OECD CORE COMPETENCIES
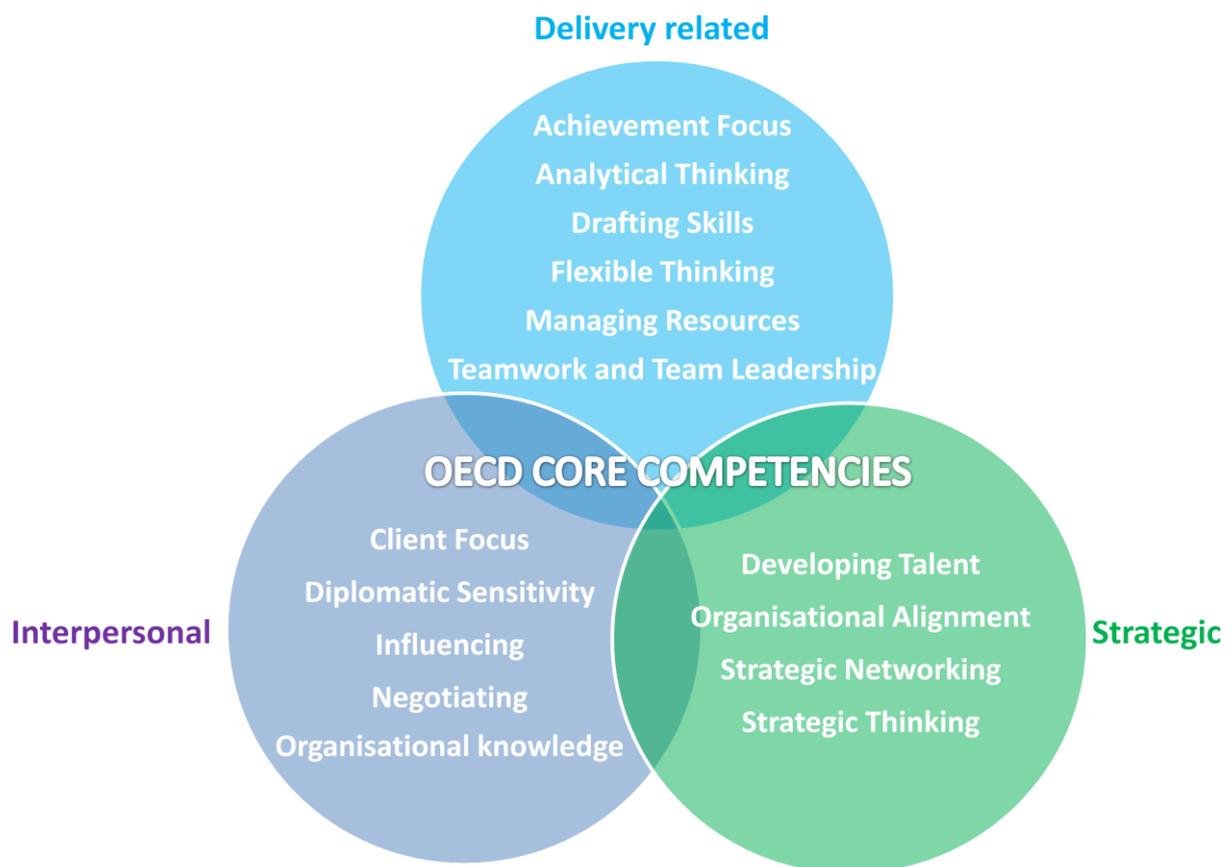
The OECD Competency framework comprises **core competencies** which are presented in three clusters as shown below. The blue cluster groups the delivery related competencies, the purple has interpersonal competencies and green relates to strategic competencies.

Delivery related

Achievement Focus
Analytical Thinking
Drafting Skills
Flexible Thinking
Managing Resources
Teamwork and Team Leadership

OECD CORE COMPETENCIES

Interpersonal

Client Focus
Diplomatic Sensitivity
Influencing
Negotiating
Organisational knowledge

Strategic

Developing Talent
Organisational Alignment
Strategic Networking
Strategic Thinking

WHAT ARE CORE COMPETENCIES?

Core Competencies can be defined as personal attributes or underlining characteristics, which combined with technical or professional skills, enable the delivery of a role/job. Competencies state the expected areas and levels of performance, tell us what is valued and rewarded.

Other factors such as personal values, motivation and type of work also play their part in job performance that are likely to feature in discussions between staff and managers.

The Core Competencies do not define our technical roles and accountabilities, nor does it include the technical skills necessary to do our jobs. These are found in the Technical competency section, many of which have been or are in the process of being developed for each job family.

The OECD Core Competencies are an outline which is consistent across the organisation and helps identify the types of behaviours the Organisation wishes to promote, develop and is keen to engender.

Each of the core competencies has the following components:

- **Competency definition -** explains what the core competency means. For example: Influencing is described as - *an intention to convince others in an honest, respectful and sensitive manner in order to get them to go along with one's objectives, or the desire to have a specific impact or effect on others.*

- **Behavioural indicators** - are examples that indicate how an individual can demonstrate that competency. Behaviour indicators are designed to show what effective performance looks like. All indicators are not always all applicable to a job role.

- **Competency levels - e**ach competency also has five levels*, attached to the current grading structure for a matter of clarity - which make using the behavioural indicators simple.

  The levels allow us to be quite specific in determining what is required for a given role or situation, allowing us to clearly focus our discussions and development efforts for the greatest improvement in performance.

  *Some levels include more than one grade. In such a case, the level of competency described reflects the upper end of the grade.

The following pages set out all fifteen of the competencies and the behaviours expected at each level.

Title: Analytical Thinking

Description: *Analytical Thinking* is the ability to identify patterns between situations that are not obviously related and to identify key or underlying issues in complex situations.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Is sought by others for advice and solutions to make best interpretation and usage of information • Discerns the level of importance to apply in each aspect of the analysis in relation to the broader context.
4	A4	• Develops conceptual frameworks that guide analysis • Draws sound conclusions based upon a mixture of analysis and experience.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Independently engages in tasks requiring interpretation of complex and often vague sets of information. • Identifies gaps in information and makes assumptions in order to continue the analysis and/or take action. • Seeks for a wide range of sources of information.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Identifies critical connections and patterns in information/data. • Analyses soundly verbal and numerical data • Recognises causes and consequences of actions and events that are not readily apparent. • Anticipates and thinks ahead about next steps.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Distinguishes between critical and irrelevant pieces of information. • Gathers input / information from a few different sources to reach a conclusion.

Title: Flexible Thinking

Description: *Flexible Thinking* involves the ability to adapt to a variety of situations, individuals or groups effectively. It is based on the ability to understand and appreciate different and opposing perspectives on an issue, to adapt an approach as the requirements of a situation change, and to change or easily accept changes in one's own organisation or job requirements.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Is intellectually agile in response to challenges of internal and external environments; • Solicits ideas and responds positively to those from staff, committees and Secretary-General.
4	A4	• Contributes to shaping business practices and policies • Shares new ideas and perspectives to adjust business strategies • Encourages others to see the positive outcome of doing things differently
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Seeks for best practices inside and outside the Organisation to anticipate change • Stays open-minded and encourages others to bring new perspectives.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Anticipates having to adapt work methods to changing technology and environment • Considers problems from all new perspectives and can expand on the thinking or solutions proposed by others. • Adapts to new ideas and initiatives relevant to own area of work • Understands and promotes the Organisation's business needs and policies for introducing change
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Proposes ways to do things differently. • Understands and recognizes the value of other points of view and ways of doing things. • Displays a positive attitude in the face of ambiguity and change.

Title: Managing Resources

Description: *Managing resources* is about understanding human, financial, and operational resource issues to make decisions aimed at building efficient project workflows and planning and overall organizational performance.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Set and redefines priorities and reorganizes staff to increase the group's response capacity to internal and external demands. • Evaluates financial impacts of decisions and develops strategies to address financial resource issues.
4	A4	• Advises and/or develops practical solutions to address resource issues that impact on the effectiveness of a team/project/ work and the work to be delivered. • Allocates and controls financial resources within own area consistent with goals, priorities and budget. • Organises people and activities, separates and combines tasks into an efficient work flow to deliver project outputs according to clear timeframe.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Allocates and controls resources within own area of responsibility / scope of assignment. • Identifies needs for resources to effectively support current initiatives, services and offerings. • Manages assignments delivery process and deadlines.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Manages the allocation of resources in relation to business needs • Manages the work plan, sets timelines, sets milestones and involves stakeholders to deliver on time • Provides advice on procedures and the use of financial resources
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Organises the use of resources to meet expectations and identifies difficulties • Plans, coordinates and manages internal and external resources to accomplish assignments within the given deadlines.

Title: Teamwork and Team Leadership

Description: *Teamwork and Team Leadership* implies working cooperatively with others, be a part of a team, and assume the role of leader of a team. In OECD, people work not only with their own teams but also with teams and groups across and outside of the Organisation. Therefore they need to work effectively together with interdependent goals, common values and norms to foster a collaborative environment and drive teams in the same direction.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Makes team assignments within and outside the Division/Directorate to facilitate horizontal work • Delegates authority to match responsibility, and holds staff accountable for agreed upon commitments. • Appropriately involves others in decisions and plans that affect them • Promotes group morale and productivity by being clear about output expectations • Sees arising conflict and takes action at Division/ Directorate/ Organisation level
4	A4	• Provides clear direction and priorities to teams • Delegates responsibility to individuals to make them accountable for successful execution • Organises teamwork to encourage cooperation and bring together complementary skills/expertise • Credits individual contributions/acknowledges team accomplishments • Facilitates the discussion and resolution of conflicts or disagreement • Encourages and values teams' input
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Assumes accountability for work delegated to others (peers, team members, experts, etc.) • Seeks to work with teams with complementary skills/expertise • Encourage people with opposing viewpoints to express their concerns • Resolves conflict among team members sensitively and fairly
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Supports others in taking independent action • Resolves issues that occur with minimal direction • Invites and builds upon the ideas of others • Assumes additional responsibilities to facilitate the achievement of team goals
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Initiates collaboration with others and spontaneously assists others in the delivery of their work. • Shares all relevant information with others and seeks for others' input. • Expresses own opinion while remaining factual and respectful

Title: Drafting Skills

Description: *Drafting Skills* are based on the ability to communicate respectfully ideas and information (often very technical) in writing to ensure that information and messages are understood and have the desired impact.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Handles strategic written communication for the Organisation • Reviews complex and/or sensitive work carried out identifying the impact for the Organisation
4	A4	• Transforms technical information to engage a non-specialist audience • Tailors the communication to the reader and to the context to positively influence policies, reforms, and directions. • Edits work delegated to others
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Writes on complex and highly specialised issues • Conveys critical nuances and qualifiers to facilitate complete understanding of the material.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Writes information in a logical and comprehensive, yet concise manner. • Combines information from various sources in a concise and consistent manner • Makes sound use of graphics, tables, to effectively present numerical data
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Tailors communication (e.g. content, style and medium) to diverse audiences. • Writes and presents factual material clearly

Title: Achievement focus

Description: *Achievement focus* is generating results by assuming responsibility for one's performance and the correctness of one's interventions, recognising opportunities and acting efficiently, at the appropriate moment and within the given deadlines.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Assesses group performance against goals and identifies areas for improvement. • Translates business opportunities into concrete measures that are beneficial for the Organisation • Dares to take calculated risks in order to let the business develop positively
4	A4	• Sets challenging goals for his/her area of responsibility in relation to business opportunities • Measures the risks involved while taking a course of action • Engage in action at the right time and to achieve results.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Identifies needed adjustments in own area of responsibility and sets priorities accordingly • Considers the implication of proposed course of actions • Takes new initiatives aiming at improving team performance
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Demonstrates ability of challenging existing ways of doing to be more effective • Contributes to improvements in work methods and outcomes and team performance. • Generate results by acting in a focused way and within the deadlines, and find ways to go around obstacles with minimum guidance • Makes efforts to optimise process workflows efficiency using technology
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Defines ambitious, but realistic, personal goals • Works to meet high quality and performance standards. • Promptly and efficiently completes work assignments.

Title: Client Focus

Description: *Client Focus* is based on the ability to understand internal/external clients (e.g. Committees, working groups, country representatives, etc.,) needs and concerns in the short to long-term and to provide sound recommendations/solutions

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Builds client's confidence using own personal reputation in the international community and expertise. • Knows when it is appropriate to push clients to consider difficult issues and acts accordingly. • Determines strategic direction and long-term opportunities to best meet clients' evolving needs. • Monitors, evaluates and, as needed, renews the client service model and service standards.
4	A4	• Acts as a seasoned advisor, providing independent opinions on complex client problems and novel initiatives, and assists with handling priority issues. • Gives the client constructive feedback about issues/problems encountered • Advocates on behalf of clients to more senior management, identifying approaches that meet clients' needs as well as those of the Organisation.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Pulls together aspects of a trend or policy into a clear picture for others to understand • Looks for ways to add value beyond clients' immediate requests and act on them. • Anticipates clients' upcoming needs and concerns. • Explores and addresses the long-term client needs.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Follows up with clients during and after delivery of services to ensure that their needs have been met. • Keeps clients up-to-date on the progress of the service they are receiving and changes that affect them. • Ensures service is provided to clients during critical periods. • Prioritises clients' issues and address them accordingly
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Responds to and anticipates client needs in a timely, professional, helpful and courteous manner, regardless of client attitude. • Clearly shows clients that their perspectives are valued. • Strives to consistently meet service standards.

Title: Influencing

Description: *Influencing* implies an intention to convince others in an honest, respectful and sensitive manner in order to get them to go along with one's objectives, or the desire to have a specific impact or effect on others.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Handles strategic communication issues for the Organisation in highly exposed situations • Handles difficult on-the-spot questions (e.g. from senior executives, public officials, interest groups, or the media). • Anticipates and builds on others' reactions to keep momentum and support for an approach. • Uses experts or other third parties to influence (e.g. takes multiple different actions to make staged arguments, assembles political coalitions, building "behind-the-scenes" support for ideas). • Takes a well thought-out impactful action to win the point or reach an agreement.
4	A4	• Communicates complex issues clearly and credibly with widely varied audiences. • Scans the environment for key information and messages to form the development of communication strategies • Uses situations (e.g. the setting, persons present, sequence of events) to create a desired impact and to maximise the chances of a favourable outcome.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Uses compelling argumentation to convey its conclusions and ideas • Understands others' complex or underlying needs, motivations, emotions or concerns and adjusts communication effectively.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Persuades by using concrete examples to make a point. • Recalls others' main points and takes them into account in own communication. • Reads cues from diverse listeners to assess when and how to change planned communication approach to effectively deliver message.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Checks own understanding of others' communication (e.g. paraphrases, asks questions). • Maintains continuous, open and consistent communication with others. • Builds on successful initiatives to gain support for ideas. • Adapts arguments to others' needs/interests.

Title: Diplomatic Sensitivity

Description: *Diplomatic Sensitivity* implies understanding other people. It includes the ability to hear accurately and understand unspoken, partly expressed thoughts, feelings and concerns of others. Included in this competency is an emphasis on cross cultural sensitivity. Proficiency in *Diplomatic Sensitivity* requires the ability to keep one's emotions under control and restrain negative actions when faced with opposition or hostility from others or when working under stress.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Makes one's case, especially when dealing with the highest level of government officials, with tact • Knows when to draw a firm line and when to accommodate. • Accurately hears and understands the unspoken thoughts or feelings of others and acts purposefully
5	A4	• Identifies and responds to underlying attitudes or behaviour patterns such as cultural norms or personality differences. • Phrases ideas in a way that avoids negative reactions (internally as well as externally). • Reacts purposefully to frustrations
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Maintains objectivity when one's own positions or opinions are challenged by peers or stakeholders. • Encourages others to contribute by overcoming cultural barriers and background differences • Remains objective when facing criticism
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Listens actively, considers people's concerns and adjusts own behaviour in a helpful manner, understands the reason behind, or motivation for someone's actions.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Is attentive when doing projects, assignments or interacting with people from different countries and backgrounds • Expresses negative feelings constructively

Title: Organisational Knowledge

Description: *Organisational Knowledge* is the ability to understand the power relationships within the Organisation and with other organisations. It includes the ability to understand the formal rules and structures including the ability to identify who the real decision makers are as well as the individuals who can influence them.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Uses knowledge of corporate politics to handle complex situations effectively and with discretion. • Understands the nature and limits of related organisations and government agencies, and uses that knowledge to influence and lead. • Takes ownership of compliance/ethic/other issues in order to protect the Organisation's reputation and respect its obligations.
4	A4	• Based on knowledge of the Organisation's governance, rules, structures and people recognises the opportune time for action, having positioned all key elements to maximise the probability of success. • Manages compliance/ethic/other issues to protect the Organisation's reputation and respect its obligations.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Anticipates outcomes based on an understanding of organisational decision making bodies and power relationships. • Promotes and encourages others to keep up to date with the Organisation's rules, structures, decision making bodies, networks, power relationships and environment
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Seeks to understand and raises awareness of the Organisation's decision making bodies and power relationships. • Shares knowledge about and encourages others to keep up to date with the Organisation's rules, structures, networks, systems and environment. • Recognises what is and is not acceptable / possible at certain times given the Organisational rules, structures, decision making bodies, power relationships, code of conduct, values. • Raises compliance/ethic/other issues to protect the Organisation's reputation and obligations.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Demonstrates understanding of the general environment in which the Organisation operates. • Understands and uses the Organisation's structures, rules and networks. • Knows and respects the Organisation's code of conduct and values.

Title: Negotiating

Description: *Negotiating* involves the ability to work toward win-win outcomes. As its lower levels, this competency assumes an understanding of one's counterparts and how to respond them during negotiations. At the higher levels, the competency reflects a focus to achieve valued-added results.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Constructively works towards a win-win solution during negotiations. • Explores creative solution with others to overcome antagonism and to develop partnership • Successfully leads negotiations with strong impact on his entity • Demonstrates more than one preferred negotiating style (competing, cooperative, avoiding, compromise, accommodating and adapts according to the counterpart and context • Demonstrates an ability to step back when necessary from the negotiation process while staying focused on the objective
4	A4	• Prepares and effectively runs negotiating meetings to achieve a specific objective • Negotiates in a constructive manner when tackling difficult issues. • Makes realistic compromises during negotiations. • Maintains an objective non-emotional distance from the interpersonal conflicts or arguments that arise during negotiations • Focuses on achieving value-added results during negotiations
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Identifies minimal or ideal conditions of the others during negotiations. • Negotiates based on first hand observations and information collected from both sides avoiding using hearsay or personal opinions.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Identifies main negotiating points of a given issue and engages in negotiation. • Listens to differing points of view and promotes mutual understanding.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	

Title: Strategic Networking

Description: *Strategic Networking* involves working to build and maintain friendly, trustworthy, open internal and external relationships or networks of contacts with people who are or might become important actors in *achieving strategic* related goals.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Manages relationships among key outside organisations and government entities to create long-range opportunities • Utilises established network of relationships to seek information of strategic importance and to seek a position of influence in key forums.
4	A4	• Actively and continuously expands own network to meet strategic goals. • Identifies and creates opportunities to initiate new partnerships that will facilitate the achievement of strategic goals.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Evaluates current network for effectiveness and relevance to achieving strategic objectives within own area. • Identifies and creates opportunities to initiate new connections that will facilitate the achievement of strategic goals within own area.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Actively nurtures existing both formal and informal contacts to facilitate the progress of work by proactively sharing information, best practices and respective interests and areas of expertise. • Identifies current or past contacts that can provide work-related information or assistance.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Fosters two-way trust in dealing with contacts (e.g. maintains confidentiality regarding sensitive information).

Title: Strategic Thinking

Description: *Strategic Thinking* is the ability to develop a broad, big-picture view of the Organisation and its mission. Competitive advantages and threats, industry trends, emerging technology, market opportunities, stakeholder focus – strategic thinking is where it all comes together. Strategic thinking keeps individuals and groups focused and helps decide where to invest critical resources. It includes the ability to link long-range visions and concepts to daily work.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	**A5-A7**	• Understanding the position of the OECD in the larger world context; conveys a thorough understanding of the Organisation/ Directorate/Division area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats; identifies competitive differentiators • Considers the bigger picture while setting priorities and the way forward
4	**A4**	• Identifies and considers emerging business opportunities and risks when articulating new options and recommendations • Maintains a broad, strategic perspective while identifying and focusing on crucial details.
3	**A1-A3** **L1-L3**	• Demonstrates awareness of the impact of own work on aspects of organisational strategy and the impact of organisational strategy on own work. • Identifies implications of own analysis (e.g. potential impact on certain stakeholders).
2	**B4-B6** **C5-C6**	• Identifies new information or data to key decision makers or stakeholders to support their understanding and decisions
1	**B1-B3** **C1-C4**	

Title: Developing Talent

Description: *Developing Talent* means fostering an environment that will encourage professional and personal growth and the transfer of knowledge to future talent.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	• Delegates authority and responsibility with the latitude to do a task in their own way and encourages others to take the lead and learn new skills • Promotes sharing of expertise and supports learning opportunities across the Division/Directorate/Organisation • Develops a common understanding and is transparent about staff potential to take over new responsibilities • Sets an example for staff development in the Division/Directorate/Organisation • Encourages others to develop their people through development dialogues and action plans
4	A4	• Assembles teams with complementary skills and promotes the expectation that they will learn from one another. • Identifies and plans learning, targeted to specific developmental needs in current position. • Encourages others to take on new responsibilities in order to support professional development. • Gives feedback that is constructive and precise based on facts and behavioural patterns observed and gives individualised suggestions for improvement.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	• Helps others learn from experience and development initiatives. Recommends readings, trainings and other resources • Continually acquires and applies new knowledge and learning to improve job performance. • Provides constructive feedback to others
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	• Actively shares knowledge among peers or offers advice to less experienced colleagues. • Self-assesses against standards for current position to identify learning needs. • Effectively transfers acquired knowledge and expertise. • Demonstrates initiative in developing self professionally
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	• Takes advantage of learning opportunities provided (e.g. courses, feedback from supervisor or peers) to meet requirements of current job. • Sets clear self-development expectations

Title: Organisational Alignment

Description: *Organisational Alignment* is the ability and willingness to align one's own behaviour with needs, priorities, and goals of the Organisation, and to act in ways that promote the Organisation's goals or meet organisational needs. *Organisational Alignment* means focusing on the Organisation's mission before one's own preferences or professional priorities.

Levels	Grades	Key Indicators
5	A5-A7	- Uses a variety of vehicles to communicate the Organisation's needs and strategic directions. - Develops a strategic direction for its entity consistent with its role in the success of the Organisation - Ensures the initiatives and priorities in its area are integrated with one another and aligned with the strategic priorities of the broader Organisation - Aligns people, processes and structures with strategic direction and Organisational needs
4	A4	- Promotes a shared understanding of the Organisation's needs and strategic direction to rally teams. - Develops and implements projects/programs and processes aligned with the strategic direction and needs.
3	A1-A3 L1-L3	- Keeps aware of the organisational objectives and monitors current developments and trends that may affect implementation of organisational direction, programs or plans. - Helps others understand the strategic goals of the Organisation and how their work relates to it.
2	B4-B6 C5-C6	- Demonstrates awareness of Organisation's priorities as they relate to own area of work. - Explains and convinces others of the need for adaptation and change of policies, structures, methods.
1	B1-B3 C1-C4	- Explains the role and goals of the Organisation and how they relate to own area of work. - Demonstrates awareness of the relationship of own work to the work of their Organisation.