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***“Raising the Bar” for HR***  
***Hiring Practices and Competency Profiles***

**Presented by**

***Terrence A.F. Whyte, B.A., LL.B., CHRP***  
***Templeman Consulting Group Inc.***  
**115 Clarence Street**  
**Kingston, Ontario K7L 5N6**  
**Tel: 613-542-1734**  
**Fax: 613-542-8202**  
**Toll Free: 1-888-606-TCGI (8244)**

**and**

***Templeman Menninga LLP***  
**205 Dundas Street East, Suite 200**  
**P.O. Box 234**  
**Belleville, Ontario**  
**Tel: 613-966-2620**  
**Fax: 613-966-2866**

# **“RAISING THE BAR” FOR HR HIRING PRACTICES & COMPETENCY PROFILES**

## ***Introduction***

- Focus on techniques and methods which provide organizations with the means to effectively select and retain employees that will meet and adapt to changing business demands
- Integration of the selection and performance management methodologies promotes consistency and fairness across the organization
  - Selection and performance managements techniques are based on similar performance standards and criteria
  - Fosters a clearer understanding at both the management and staff level
- Use of Competency-based selection and evaluation methods provides more meaningful outcomes
  - candidate/employee focused within the context of the position responsibilities.
  - directly linked to organizational goals and objectives
  - measurable and actionable

Our objective today is to provide an overview of the systems we have developed and which have proven to enhance our clients’ abilities to effectively select appropriate personnel and, once in place, continue to motivate, reward and develop those employees to meet the demands of the changing business environment. The obvious starting point is to hire the right employees in the first place.

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## ***Search and Recruitment***

Borrowing a statement from our Strategic Planning program

***“If you always do what you’ve always done  
You’ll always get what you always got.”***

When examining the competencies and qualities needed to fill a position, whether due to expansion, restructuring or employee leaving, it is important to consider both the current and future environment. Too often, the ad goes out, or the posting goes up and it mirrors exactly what was previously in place or the traditionally held industry-wide standard.....

- Evaluate the current and future requirements for the position, within the context of the environment within which it will operate.
- Outline the responsibilities and performance standards for the position – state in behavioural terms

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- Define the educational and experiential criteria for the position based on the specified responsibilities and performance standards – mandatory and wish list
- Determine whether to use Internal vs. External
  - Internal recruitment highly desirable whenever feasible
    - Provides career advancement opportunities for existing staff
    - Internal resources already possess knowledge of the business and its clients/ customers – less start-up time required
    - Demonstrates organization’s commitment to and respect for the employee population
  - Determine whether sufficient potentially suitable internal candidates exist to warrant an internal search – Interest levels of those candidates
  - Consider conducting a combined Internal/External recruitment
- If external, identify the target search markets and the most effective means for penetrating and promoting to those markets
  - Newspaper advertising
  - Professional associations newsletters/web sites
  - Trade magazines advertising
  - Human Resources Development Canada postings/web site
  - Networking
  - Community agencies, associations and service organizations
  - Current employees
  - **TCGI** web site

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### ***Candidate Recruiting and Evaluation Methodology (REM)***

#### ***Why use Competency-Based evaluation techniques?***

- Once hired, normally 3 up to 12 months will elapse before the individual has reached an acceptable level of competence and productivity within the position

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- Essential that appropriate emphasis and effort is placed on selecting an individual who has the greatest likelihood of ongoing success and achievement in the target position
  - Use of an appropriate candidate selection method is central to the success of the recruiting effort
  - Important to assess both the theoretical knowledge and their demonstrated ability to apply that knowledge – Determine the degree to which the skills and knowledge are transferable
  - Emphasis should be placed on an evaluation of the candidate’s skills and abilities to fulfill the duties of the target position, not necessarily what has been their experience in prior positions
  - Use of a competency-based evaluation method focuses on observable and measurable skills and behaviours displayed by the candidate.
  - The structure presented by the REM ensures that applicants are evaluated in a highly objective, equitable and quantifiable manner
  - Promotes consistency throughout all phases of the recruiting effort
  - Opportunities for evaluator subjectivity are reduced to a minimum, therefore hiring decisions are readily justified and defensible to challenge
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### ***Core Competency Analysis***

- Outlines examples of skills, behaviours and qualities consistent with proficiency in each of the core competency categories
- Each position draws upon and requires a level of expertise in any of up to 11 competency areas.
- Selection of and ranking the core competencies in order of importance provides the ability to place appropriate emphasis on those skills and abilities that are most critical to the target position.

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## **HIRING PRACTICES & COMPETENCY PROFILES**

### **Core Competencies:**

#### **1. Leadership and Change Management**

- Translates organizational vision into achievable incremental phases
- Uses Personal (vs. Positional) power to influence others
- Innovates and challenges the status quo
- Serves as a positive role model to others – internally and externally

#### **2. Planning / Risk Assessment and Management**

- Develops, implements and integrates appropriate business planning models
  - Operational (short term)
  - Tactical (medium term)
  - Strategic (longer term - directional)
- Conducts organizational reviews and evaluations and identifies
  - areas of risk to the organization and/or its operational units
  - areas of strength and weakness of the human, financial and technological resources of the organization
- Assesses risk – short term vs. long term and appropriately balances the trade-offs of each
- Formulates risk management plan addressing organization-wide and divisional issues

#### **3. Management and Supervision**

- Comprised of the more traditional behaviours and skills commonly linked to getting work done through the active support of others
- Planning, delegating, reviewing, motivating, assessing, taking disciplinary action.

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- Organization and assignment of work, reviews and follow-up
4. **Subject Matter Expertise**
- Represents the position-specific knowledge and skills required of the job – Technical aspects and their application
  - Important to determine not only if the knowledge is present, but also if the candidate has the ability to appropriately apply that knowledge and expertise within the target work environment
  - Interprets technical and/or legislative directives on behalf of the organization
5. **Project Management**
- Ability to differentiate between project and traditional management and the unique challenges that are present in a project environment
  - Projects are time-bound and have a defined deliverable for completion
  - Often the human resources allocated are part-time, and have no direct reporting relationship to the project manager – conflicting priorities arise
  - Emphasis is on effectively planning, monitoring and controlling project resources and milestone deliverables.
6. **Team Coordination and Leadership**
- Demonstration of particular behaviours that promote a sense of team and unity within the group
  - Focuses the group on the common objective
  - Facilitates individual team member’s understanding of the value of their contribution to the overall goal
  - Identifies linkages and interdependencies between team members and the respective impacts of their activities on others

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**Situational Analysis**

- Demonstration of ability to apply Critical Thinking and Analysis techniques to resolve problems and implement new methods and practices
- Defines the issue/situation, analyzes, develops alternatives with associated outcomes and determines the best option given the organizational environment and resources
- Evaluates the recommended course of action and develops a decisive implementation plan

**8. Communications**

- Demonstrates abilities to embody clarity, value and precision in written and verbal exchanges
- Identifies and applies the appropriate communication strategy for the target recipient(s)
- Tailors the content to meet the needs of the target audience
- Checks for understanding

**9. Interpersonal**

- Knowledge and application of techniques and methods which promote positive interrelations and strengthen relationships with others in a variety of situations
- Is sensitive and responds to the unique qualities and needs of others
- Demonstrates consistency, fairness and objectivity in dealings with others
- Seeks and draws upon the strengths of others

**10. Organization and Coordination**

- Demonstration of the ability to effectively manage and complete one’s personal work assignments – Personal Time Management

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- Evaluates the work effort and assigns priorities
- Sets achievable personal goals and objectives
- Is proactive in the resolution of conflicting priorities through the development of alternatives
- Seeks out and recommends opportunities to improve service delivery in area

**11. Administration**

- Demonstration of the ability to get the “paper work” done in a timely and accurate fashion
  - Internal and external correspondence, budget creation and monitoring, data files creation and maintenance, timely generation and distribution of meaningful reports (periodic and one-off), completion of required documentation to ensure adequate paper trail
  - Through the definition of the specific requirements and responsibilities of the target position and the determination of the relative ranking and weight assigned to each of the core competencies, the employer arrives at a customized structure that is tailored to the particular characteristics of both the position and the organization.
  - The central premise of this competency-based recruiting and evaluation methodology lies in the degree to which the candidate displays and/or espouses skills and behaviours that are consistent with those associated within each of the Core Competency areas selected for the target position
  - Candidates are then evaluated and assigned scores based on their performance in each of the Assessment Components within the context of the individualized Competency Rank Order and Weightings for the target position.
  - Ensures that the appropriate emphasis continues to be placed on those skills and qualities that are of the highest priority throughout the evaluation process
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### **Preliminary Interview**

- Provides selection committee members with opportunity to clarify and confirm particulars in candidates application package
- In addition, committee members are able to formulate an initial assessment of potential fit within the organization
- Generally short – up to 1 hour in duration
- Results in the development of a short-list of those applicants who will continue on to the comprehensive phases of evaluation

### **Written Assignment/Oral Presentation**

- Generally used when seeking to fill senior, managerial, professional and/or specialist level positions
- Designed to assess candidate’s ability to interpret, research and develop an appropriate written response to a position-specific question  
*(Based on a current topical situation or philosophical in nature requiring candidate to comment on their position with respect to a particular issue)*
- Candidates then provide a brief presentation and/or discussion of their response at the time of the comprehensive interview
- Inclusion of the written assignment and oral presentation further adds to the totality of the evaluation process

### **Comprehensive Interview/Compilation and Analysis of Evaluation Scoring**

- Interview questions are developed to measure the candidate’s skills and abilities within the core competencies identified for the target position
- Questions are designed not only to test the applicant’s knowledge and skills in various areas, but also to examine how that knowledge and those skills have been / would be applied in a variety of

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practical situations

- Interview committee members assess and rate the candidate’s responses within the Core Competency areas assigned to each of the questions using a standardized scoring scale
  - Lacking 1-4
  - Adequate 6-9
  - Meets More and/or All Expectations 11-15
- When results of the interviews are calculated, the rankings of candidates will be relatively consistent among interviewers
- Given the highly quantitative approach used, specific interviewer biases are readily identifiable as are particular scoring anomalies – Corrective measures can then be implemented
- In general, the score resulting from the Comprehensive Interview will represent 50% or more of the overall candidate score

### **Practical Assignment/Skills Assessment**

- Generally included when seeking to fill positions requiring the regular application of “hands-skills”, usually associated with administrative support, financial or technical roles
- Candidate required to complete and submit their work in response to a practical assignment or skills test
- Normally completed immediately after the Comprehensive Interview
- Conducted within a controlled environment and having a set time limit

### **Reference Checking**

- Permission to contact specified references must be obtained from candidate(s)
- Specific consideration must be given to the privacy and common-law environment within which the business operates

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- Focus on specific behaviours; attempt to gain information concerning the degree to which the candidate performed the duties of their former position in accordance with the stated performance objectives and standards
- Do not be surprised if the reference merely confirms the position title and length of service with the former organization

**Supplementary Specialized Testing**

- Variety of specialized testing tools available
  - Aptitude
  - Vocational Interests
  - Personality / Emotional Quotient
- Provide the opportunity to further examine the candidate’s suitability, adaptability and ability to fulfil the responsibilities of the target position
- Cost of these testing tools is a factor in determining the value of inclusion within the evaluation process
- Can provide further reinforcement for, and confidence in, the recommended candidate

**Consolidation of Results and Presentation of Job Offer**

- Results of all selected evaluation and assessment components should be consolidated and summarized, clearly identifying the outcomes of each of the evaluation phases
- Verify that the forerunner / desired candidate has met the minimum scoring thresholds for any applicable assessment components
- Develop job offer documentation (Employment Contract, Offer Letter of Employment, Contract for Services) which meets all organization standards and practices as well as legal requirements
- Present and discuss job offer with candidate and reach agreement on the terms and conditions of employment – Establish if there is any room for negotiation prior to presenting the offer
- Notify unsuccessful candidates