Competency Matrix and Definitions Library

Agencies, Boards and Commissions

Alberta

Classification: Public

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview: Competency-based Recruitment

Competency-based recruitment directly contributes to the effective governance for Alberta's agencies, boards and commissions (ABCs or public agencies). Further, utilizing competencies to inform recruitment contributes to a robust system for identifying, tracking and measuring the skills required for public agencies to be successful. Candidates with the necessary level of skills and knowledge will be represented on Alberta's public agencies by utilizing a deliberate process involving the identification and selection of competencies.

Through clearly identifying and defining competencies attributed to members, and actively engaging in a performance evaluation process, public agency strengths, areas of development and gaps will be identified, which also further informs recruitment strategies and succession planning. To enhance public agency governance performance and organizational success, this document identifies the application of consistent terminology and definitions for competencies, which includes observable and measurable knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal attributes.

To assist public agencies in determining the competencies required for their board members, the following is further described in this document:

- Competency Definitions Library (Appendix A):

    - Includes categories and specific competencies (Chart A), which is further delineated into specific competencies or skills and definitions (Chart B).

- Competency Matrix Tool (Appendix B):

    - Includes a template to assist in identifying the competencies required. The matrix informs the public agency's performance evaluation process by assessing the competencies required for effective governance, and the current skill level of the members. An example of a fictional matrix is also provided.

2.0 Competency Library

2.1 Purpose: Competency Library

The library is organized into competency categories, specific skills or attributes, and definitions (Appendix A). The critical knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes required for a public agency board to effectively identify, recruit and select members, manage succession planning, and

develop strong governance practices are also included. Clear, consistent competencies allow public agencies to create a common language and shared understanding of the requirements for effective board governance.

2.2 Applying the Competency Library

The library is a guide and foundation for public agencies; however, it is not an exhaustive list of all the knowledge, skills, abilities, attributes and experience that may be required. The competencies are categorized based on similarity among the various skills (see Chart A), and a breakdown of further measurable attributes and definitions (Chart B). The range of competencies is provided to inform the selection by ABCs.

As the competencies directly contribute to effective public agency governance and the achievement of the organization's goals and mandate, the selection and identification of skills required becomes increasingly important. Considerations in using the matrix and identifying competencies reflective of the needs of the public agency are provided below:

- Review the competency list provided in Appendix A and Chart A, and select four to six competencies that are critical for the ABC's effectiveness and success. ABCs may also choose an entire competency category for the matrix. The definitions that are provided should be used to inform the selection process (Chart B).

- Specific competencies may not be included in the library. In these instances, definitions may be added. For example, the Writers in Residence Panel requires members to be *active in peer-reviewed literature*, which is not listed in the library. As this is critical to the panel, it can be added to the panel's matrix.

3.0 Competency Matrix

3.1 Purpose: Competency Matrix Tool

The competency matrix is a detailed table identifying the critical skills for the ABC and members (Appendix B). The tool is used to evaluate the performance of public agency board members by identifying strengths, areas of development and gaps both individually and collectively across the ABC. In addition, the matrix contributes to recruitment and succession planning efforts by informing decision-making to ensure the right candidates with the skills required are selected.

3.2 Applying the Competency Matrix

To be effective, the competency matrix (Appendix B) is maintained by the ABC, with support as needed from the department. A template has been provided, but it is at the discretion of the ABC to tailor the matrix to meet its needs. To complete the matrix, use the following process:

i.   Identify the name of the ABC and include all board members (vacant positions should be given a blank line with the name 'vacant)';

ii.   Review the competency library to select those required, or identify additional competencies that may not be included in the library, include in the 'board member competency section';

iii. Add the definitions for each selected competency to Tab 2 of the matrix as this reinforces a shared understanding of the meaning of each skill;

iv.   Complete the background information section;

v.   Through the public agency evaluation process, assess the performance of individual members (a ranking scale is included in the tool), and

vi.   Establish a schedule to review the matrix and ensure it is updated on an annual basis, or as needed.

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Appendix A: Competency Library Categories and Definitions

Chart A: Competencies at-a-glance ~ Categories and Specific Competencies		
	Competency Categories	**Competencies**
A.	**Analytical and Decision Making**	• Critical Thinking • Accurate Judgement and Decisions • Acts Decisively	• Collaborative Decision Making • Risk Management • Results Orientation
B.	**Communication**	• Effective Verbal Communication • Writing for Clarity and Understanding	• Communications Technology
C.	**Innovation**	• Evaluates and Implements Ideas • Demonstrates Creativity	• Drives Continuous Improvement
D.	**Leadership and Accountability**	• Inspires and Motivates Others • Change Leadership	• Managing People • Meeting Facilitation
E.	**Organizational and Business Acumen**	• Entrepreneurial Thinking • Organizational Understanding • Governance • Acts Strategically	• Networking and Relationship Building • Political Acumen • Understanding of Industry/Sector
F.	**Personal Awareness and Responsibility**	• Self-Insight and Awareness • Personal Effectiveness	• Personal Agility
G.	**Social Awareness and Commitment**	• Community/Social Responsibility • Fostering Diversity	• Indigenous Community Awareness
H.	**Technical Knowledge, Skills and Experience**	• Cyber Security Awareness • Information Technology • Accounting/Financial Acumen	• Legal/Regulatory Understanding • Human Resources Understanding • Professional Skills and Experience
I.	**Adjudication**	• Administrative Law • Decision Making • Decision Writing	• Chairing Hearings • Mediation

Chart B: Categories, Competencies and Definitions		
#	Competency	Definition
A.	**Analytical and Decision-Making**	
1.	**Critical thinking**	• identifies problems and solutions that others might miss • provides detailed insight and constructive criticism into problems and complex situations • skilled at finding logical flaws in arguments and plans • strong analytical and systems thinking skills
2.	**Accurate Judgements and Decisions**	• bases decisions on systematic review of relevant facts and information • provides clear rationale for decisions • considers long-term consequences and implications
3.	**Acts Decisively**	• shows a strong bias toward action • moves through the decision making process and commits to a clear course of action • is comfortable making decisions based on partial information
4.	**Collaborative Decision Making**	• finds mutually agreeable solutions to problems • able to collaborate with various audiences
5.	**Risk Management**	• balances risks and opportunities • provides options to mitigate risk
6.	**Results Orientation**	• identifies and implements opportunities to improve quality, service, and productivity • prioritizes activities to ensure most important outcomes are achieved
B.	**Communication**	
7.	**Effective Verbal Communication**	• expresses ideas and information clearly and concisely • understands audience and tailors message accordingly • listens to the comments and questions of others • creates effective and compelling presentations
8.	**Writing for Clarity and Understanding**	• writes clear, concise documents that are easy to read and understand • uses correct spelling, grammar, and sentence structure • able to develop effective written documentation in a short time • accurately interprets written information • processes large amounts of written information quickly

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| 9.	Communications Technology	• adept and efficient at applying and using technology/computer programs etc. related to role • adapts work to reflect advances in technology • high level of typing skills • able to trouble shoot basic computer problems
C.	**Innovation**	
10.	Evaluates and Implements Ideas	• converts ideas from general concepts into actionable plans • defines requirements and resources needed to implement new ideas • approaches innovation with a practical, task-oriented mindset
11.	Demonstrates Creativity	• produces a wide-range of new ideas and solutions when presented with a problem
12.	Drives Continuous Improvement	• establishes methods to harmonize and improve performance of systems and processes • aware of links and impacts to related processes
D.	**Leadership and Accountability**	
13.	Inspires and Motivates Others	• checks assumptions, and acknowledges the importance of others contributions • articulates the importance of tasks, including benefits to the individual, group and beyond • mobilizes others through contributing to and supporting others in identifying goals and establishing plans for achievement • develops a succession planning strategy/plan that contributes to good governance and supports member growth and effectiveness of the ABC
14.	Change Leadership	• translates organizational change strategies into specific practical goals, processes and time frames • promotes a climate of continuous transformation • listens and addresses resistance or concerns around change
15.	Managing People	• clearly defines and communicates roles and responsibilities • holds people accountable for accomplishing objectives and deliverables • recognizes and rewards achievement of others • provides constructive feedback on performance and manages/addresses performance gaps

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16.	**Meeting Facilitation**	• effectively determines meeting objectives and ensures directly contributes to the achievement of deliverables • summarizes deliverables resulting from the meeting • records assignment of tasks and timelines for completion
E.	**Organizational and Business Acumen**	
17.	**Entrepreneurial Thinking**	• understands how ABC fits into the broader marketplace • identifies opportunities for innovative and creative growth opportunities • monitors market trends and shifts
18.	**Organizational Understanding**	• understands the mandate, goals and strategies of the organization • collaborative skills that enable the successful completion of projects through the organizational structure • maximizes productivity while staying within the confines of organizational policies and procedures • ensures alignment of activities with GOA priorities
19.	**Governance**	• understands the relationship between members, management and stakeholders • acts in accordance with sound governance practices and processes, and the highest ethical standards
20.	**Acts Strategically**	• demonstrates an ability to understand complex business challenges and developing tangible, workable strategies, programs and business cases
21.	**Networking and Relationship Building**	• builds networks of relationships and uses network connections to help get things done • identifies and initiates working relationships that are mutually beneficial • finds topics and common interests to build rapport with others • interacts effectively with others to exchange information and develop professional contacts
22.	**Political Acumen**	• understands systems, motivations, and influences at work in government decision-making processes • considers multiple perspectives when developing responses and managing challenges • communication (written/verbal) is aligned and received in the manner intended • acknowledges the motivations and influences that affect the decision-making processes • understands the implications of decisions at the public policy level and political level • manages conflict with diplomacy

23.	Understanding of Industry/Sector	• demonstrates understanding, or expertise of the industry or sector the ABC operates within • understands particular trends, challenges and opportunities, and unique aspects of the sector
F. Personal Awareness and Responsibility		
24.	Self-Insight and Awareness	• has a good sense of personal strengths and development areas • maintains effectiveness and emotional stability • recognizes personal motivations and potential stressors and able to manage challenges effectively
25.	Personal Effectiveness	• completes tasks promptly and efficiently • looks for innovative ways to improve efficiencies and ensure work is aligned to the ABC's goals and mandate is an active member of professional community and maintains skills • takes accountability for delivering on commitments
26.	Personal Agility	• demonstrates positive attitude, resilience, and openness to change • adapts interpersonal style and approach based on circumstance and cues from others • sees opportunities and challenges from multiple perspectives
G. Social Awareness/Commitment		
27.	Community and Social Responsibility	• shows sensitivity toward social issues and causes important to ABC • demonstrates knowledge or expertise of the community demographics the ABC serves • demonstrates capacity to build networks and foster trusting relationships with communities and stakeholders • demonstrates knowledge and understanding of diversity
28.	Fostering Diversity	• demonstrates respect for the beliefs and traditions of others • promotes practices that support cultural diversity • discourages behaviors or practices that may be perceived as unfair or biased • demonstrates knowledge and understanding of issues affecting diverse communities
29.	Indigenous Community Awareness	• demonstrates knowledge of Indigenous communities, including understanding of their attitudes and values, history, barriers and challenges in both urban and rural settings • fosters meaningful dialogue with Indigenous communities

	H.	Technical Knowledge, Skills and Experience	
30.	**Cyber Security Awareness**	• complies with cyber security policies and practices • takes action to ensure confidentiality of information is maintained • promptly reports suspicious activity and possible breeches in cyber security (malware, phishing attempts, etc.)
31.	**Information Technology**	• understands the implementation and/or management of computer-based information systems • understands current technology trends and changes related to the information technology sector
32.	**Accounting/ Financial Acumen**	• understands how financial information is used to guide business decisions • develops accurate financial forecasts • able to analyze and interpret financial statements
33.	**Legal/Regulatory Understanding**	• demonstrates knowledge or expertise in legal principles, processes and systems • effectively interprets and applies legislation • understands legal dimensions of organizational issues
34.	**Human Resources Understanding**	• demonstrates understanding of human resource management including recruitment, succession planning, talent development and retention, compensation, and pensions
35.	**Professional Skills and Experience**	• experience in _____ (e.g. legal, health care, environment, transportation, etc.)
I.	Adjudication		
36.	**Administrative Law**	• understands the body of law that regulates the operation and procedures of government agencies as it applies to adjudicative tribunals • understands and acts within the scope of the powers delegated by enabling legislation • demonstrates knowledge or expertise in natural justice and procedural fairness
37.	**Decision Making**	• proven ability to articulate views, while being fair, impartial, objective and open minded • demonstrates strong ethical principles and integrity • identifies issue(s) clearly and succinctly • utilizes expertise and knowledge to weigh evidence, including relevant legislative and/or legal tests
38.	**Decision Writing**	• demonstrates ability to write clearly and concisely • experience drafting decision documents

		• clearly demonstrates how evidence was weighed, including the resolution of conflicting evidence • shows a logical connection between arguments, evidence, findings of fact, reasons for decision, and the conclusion • able to clearly articulate how legislation was interpreted and applied to the facts of the case
39.	**Chairing Hearings**	• keeps hearings in good order and follows procedures specific to the adjudicative ABC • ensures the principles of administrative justice and procedural fairness are followed at all times
40.	**Mediation**	• able to moderate effectively in an adjudicative setting

Appendix B: Example of a Completed Matrix

Alberta — Competency Matrix Tool: Writers in Residence Competency Matrix
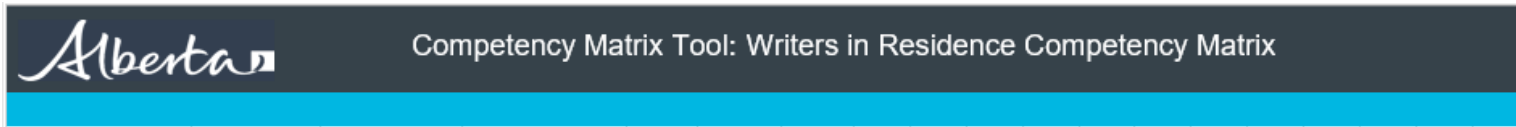
The Competency Matrix is a tool to inform board succession planning and recruitment. Public Agencies are able to adjust the tool to reflect their needs and requirements.

Name	Role on Board	Term Expiry (MM/YY) & Term (#)	Committees/ Role on committees on Council	Areas of Diversity (Self-Identify) e.g.: Gender, Culture, Geographic Location, any other	Critical Thinking	Writing for Clarity and Understanding	Political Acumen	Fostering Diversity	Information Technology	ABC Competency	ABC Competency	ABC Competency	ABC Competency	ABC Competency	ABC Competency	ABC Competency	ABC Competency
Chair's Name	Chair	12/22 (Term 2)	Governance; Finance	male	2	3	4	1	1								
Member's Name	Member	05/21 (Term 1)	Governance	male	3	2	4	4	4								
Member's Name	Member	6/23 (Term 1)	Governance	female; self-identified as English	2	2	2	3	4								
Member's Name	Member	2/22 (Term 2)	Human Resources	female	1	2	1	3	2								
Member's Name	Member	12/21 (Term 2)	Finance	female	1	2	1	3	2								
Average					1.8	2.2	2.4	2.8	2.6								
Mode (Most Frequently Occurring Number)					2	2	4	3	4								

RANKING LEGEND

RATING	DEFINITION
1 = None	No experience in the area
2 = Limited	General awareness and limited experiences
3 = Proficient	Broad knowledge based on some experience
4 = Expert	Expert knowledge based on extensive & direct experience

	Competency Name	Definition
A.	Critical Thinking	- provides detailed insight into problems and complex solutions that ultimately drive solutions - skilled at finding logical flaws in plans and processes
B.	Writing for Clarity and Understanding	- writes clear, concise documents that are easy to read and understand - uses correct spelling, grammar and sentence structure - able to develop effective written documentation in a short time
C.	Political Acumen	- understands systems, motivations, and influences at work in government decision-making processes - strong analytical and systems thinking skills to consider multiple potential perspectives in considering and developing a response and managing the challenge/issue - communication (written/verbal) is aligned and received in the manner intended acknowledges the motivations and influences that affect the decision-making - understands the implications of decisions at the public policy level and political level - manages conflict with diplomacy
D.	Fostering Diversity	- demonstrates respect for the beliefs and traditions of others - promotes practices that support cultural diversity - discourages behaviours or practices that may be perceived as unfair or biased - demonstrates knowledge and understanding of issues affecting diverse communities
E.	Information Technology	- understands the implementation and/or management of computer-based information systems - understands current technology trends and changes related to the information technology sector
F.	Add Competency	
G.	Add Competency	