

National Council Competencies

What is a competency?

Competencies are sets of defined behaviors that, when measured, indicate how well an individual will perform in their role. They can be used to measure performance as well as to develop, recruit and select team members.

How did we come up with these competencies?

Phi Mu contracted Erin Fischer, CEO and Owner of The Leadership and Training Studio and a Phi Mu alumna, to help us with this work. Erin's team researched and created a list of 32 different competencies needed to be successful in the role. They then defined those competencies for a group of staff, volunteers, current and past National Council members to sort and prioritize.

National Council Competencies:

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Decision Quality
- Establish Priorities
- Inclusiveness
- Integrity
- Learner
- Perspective
- Purpose/Vision/Goal Setting

Adaptability

- Are steadfast in their goals, yet flexible in their approach.
- Try new ideas or strategies to accomplish something.
- Practice emotional tolerance and mental fortitude.
- Experiment with new ideas, new concepts and new ways of thinking.
- Let go of what they once believed to be “right” in order to pursue the “new right.”
- Are resourceful.
- Set a vision rather than rigid expectations.
- Expect change, movement, alterations and modifications.
- Are curious.
- Accept multiple perspectives.

Collaboration

- State the purpose and the “why” of the work at hand.
- Allow the team to openly share ideas, thoughts, views and opinions.
- Connect people and resources to achieve objectives.
- Empower others to achieve results.
- Include collaborators in the decision-making process.
- Are curious, interested, inquisitive and ask questions.
- Actively listen to others.
- Seek out diverse perspectives and opinions.
- Help their teams establish ground rules for how they will work together.
- Guide their group to decision and action.

Communication

- Use stories, images and descriptions to bring ideas to life.
- Speak well, and avoid filler words (i.e., um, yeah, so, etc.).
- Write personal and professional messages that are thorough and concise.
- Listen. Then, listen some more.
- Speak with a purpose and have a clear vision of their end goal.
- Use their words to inspire others to act.
- Practice self-awareness when communicating messages.

Decision Quality

- Define the issue to be solved and all the steps required to make a sound decision.
- Determine and weigh all the options.
- Consider both short-term outcomes and long-term consequences (good and bad) for their decisions.
- Collaborate with others to collect the best ideas instead of making decisions on their own.
- Consider the opposite point of view and the value of that vantage point.
- Think about plans B and C in addition to plan A.
- Step away from a decision to discover potential blind spots.



- Play the devil’s advocate to examine their initial thoughts and ideas.
- Concern themselves with the greater good.

Establish Priorities

- Create a vision and goals for their work.
- Share their vision and goals with team members.
- Set expectations, timelines, deadlines and priorities with team members.
- Take on the grueling and arduous tasks at the top of each day.
- Plan for interruptions and missteps.
- Start with the end in mind. Consider what success looks and feels like when the work is complete.
- Eliminate items that get in the way or impede progress, including distractions like phone calls, social media, people needing “five minutes” of your time and more.
- Assess priorities based on the work that needs to be accomplished.

Inclusiveness

- Value differences. Simply stated, they honor people who are different and give worth to those differences.
- Respect all races, ethnicities, religions, genders, sexes, sexual orientations, ages and differences in socio-economic status and abilities.
- Give others a voice at the table.
- Create spaces that are open, cooperative, supportive and empowering.
- Recognize their unconscious bias and work to learn more about others.
- List their own advantages and privileges and are mindful of their choices as it relates to these. Then, think about how their choices impact others.
- Consider what is equitable for those they serve and those around them.

Integrity

- Do what they say they will do and do so with integrity.
- Stand up for what they believe is right and use their voice on behalf of others.
- Align their actions with their beliefs and vision.
- Earn the trust of others.
- Take ownership for solving problems, even when the fault lies elsewhere.
- Are reliable and dependable.
- Are committed to the growth of other people and build community with others.
- Practice humility and authenticity.
- Share the spotlight and seek the best in people.

Learner

- Ask questions to gain clarity or to answer their curiosity.
- Explore new ways of looking at problems, issues and challenges.
- Pursue knowledge, education and training. Read books and articles and watch relevant content related to their current work.



- Consider their confirmation bias. (This is the tendency to find content or viewpoints that already match their own- even if they may be wrong.)
- Practice retaining and retrieving facts and concepts to improve their memory of content.
- Know their learning style and how to best gain new skills and knowledge.
- Articulate their learning habits, learning approaches and learning strategies.
- Test their knowledge against others' in order to gain clarity.

Perspective

- Can write, record, speak and identify a situation for what it is.
- Can see the world from other points of view.
- Maintain self-awareness through feedback and reflection.
- Have overcome challenges and see value in the process of getting unstuck after being stuck.
- Forgive themselves and others.
- Admit when they are wrong.
- Know they have blind spots and seek mentors and coaches to help them discover new perspectives.
- Explore and embrace new views and vantage points.

Purpose/Vision/Goal Setting

- Can articulate a personal or professional vision.
- They have a passion, vision, value or belief in something that is deeply meaningful to them.
- Have identified a pain point or passion point that needs attention in the community or in the workplace.
- Have a desire to serve.
- Align their purpose with their actions.
- Work not to be busy, but to fulfill a purpose.
- Share their vision with others to get feedback and support.

