



# Competency-based Selection Presentation to MMMA 3.18.10

Example from City of Newton Public Works  
Commissioner Search Fall 2007

Presented by Sandy Pooler



# Agenda

- What is competency based selection?
- Why would we want to use this type of process?
- What is a competency model?
- How do we develop a competency model?
- Interview Process.



# Competency-based Selection

- Job description completed
- Competencies defined for the job – for today and tomorrow
- Key competencies identified to target in the selection process
- Questions focus on specific situations to assess behaviors identified in the competency model
- The situations relate to successful performance on the job from actual work life.
- It reflects what the candidate actually “did” versus his/her opinion
- It is more valid (how accurately the system predicts performance on the job) and reliable (how consistent the results are over time on a wide range of people).



# Traditional vs. Competency-based Questions

## Traditional

- What are your current job responsibilities?
- How do you make decisions?
- These questions often do not involve probing questions that yield further information about the reasons “why” a candidate responded as he did.

## Competency-based

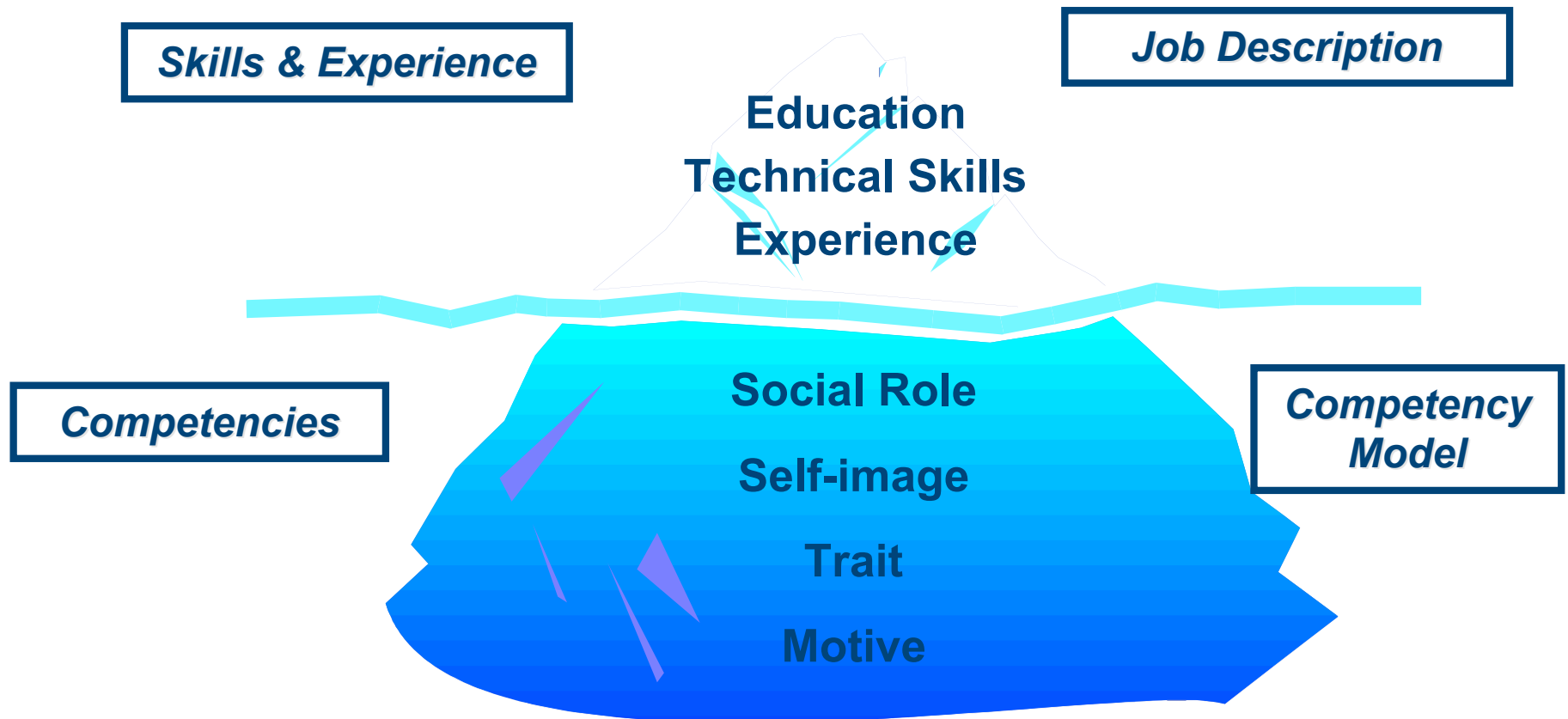
- Tell me about a time when you dealt with an angry citizen.
- Describe a situation when you were very successful in your job?
- The competency-based questions focus on specific situations to assess behaviors in the competency model. The interviewer is looking for examples of what the candidate did, thought, felt, etc. and the results



# Benefits

- Strong compliance with the uniform guidelines.
- Candidates response are drawn from actual work life and not opinion
- Focus is on a candidates behavior.
- Process is based on job description, analysis, and competencies.
- Better trained interviewers.

# Competency Model





# What is a Competency Model?

A *competency* is a personal characteristic that enables employees to demonstrate critical behaviors: in more situations, at higher levels, and with better results.

Competency models provide a catalog of the ideal traits desired by the organization, for a given job, which in turn become the key attributes to be developed.

It is important to remember that competency models represent the *ideal*.



# What is a Competency Model?

**Skills** – are things that people can do well for example word processing

**Knowledge** – is what a person knows about a specific topic for example  
– city ordinances

**Social role** – is the image that one displays in public and represents what s/he thinks is important. It reflects the values of the person.

**Self-image** – is the view people have of themselves. It reflects their identity.

**Traits** – are habitual behaviors by which we recognize people and reflect the way in which others describe people, e.g. she is reliable.

**Motives** – are unconscious thoughts and preferences which drive behavior, e.g. achievement, affiliation, and power



# Creating a competency model

- Assemble a group of people who understand the job as defined in the job description:
- Using the competency methodology identify the following
  - Essential or Mission Critical competencies
  - Nice to Have or Useful
  - Not Important or Least
- Agree on 5-10 competencies.
- Develop questions for review and edit and ultimately approval.
- Assign questions to each member of the interview team so all candidates are asked the same questions.



# Sample Competencies Examples

1. Action Oriented
2. Approachability
3. Boss Relations
4. Building Effective Teams
5. Career Ambition
6. Caring about Direct Reports
7. Comfort Around Top Management
8. Command Skills
9. Compassion
10. Composure
11. Conflict Management



# The Interview Process

- Introduce interview team members.
- Start with an open question.
- Each team member then asks his/her question(s), so all candidates are asked the same questions.
- Fill in evaluation sheets and score each candidate.
- Allow candidate to ask question(s) at the end.
- Interview will last about 50 minutes.



# Rating Sheet

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Rating scale: 1. Exceptional                      2. Meets our needs                      3. Does not meet our needs

Competencies	Behaviors	Rating	Notes
<i>Savvy: Interpersonal and Political</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Builds constructive and effective relationships using formal and informal organizations</li> <li>• Listens well</li> <li>• Relates well to all kinds of people, including inside and outside the organization</li> <li>• Sensitive to how people and organizations function</li> <li>• Ability to diffuse high-tension situations comfortably</li> </ul>		

Rating scale: 1. Exceptional                      2. Meets our needs                      3. Does not meet our needs

Competencies	Behaviors	Rating	Notes
<i>Action Oriented</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively seeks out opportunities to develop and offer new services</li> <li>• Stays abreast of government and market information that may indicate opportunities for new services</li> <li>• Takes calculated risks</li> <li>• Adopts a “lets get it done” attitude</li> </ul>		