



The Arch to Assessment: Using Evaluation Tools to Build Staff Competency

Workshop for Staff

Introduction

Evaluation

The Arch to Assessment

Acknowledgments

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Introduction

BUILDING COMPETENCE

Research indicates that for employees to gain new levels of ability they must...

- Have clarity about what acceptable performance “looks like”
- Be given continual feedback on how their actions compare to expectations



STAFF MEMBER'S ROLE

The competencies associated with the VENA guidance initiative are behavioral and attitudinal in nature. During this workshop, you will translate these rather abstract and invisible competencies into concrete, observable actions so you can consistently demonstrate them.

In this workshop you will also learn about how your performance will be monitored, relative to these competencies.



Evaluation

GAINING CLARITY

You have learned how to...

- Build rapport
- Use critical thinking
- Develop positive client centered health outcomes during the nutritional assessment process

To ensure you clearly understand what is expected in terms of each of these competencies, the management team will define concrete, observable actions for each competency.

It is important that you demonstrate these actions and others, to convey your mastery of the competencies.

Example

Competency: Rapport building

Actions:

- Listens without interrupting
- Maintains eye contact while listening
- Gives full attention while listening



COMPETENCE IN ACTION!

Purpose

To identify behaviors and actions for each of the competencies

Instructions

1. Work with your group to identify at least five actions or behaviors that would demonstrate your mastery of the competency the facilitator assigns to you.
2. Write your work on the flip chart so you can to share it with the larger group.

Competency: _____

Actions or behaviors:

BUILDING COMPETENCY CHECKLIST

The *Building Competency* checklist is a tool to help your supervisor monitor your performance and provide you with effective feedback.

Your supervisor will be responsible for observing you, as you are interacting with clients, and for documenting his/her observations using the checklist.



Building Competency Checklist

Job Title _____

Employee's name _____

Your name _____

Date _____

Ideas for improvement

Rating	1 Excellent	2	3	4	5 Poor
Rapport Building Actions					

Comments



Rating	1 Excellent	2	3	4	5 Poor
Critical Thinking Actions					

Comments

The Arch to Assessment

Rating	1 Excellent	2	3	4	5 Poor
Positive Client Centered Outcomes Actions					

Comments



ACCEPTING FEEDBACK

Giving performance-related feedback is usually ranked among the most dreaded tasks by managers. Honestly and effectively telling someone that s/he is not meeting expectations is very difficult both for the sender and the receiver of the message.

However, few individuals can be successful without regular performance feedback.

How you react to and implement the feedback you receive is an important part of the feedback process.

In the heat of the moment

It is very difficult to keep emotions out of it when someone is telling you that your skill is insufficient or your behavior is inappropriate. The more emotional your immediate reaction, the less likely it is that you will hear the message.

Some techniques for keeping emotions to a minimum include...

- Take deep breaths
- Remind yourself that this feedback is in your best interest
- Think of one thing you know you are very good at

If the message is too sensitive, or if you are just not able to listen in the moment, say so. Tell your manager, "I appreciate your willingness to give me feedback. I cannot listen very effectively now. Can we continue this later?"

And, at all costs, do not let your anger or frustration come out in inappropriate ways. Do not attack another person's performance. Do not accuse your manager of trying "to get you." You may be thinking these things, and they may be true, but you can address them more effectively when you are less emotional.

Active listening and effective questioning

To really hear the message, you will need to listen actively. This means you must try to suppress that little voice which may be saying, "Oh no, am I going to get fired!" and focus on what is being said.

To listen actively...

- Resist the temptation to formulate excuses or a defense
- Maintain eye contact
- Focus on keeping your emotions to a minimum

Because feedback related to a performance shortfall can be so difficult to hear, you may not fully comprehend the message by just listening actively. You will need to ask clarifying questions and summarize what you have heard to ensure you and your manager are on the same wavelength.

If your manager says, "I appreciate how you paraphrase what a client says to convey you are listening. You do not always apply what they tell you, though, when building a plan to address their risks."

You might ask a clarifying question, "Do you think I am disregarding the client' input?"

And you might summarize by saying, "So you think that I am doing a good with rapport building, but need to focus more on critical thinking?"

By asking these sorts of questions you and your manager can examine underlying issues or barriers that may be affecting your performance or uncover ideas for improvements.



Agree on next steps

Either in the initial discussion, or soon after, bring the feedback session around to what your manager expects you to do about the performance issue. Ask questions like...

- “Can you explain what the next steps might be?”
- “Do you have suggestions for ways I can improve?”
- “When will you be checking on my performance in this area again?”

Try to get clear on what your manager expects you to do, and by when. Give input as well. You are in the best position to identify barriers and create improvement plans. Now is the time to speak up if your manager doesn't have a clear or complete picture.

Find a way to say thanks

If your manager delivers performance-related feedback in an appropriate and constructive manner, you need to recognize that effort, as painful as the message may have been. A good manager wants to see individuals succeed and recognizes that critical feedback is a central part of professional growth.

When you are feeling up to it, when you genuinely see the value of the feedback, let your manager know it was appreciated. It will improve your relationship and make communication that much easier the next time around.

FED UP WITH FEEDBACK

Purpose

To improve your role in a performance feedback session

Instructions

1. Consider the last time you received corrective or critical feedback related to your performance.
2. What was the most difficult thing about receiving the feedback?

3. Did your emotions interfere with your ability to listen? If they did, what could you have done to reduce your emotional response?



4. Did you ask any questions? If not, what do you wish you had asked?

5. Were you clear on the next steps? If not, what could you have clarified?

6. Did you find a way to thank the person delivering the feedback? If not, why not?

ENHANCING YOUR PERFORMANCE

There are numerous ways in which you can improve your performance. Most of them take little time or energy, and when added together, result in significant performance improvements.

Tips and techniques

- **Apply the 80/20 rule**

Spend 80 percent of your time doing the 20 percent of your workload that is most important. Most people tend to do the least important tasks first, just to get them out of the way. Instead, put off unimportant tasks to focus on the more important ones.

- **Say no**

In this “team era,” you are probably bombarded with requests to work on special project teams, cross functional teams, interest groups, and so on. Although some of these teams can provide professional development opportunities for you, the long and short of it is they take you away from your primary job functions. The day after you volunteer, you may be asked to accelerate a timeline!



- **Take time now to save time later**

How many times have you been doing something at work and saying to yourself, “I really should do it according to this method, but I’m in a hurry so I’ll just do it this way”? Chances are next week or next month you’ll be right back doing it “this way” again. Don’t hesitate to take time to create a process, a form, a procedure, for recurring tasks. Avoid the temptation for quick and dirty solutions – they always cost more time in the long run.

- **Challenge everything**

Don’t get so comfortable in your job that you stop challenging. Ask yourself, “Why am I creating this report? Does anyone even use it anymore?” Question whether a process is as efficient as it could be. Consider whether you are still meeting client needs, or have the needs and expectations changed? And challenge yourself; to do it just a little bit better, a little more efficiently.

Performing at a higher level doesn’t mean working harder. It means working smarter!

