 'argument', that will be successful with a particular audience or interest group.
- May include taking a dramatic, or unexpected, action to persuade others round to a particular point of view.

Stage 3 - Influences both directly and indirectly

- Uses subtle influencing tactics, such as lobbying before a meeting, which fit with the particular situation.
- Understands the need to use informal persuasion and provision of information, to influence others over whom they have no formal authority.
- Takes the time to build critical mass or support for a position, with the end aim of getting results by working in partnership.

Stage 4 - Uses complex influencing strategies

- Uses complex and multi-layered influencing strategies – ones that will work for the long term and bring about change in modernising the company and service delivery.
- Builds and uses extended networks of influence, understanding that organisations are changing role and shape.
- Strives to ensure that local people, staff and other agencies are involved in shaping the modernisation agenda.

Negative Indicator - Over-relies on own impact

- Does not use subtle or informal influencing, failing to understand the networks and coalitions across the context.
- Relies too much on the force of their own impact, seeing only their side of the 'argument'.

Working effectively with Others

- Being committed to working and engaging constructively with internal and external stakeholders.

Features of this quality include:

- Ensuring that the strategy for improvement, and the planning, development and provision of services, are cohesive and 'joined up'. Understanding and being sensitive to diverse viewpoints.
- Striving to create the conditions for successful partnership working.

Stage 1 - Appreciates others' views

- Expresses positive expectations of internal and external stakeholders.
- Acknowledges and respects others' diverse perspectives.

Stage 2 - Works for shared understanding

- Shares information with partners when appropriate.
- Summarises progress, taking account of differing viewpoints, so as to clarify understanding and to establish common ground.
- Surfaces conflict and supports resolution of this conflict.

Stage 3 - Forges partnerships for the long term

- Maintains positive expectations of other stakeholders, even when provoked, and strives to create the conditions for successful partnership working in the long term.
- Is informed on the current priorities of partners, and responds appropriately to changes in their status or circumstances.
- Ensures that the strategy for service improvement is developed in a cohesive and 'joined up' manner.

Negative Indicator - Goes it alone

- Fails to involve others in bringing about integrated care.
- Does not share information with other stakeholders