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Human Capability Standards

Five Level Framework

Contents

Capability Domains

The VeriSkills™ Human Capability Standards are sorted into three domains of learning and non-technical practice. When constructed, each capability will focus on a distinct but complementary balance between cognition, personal character and emotions, and applied skills and knowledge.

Thinking

Critical Thinking
Creativity
Adaptive Mindset
Innovative Thinking

Personal

Lifelong Learning
Initiative & Drive
Cultural Awareness
Ethics
Empathy

Action

Communication
Collaboration
Problem Solving
Digital Acumen
Customer Focus

Human Capability Standards for the Future

Based on global research projects and extensive collaborative research work, the collaboration between The Institute for Working Futures Pty Ltd and Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC™) sought to validate the most important capabilities for the future workplace.

The validation project identified the following capabilities as the most important soft or non-technical skills and knowledge required in the future workforce. While not devaluing technical knowledge and skills, the emphasis is on a graduate's overall employability or how to identify high potential individuals with the talent to succeed in the future workforce.

	Capability	Description
Thinking	**1. Critical Thinking** ★	Able to use a range of tools or methods to critically examine and assess existing information, thinking, assumptions and issues to present well-reasoned insights or to make judgements.
	2. Creativity	Able to actively contribute to creative works, ideas or novel solutions.
	3. Adaptive Mindset ★	Able to adjust to change and maintain their curiosity, while dealing with disruption, pressure and setbacks – in a resilient and positive manner.
	4. Innovative Thinking	Able to be entrepreneurial and make connections between disparate ideas, challenge current thinking or practices, and actively use knowledge to create new products, solutions or opportunities.
Personal	**5. Lifelong Learning** ★	Able to identify and continuously develop one's own knowledge, skills and personal attributes such as mindset and motivation.
	6. Initiative and Drive	Able to appreciate personal strengths and weaknesses and effectively relate to others in a professional manner. This includes being able to work independently, set and attain personal and work-related goals, being motivated, and accepting responsibility for their actions.
	7. Cultural Awareness	Able to engage with others with sensitivity and regard for diversity and the social or cultural differences impacting behaviour.
	8. Ethics ★	Able to act with integrity and in conformance with social and professional standards of ethical conduct.
	9. Empathy ★	Able to recognise and regulate their own emotions in any situation, while also being good at identifying and respecting the needs and feelings of other people.
Action	**10. Communication** ★	Able to communicate with clarity and impact to facilitate individual and collective understanding, action or information exchange.
	11. Collaboration ★	Able to work collaboratively with all types of people, contribute to teamwork and to build relationships and networks across a range of people or groups.
	12. Problem Solving ★	Able to define and analyse problems, generate optimal solutions and make recommendations.
	13. Digital Acumen	Able to use digital technology to undertake workplace tasks and outcomes.
	14. Customer Focus	Able to focus on customer service requirements and works proactively to raise the customer experience.

The eight starred capabilities listed above are identified as essential requirements for future work and graduate employability, irrespective of the profession or the individual's job, work-level, or occupation. The remaining six, while critical, may vary in importance depending on the role.

Structure of a
Capability Standard

The Human Capability Framework is intended to identify and develop an individual's capability potential. Each capability sets a standard through the application of the criteria, indicating proficiency at different levels of career and capability progression.

Capability Title:
The title for the capability standard.

Capability Description:
The short description detailing the scope and coverage of the capability standard.

Proficiency & Development Indicators:
While not an essential feature of a capability standard, each Human Capability possesses positive and negative attributes. These attributes span all levels and allow individuals, or those evaluating a person's capability, to perform a 'ready reckoner' to see if the capability has been attained.

Levels:
The Human Capability Standards identify levels of proficiency or developmental progress. Each standard has five levels with criterion anchored by level according to the autonomy, influence and complexity a person may display at that developmental stage. The levels are a frame of reference and implemented models will reflect contextual needs in many instances.

Criteria Indicating Proficiency:
The calibrated criteria indicate the knowledge, skills and personal attributes that anchor individual proficiency to a level of performance or career progress. These are indicative statements setting standards at each level to define desired behavioural outcomes and application for each capability. They are neither assessment criteria nor a rubric. As anchors, they are the basis for evidence collecting, setting assessment questions or for framing attainment rubrics through learning, skills demonstration or experience.

Table 1. Human Capability Standard design

Lifelong Learning

Able to identify and continuously develop one's own knowledge, skills and personal attributes such as mindset and motivation.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Provides feedback and engages in information or knowledge sharing ✓ Looks for opportunities to share knowledge and insights ✓ Continuously learns and reflects on practice ✓ Sees learning and development as a means to continually improve ✓ Takes control of their own learning and career plans ✓ Recognises the importance of experience when building tacit or informal knowledge	✗ Has little to say or contribute to collective information or knowledge sharing ✗ May withhold knowledge from others to preserve own control or importance ✗ Overlooks opportunities to learn or reflect on own practice ✗ Sees qualifications and learning as a means to gain recognition and status ✗ Requires guidance and supervision to drive their own learning and career plan ✗ Thinks all knowledge requires a formal course or has to be written down

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Identifies own leadership and learning style • Takes accountability for their own learning and development • Reflects on own performance and learns from mistakes • Actively seeks new development opportunities and experiences • Learns in collaboration with others and shares knowledge • Gains skills and knowledge mastery in a well-defined area of work or performance context	• Identifies and builds deeper perspectives on learning and skills required in a chosen area of practice • Develops competence in technical skills relevant to the discipline and area of work • Continuously updates skills and knowledge within their own field • Facilitates the development of competencies within their areas of recognised expertise • Contributes to the skilling and development of new knowledge within the team and work context	• Opens career options beyond a technical or discipline-specific pathway • Actively shares skills and knowledge with colleagues on how to deal with ambiguity and inconsistencies that impact specific work or situations • Plans and coordinates learning opportunities across a workforce or community • Removes barriers to collaborative learning or knowledge transfer across disciplines • Reflects regularly on professional performance and ways to improve	• Proactively seeks out professional development on advanced leadership practices • Drives unrelentingly for recognition of personal and professional performance • Engages in advancing teaching or training of others in their field • Researches and reviews learning practices of organisations considered examples of good practice • Cultivates existing and new national and international collaborative relationships that can enhance learning and development	• Actively encourages the search for more innovative and effective means to develop self and the competence of other leaders • Makes significant contributions to expanding or conveying the body of knowledge in their profession or discipline • Leads and contributes to the capture, sharing and enhancement of learning across the organisation, community or profession • Translates national policy and industry leadership and professional development initiatives into organisational strategies and plans

Capability Title

Capability Description

Proficiency & Development Indicators

Levels of Proficiency

Criteria providing indicators of proficiency by level

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Levels of Proficiency: Career, Learning and Development

The framework has been organised into five levels.

Table 2. Stages of capability development and resulting proficiency

Level 1 Foundation	• Has prior learning and limited practical experience that informs actions and judgements. • Works under routine direction. • Remains reliant on established rules, procedures, and theoretical knowledge but displays personal discretion when resolving familiar problems or challenges.
Level 2 Intermediate	• Has substantial practical experience and is learning to lead and direct others in the application of rules, procedures, and theoretical knowledge to successfully complete work. • Exercises substantial personal responsibility and autonomy to successfully achieve planned milestones or accountabilities. • Plans own work and the work of others to meet given objectives and processes, including overcoming complex problems.
Level 3 Proficient	• Has considerable practical experience in an area of professional practice and advises others on improving the existing rules, procedures, and theoretical knowledge. • Is fully accountable for meeting planned technical, team, or project objectives. • Works in a fluid, flexible manner that may require collaborating with others to produce novel or innovative ideas, solutions, or ways to overcome barriers to success.
Level 4 Advanced	• Has considerable practical experience and can work fluently beyond their own area of professional practice to extend the existing rules, procedures, and theoretical knowledge. • Has defined accountability for outcomes that have wide community or organisational impact. • Operates intuitively and in a fluid, flexible and highly effective way, in both familiar situations and those that are unfamiliar, complex, or challenging.
Level 5 Expert	• Has extensive practical experience and makes significant contributions to challenge or advance how existing rules, procedures and theoretical knowledge meet future needs. • Has defined accountability for outcomes that have long-term community or organisational impact. • Uses knowledge and deep understanding to help others make decisions or extend current practice to successfully navigate unfamiliar or challenging future situations.

The stages in capability development are aligned to the Australian Qualification Framework (AQF) and the application of knowledge and skills. This permits attainment of capability to be recognised and credentialed (via micro-credentials or badges) to provide entry, credit, or advanced standing scores that support accelerated attainment of an accredited qualification.

1. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is typically defined to include concepts such as analysing information, applying a logical inquiry process, and appraising evidence to make sound judgements. However, critical thinking is more than just an adjunct to analytical thinking or problem solving, and viewing it in these terms serves to reinforce obsolete ideas about education and work.

Critical thinking can be applied in a variety of settings in life, learning, or work. It may occur during interpersonal or social conversations, reading novels, academic study, formal scientific projects, or from informal intuitive insights.

Research investigations on the capabilities for the future workforce consistently rate Critical Thinking in the top three human capabilities. It is valued highly because it allows an individual to continually make informed judgements and evaluate knowledge, systematically analyse alternatives, make informed decisions, and critically review if their actions have achieved the required outcomes.

While closely related to Problem Solving, Innovative Thinking, and Creativity, it is a distinct capability.

While Problem Solving is more about processes, tools and techniques that can be learnt, Critical Thinking is very much about a person's intellectual horsepower. It involves their ability to engage the brain to not only solve a problem or make a decision, but question alternatives, see opportunities, understand the context and emotions involved, and reach conclusions that draw on past experience or knowledge.

Critical Thinking

Able to use a range of tools or methods to critically examine and assess existing information, thinking, assumptions and issues to present well-reasoned insights or to make judgements.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Applies logic and reasoning to make judgements ✓ Suggests solutions or actions that are context appropriate and achievable ✓ Moves from decisions to action ✓ Makes decisions sensitive to consequences ✓ Likes to consider all perspectives ✓ Draws on experience to improve judgements	× Looks for the easiest to achieve solution × Cannot make decisions × Avoids confrontation or unpopular decisions × Makes decisions without regard for consequences × Prefers speed to a decision over accuracy × Makes judgements that confirm to past successes

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Undertakes basic research to critically analyse existing thinking and methods • Seeks and gathers information or feedback from all sources to inform decision making processes • Establishes the methodology or theoretical framework to complete a routine inquiry or investigation • Presents sound data and reasons to support insights	• Analyses and prioritises complex interests or issues • Presents sound logic, data and reasons to support professional judgements • Makes decisive judgements based on experience and expertise • Modifies and refines basic investigative processes, techniques and tools to improve insights and results • Works with others to challenge improvements to current thinking and practice	• Contributes to the enhancement of current thinking or theoretical models • Identifies and correctly applies a critical analysis approach or methods to solve complex problems • Gathers research and reports findings that advance new intellectual or theoretical models • Systematically gains support for a strategic decision or influences key stakeholders • Participates in industry or professional bodies advancing current research and thinking	• Draws on experience and expertise to exercise professional judgement and make sound decisions • Possesses self-awareness necessary to make appropriate evaluative judgements about people, events, organisations and processes • Appreciates the strategic environment and the emotional drivers influencing how key decision makers will respond to new or challenging situations • Defends and advocates for evidence-based judgements in a logical and reasoned manner • Evaluates breakthrough thinking or insights for wider adoption	• Thinks and acts with a deep awareness of the whole-of-system • Collaborates across a variety of contexts and disciplines to transform existing thinking • Makes complex, strategic judgements in a decisive manner • Cultivates the active exchange of ideas and research between international experts or institutions

2. Creativity

Creativity was always thought to be intensely personal and embedded in a combination of individual insight and a unique set of artistic or intellectual traits. Now, in a time where innovation is transforming how we work and succeed in business, creativity is being understood as a powerful capability most organisations and communities need if they are to successfully address socio-economic challenges.

The Creativity standard at the first three levels of proficiency is very much focused on how an individual working alone or with others actively contributes to turning ideas or novel solutions into reality. The later levels span both higher-order individual creativity and the fact that proficiency may be tied to enabling or leading others in a creative team.

The outcomes at all levels of proficiency in the Creativity standard may necessitate individuals undertake explicit and prescribed actions, but the emphasis must be on the ability to perceive and act in a way that helps individuals make connections, generate insights and imagine the world in new ways. This is heavily cognitive in emphasis. While the evidence of attainment may be a novel solution, design or idea, the ability to engage in the experience and adopt a mindset of looking 'outside the box' will underpin the attainment of this human capability.

Creativity

Able to actively contribute to creative works, ideas or novel solutions.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Uses imagination to see things differently ✓ Flexibility in thinking and approach ✓ Is an original thinker and can think 'outside the box' ✓ Embraces new ideas or practices ✓ Harnesses personal insights and intuition ✓ Imagines what can be and seeks to explore outside the existing or known space ✓ Encourages others to share creative inspiration and ideas	✗ Seeks to conform more than be original ✗ Lazy and unmotivated to examine new or novel solutions ✗ Doesn't see the need to be original or new ✗ Sees creativity as too risky ✗ Narrow minded and prefers to avoid using intuition or unscientific methods ✗ Adheres to the maxim 'if it's not broken don't fix it' ✗ Seldom promotes or encourages others to share creative inspiration and ideas

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Explores different ways people think and are creative • Contributes to developing and testing new ideas and concepts • Creates designs or solutions that overcome well-defined issues, problems or obstacles to success • Draws on multiple perspectives to challenge and create new approaches or alternatives • Explores and integrates new knowledge or ideas into thinking and practice	• Identifies and sponsors innovative effort where it can generate benefit within a professional, project or operational context • Implements systematic approaches to the conduct of creativity • Establishes mechanisms for managing and reviewing creative ideas or designs • Coordinates and cultivates creative processes to connect or bring together diverse perspectives or ideas	• Creates a climate that fosters and encourages creative thinking • Promotes creative processes within and across projects or teams • Champions breakthrough thinking and creative solutions • Supports and encourages creativity by enhancing learning and development opportunities • Acknowledges and rewards creativity	• Challenges existing paradigms and practices • Stimulates and sponsors creative endeavours • Takes calculated risks when trialling new ideas or designs • Establishes formal processes to trial, evaluate and assess new ideas or designs • Engages experts to support or stimulate creativity	• Leads thinking and research into new designs, concepts or ways of thinking • Establishes actions to document and share creative processes • Champions a culture that embraces creativity • Establishes systems to acknowledge and reward initiative, creativity and original thinking

3. Adaptive Mindsets

The adaptive mindsets capability resides in the rapidly emerging research on how future workforces will harness a person's brain, not just their hands.

For modern organisations, continually managing change and engaging people in the process is exhausting. This means organisations need employees and contractors who are more self-aware, curious, persistent, and who have the 'grit' to keep going when things get tough or uncertain. This is at the heart of developing an adaptive mindset.

People with adaptive mindsets don't have to be told to change; they know that success – personal and collective – relies on working under pressure, developing ways to cope with stress and anxiety, and continually learning from their experience. This means every experience contributes to a spiral of continually improving agility and action for people, teams, and the organisation.

Rather than just taking a traditional focus on what a person does, it examines how they think. It seeks to confirm a person's ability to maintain their curiosity while dealing with disruption, pressure and setbacks in a resilient and positive manner. Developing an Adaptive Mindset at all levels of proficiency will involve a significant amount of experience working with others and assessing how well a student's mental models influence the parties involved.

Adaptive Mindset

Able to adjust to change and maintain their curiosity while dealing with disruption, pressure and setbacks in a resilient, positive manner.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Systems thinker ✓ Able to engage with others to exchange ideas, information or thoughts ✓ Deals with ambiguity and complexity ✓ Embraces challenges and new situations ✓ Doesn't procrastinate ✓ Actively seeks new experiences and learning opportunities ✓ Envisions what is possible and seeks strategic opportunities	✗ Directive and very fixed world view ✗ Responds poorly to being under pressure ✗ Lacks experience with complexity ✗ Often strongly influenced by own mood ✗ Procrastinates when dealing with uncertainty or new situations ✗ Avoids variety or unfamiliar situations ✗ Thinks tactically not strategically

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Remains optimistic and calm when facing high pressure or challenging situations • Deals successfully with difficulties and adverse decisions or situations • Maintains a positive outlook even when dealing with unrelenting difficulties • Persists and remains positive even when confronted with challenges • Identifies and manages personal levels of stress	• Adjusts management style and approach to optimise outcomes • Identifies ways to grow team performance and learning to confront challenges • Works with others to adapt new ideas, practices or technologies to their context • Identifies strategies to ensure team performance is maintained when confronted with changing goals or priorities • Monitors priorities and rebalances resources to continually achieve team outcomes	• Reflects on experience and is open to new ways to improve practice • Experiments and actively seeks ways to address future challenges • Promotes change and enhances the responsiveness of people and processes • Looks for opportunities rather than obstacles when dealing with change • Appreciates the wider context and emotional drivers influencing how others respond to new or challenging situations	• Fosters development of skills and professional development across the workforce • Plays a stabilising influence even when confronted with new or challenging situations • Anticipates and helps others respond pro-actively to changing demands and shifting priorities • Perseveres to achieve ambitious personal learning and work goals	• Plays a stabilising influence in even the most challenging situations • Possesses the sophisticated self-awareness necessary to make appropriate evaluative judgements about people, events, organisations and processes • Enhances business or community capacity to adjust to new perspectives or ideas • Persists and overcomes obstacles to reach ambitious long-term personal and professional goals

4. Innovative Thinking

Innovative Thinking is the capacity to create and encourage innovation. This may lead to unorthodox solutions or new insights that can be exploited to improve current thinking or practice.

The innovation process forms the basis for individuals to inject ideas, insights, pure and applied research, scientific knowledge and technical 'know-how'. But the ability to think as an innovator underpins the continual search for improvements; improvements that when translated into a wider social or organisational context can cause secondary effects that result in significant innovation.

The Innovative Thinking capability supports individuals who will be their own 'business', who are increasingly undertaking work in a gig economy, who work on contract for multiple employers. or who undertake freelance or project roles. It is also a capability many successful entrepreneurs display.

At all levels of proficiency, evidence of Innovative Thinking must confirm the ability to be entrepreneurial and make connections between disparate ideas, thinking or practices. It necessitates the ability to move beyond technical knowledge to actively engage the intellect and emotions to see or create new opportunities, products or solutions.

Innovative Thinking

Able to be entrepreneurial and make connections between disparate ideas, challenge current thinking or practices, and actively uses knowledge to create new products, solutions or opportunities.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Seeks to challenge traditional ideas or thinking ✓ Sees things in a new or different perspective ✓ Can imaging and envisage opportunities ✓ Takes the initiative and energy to explore new ideas ✓ Passionately explores what is possible ✓ Passionately committed to accomplish difficult tasks ✓ Self-belief and motivated ✓ Acknowledges and rewards ideas and effort of others	× Seeks to conform to traditional ways of thinking and acting × Very attached to conventional theories, practices or models × Needs others to have the inspiration before they can contribute × Relies on others to set the roadmap and action plan × Cannot picture what is possible × Is arrogant and only trusts own opinions and ideas × Seeks the path of least difficulty and effort × Arrogant disregard for efforts of others

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Spots or envisions opportunities to improve current activities • Addresses challenges and opportunities that limit current products or practices • Analyses existing issues, problems or situations to find new solutions • Seeks experiences that stretch current thinking or fall outside their comfort zone • Uses tools or techniques to capture and action personal intuition or ideas • Absorbs and learns from feedback, criticism and failures	• Maintains and communicates a consistent message as to the entrepreneurial project or initiative's purpose • Plans and frames a way forward to seize an opportunity • Acts with courage and confidence to challenge or confront existing thinking or practices • Leads testing and development of a product or idea • Manages the protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights • Identifies opportunities for new programs, products, or services	• Recognises long term opportunities in the marketplace and acts to seize them • Mobilises resources and support to seize an opportunity • Identifies opportunities for new businesses, systems or thinking • Plans and sponsors entrepreneurial projects or initiatives to confirm an opportunity, design or idea • Acts proactively to extend or pivot the existing business, product or concept into new areas of activity	• Recognises and takes calculated risks • Sponsors and coordinates learning from entrepreneurial endeavours and projects • Anticipates and manages strategic ambiguity and uncertainty • Develops and coordinates of entrepreneurial projects or initiatives • Contributes to the development and shaping of innovative business models or plans • Leads others to realise an entrepreneurial initiative or idea	• Approves and sponsors major entrepreneurial ventures or strategies • Monitors the external environment to diagnose where external factors will impact major entrepreneurial ventures or strategies • Mobilises support and creates a sense of enthusiasm for entrepreneurial ventures or strategies

5. Lifelong Learning

People continually learn with a purpose in mind or through everyday experiences. Lifelong learning is a conscious act. It is evident when we become self-aware and develop a mindset conscious of the fact we think, feel and act differently depending on how well we absorb learning and embrace new experiences or overcome obstacles. Learning can be formal, organised and structured; non-formal, unstructured and with no targeted learning outcomes; and informal, based on everyday experiences and interactions with others.

The increasingly complex world of work requires today's graduates to learn in ways they cannot adequately do in a one-off structured course and subsequent examination of their knowledge. Most importantly, lifelong learning involves a commitment to learn continually throughout one's life.

The Lifelong Learning capability indicates an individual can, to varying levels of proficiency, undertake continual learning and development to grow their knowledge, skills and personal attributes.

Ultimately, the Lifelong Learning capability is very much associated with an individual's preferences and needs. The foundation for success, therefore, lies in raising self-awareness as to what these preferences may be and to isolate the opportunities or barriers that need attention.

Lifelong Learning

Able to identify and continuously develop one's own knowledge, skills and personal attributes such as mindset and motivation.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Provides feedback and engages in information or knowledge sharing ✓ Looks for opportunities to share knowledge and insights ✓ Continuously learns and reflects on practice ✓ Sees learning and development as a means to continually improve ✓ Takes control of their own learning and career plans ✓ Recognises the importance of experience when building tacit or informal knowledge	× Has little to say or contribute to collective information or knowledge sharing × May withhold knowledge from others to preserve own control or importance × Overlooks opportunities to learn or reflect on own practice × Sees qualifications and learning as a means to gain recognition and status × Requires guidance and supervision to drive their own learning and career plan × Thinks all knowledge requires a formal course or has to be written down

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Identifies own leadership and learning style • Takes accountability for their own learning and development • Reflects on own performance and learns from mistakes • Actively seeks new development opportunities and experiences • Learns in collaboration with others and shares knowledge • Gains skills and knowledge mastery in a well-defined area of work or performance context	• Identifies and builds deeper perspectives on learning and skills required in a chosen area of practice • Develops competence in technical skills relevant to the discipline and area of work • Continuously updates skills and knowledge within their own field • Facilitates the development of competencies within their areas of recognised expertise • Contributes to the skilling and development of new knowledge within the team and work context	• Opens career options beyond a technical or discipline-specific pathway • Actively shares skills and knowledge with colleagues on how to deal with ambiguity and inconsistencies that impact specific work or situations • Plans and coordinates learning opportunities across a workforce or community • Removes barriers to collaborative learning or knowledge transfer across disciplines • Reflects regularly on professional performance and ways to improve	• Proactively seeks out professional development on advanced leadership practices • Drives unrelentingly for recognition of personal and professional performance • Engages in advancing teaching or training of others in their field • Researches and reviews learning practices of organisations considered examples of good practice • Cultivates existing and new national and international collaborative relationships that can enhance learning and development	• Actively encourages the search for more innovative and effective means to develop self and the competence of other leaders • Makes significant contributions to expanding or conveying the body of knowledge in their profession or discipline • Leads and contributes to the capture, sharing and enhancement of learning across the organisation, community or profession • Translates national policy and industry leadership and professional development initiatives into organisational strategies and plans

6. Initiative and Drive

Whether working for yourself or an employer, your future workplace success will require an ability to be resourceful and to work independently without always having someone supervise your actions. It requires resilience and perseverance, both in terms of task completion and your desire to always improve personal performance.

While Initiative and Drive entails acting in your own best interests, it occurs against the backdrop of how this advances your life, learning and work. Fundamentally, it is about identifying a desirable future for yourself and being motivated to achieve that outcome through a series of personal commitments and actions.

Initiative and Drive necessitates a deeper insight into your own character. For many this will be challenging because they lack the confidence to know what or where they wish to be in the next year, let alone five years. But this is a human capability that requires you to appreciate the ways in which your personal strengths and weaknesses may affect your ability to act professionally. This includes your capacity to work independently, to be motivated and to accept responsibility. Your future goals may be simple and evolve over time, but your lack of confidence or ambition are red flags to an employer that wants to build an adaptable workforce able to work independently towards a shared future vision.

Initiative and Drive

Able to appreciate personal strengths and weaknesses and effectively relate to others in a professional manner. This includes being able to work independently, set and attain personal and work related goals, being motivated and accepting responsibility for their own actions.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Clearly scopes and plans priorities and actions ✓ Shows a level of motivation towards achieving future goals ✓ Sets goals and follows through ✓ Organised and has a good eye for detail ✓ Can envision what is required and translate this into action ✓ Able to prioritise and is proactive ✓ Sense of purpose and own abilities ✓ Takes responsibility ✓ Works well independently	× Easily distracted × Adopts a very short-term perspective × Fails to prioritise or set clear plans × Isn't detail oriented × Disorganised × Responsive and reactive × No sense of purpose and is unclear of own abilities × Avoids responsibility × Works only under close supervision

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Regularly and proactively reviews own work and established priorities • Investigates and researches information that may add to personal knowledge • Undertakes assessment of own potential and possible development and career options • Uses established methods to work through and deal with simple problems • Works compliant with relevant statutory and commercial frameworks impacting own area of responsibility	• Displays motivation and a pro-active commitment to a high-performance work ethic and the attainment of allocated responsibilities • Plans own capability and talent development, sensitive to future changes and trends • Sets personal career and improvement targets that stretch skills and performance • Works with others to deal effectively and professionally with barriers to optimal performance	• Reviews and manages personal and team motivation • Recognises and addresses issues and problems that impact goal attainment or cooperation • Uses a global perspective to identify technology trends and issues that will impact work and learning • Plans and manages others to assure compliance with relevant ethical, statutory and commercial frameworks	• Implements plans to improve workforce talent and performance • Models uncompromising integrity and commitment to professional and ethical standards • Identifies and removes root causes affecting successful attainment of planned development outcomes • Assures work output and activities of others are compliant with relevant statutory and commercial frameworks	• Anticipates future changes and trends to seize personal and organisational opportunities • Benchmarks organisational performance in a specialist area of practice against relevant ethical, statutory and commercial frameworks • Maintains the personal drive and capabilities required to succeed long term in their chosen career or professional field

7. Cultural Awareness

With increased societal diversity, along with new and evolving technology that enables expanded interaction among people from different cultures, it is even more critical that people can work across different cultures and understand the rules and beliefs others may hold.

Cultural Awareness is the understanding derived through positive interactions with people from other countries or other backgrounds, especially the appreciation of differences in attitudes and values. It raises the importance of not only an awareness of the differences but of acting with sensitivity. Non-recognition of difference is not necessarily negative, but it certainly means we need to better understand people by displaying empathy and awareness rather than judging their actions from our own perspective.

At all levels of proficiency, attaining the Cultural Awareness capability will require evidence a person is able to operate in culturally diverse settings with sensitivity and regard for a range of different perspectives, values, beliefs and behaviours.

Due to its nature, attaining Cultural Awareness may involve the formation of relationships and interactions with others in a given context. As such, this capability may be clustered or co-assessed with other human capabilities such as Collaboration, Communication, Customer Focus, Empathy or Ethics.

Cultural Awareness

Able to engage with others with sensitivity and regard for diversity and the social or cultural differences impacting behaviour.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Embraces rights of everyone equally ✓ Believes every ethnicity and culture can have differences or an opinion that may be equally important ✓ Acts inclusively and respects others' beliefs and values ✓ Feels sympathy and acceptance that not everyone has the same advantage and opportunities ✓ Actively seeks to understand and appreciate cultural differences	✗ Acts with a sense that their own rights are correct and everyone else's are incorrect ✗ Often acts with disregard to society's expectations ✗ Treats people differently if they do not share the same opinion, beliefs or values ✗ Ignores or disregards those that are less advantaged ✗ Is often sarcastic or derides different cultures

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Displays adaptability and flexibility when seeking input from others with different perspectives or beliefs • Responds to diversity in the workplace with sensitivity • Acknowledges and demonstrates sensitivity and respect for differences in people and cultures	• Promotes a culture of inclusion and participation • Promote teamwork where everyone treats each other with respect • Encourages others to appropriately express their ideas, beliefs and opinions in meetings • Encourages others to act in a manner consistent with the organisation's values and beliefs	• Builds a workplace culture compatible with and reinforcing the organisation's values and goals • Ensures operational and business activities reinforce the organisation's culture • Models and reinforces the organisation's culture and values • Corrects destructive behaviours or workplace systems that affect inclusive practices	• Understands the dynamic relationship between the organisation's culture and the different cultures and values other professions may promote • Establishes and reinforces a culture within the senior leadership/management team • Manages behaviours or actions that fail to align with organisational or community expectations	• Sponsors workplace diversity principles and inclusive practices across the organisation • Develops policies and practices that promote diversity and show consideration and concern for others • Guides and mediates the alignment of the organisation's culture and values with community expectations • Assists the organisation to connect with other entities sharing similar values, beliefs and aspirations

8. Ethics

In an increasingly global world of information, work and social interaction, it is vitally important for people in work, learning or life to identify and encourage diverse perspectives, to respect different cultures and values, and to act responsibly and ethically.

Ethics shape an organisation's sense of moral duty and its moral conduct. While individuals may have their own set of ethical beliefs, as an employee they are typically asked to align their sense of morality and values to the standards of behaviour their employer sets in terms of how they behave, act, interact with others and perform within a business context.

The Ethics standard focuses on an individual's ability to act with integrity and in conformance with social and professional standards of ethical conduct. It is about who you are, how you behave and an awareness of how your decisions affect others.

Attaining any level of proficiency in the Ethics human capability requires no 'black and white' assessment of your knowledge of ethics or a test to see if you meet an ethical benchmark. It is based on what guides your ethical choices. This requires an ethics self-assessment and an ability to use the results to produce insights that shape your future behaviours and decisions.

Ethics

Able to act with integrity and in compliance with social and professional standards of ethical conduct.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Acts according to their own ethics and conscience ✓ Makes commitments and sticks to them ✓ Willing to follow behavioural rules and social expectations ✓ Follows the rules and agreed standards of practice or behaviour ✓ Seeks to learn from mistakes of others and how they deal with ethical dilemmas ✓ Conscientiously adheres to personal commitments or loyalty	× Modifies ethics and beliefs without thought × Adjusts values and behaviours to the situation × Often fails to meet or follow through on commitments × Accepts rules and requirements they deem appropriate × Ignores or fails to see relevance in following how others deal with ethical dilemmas × Easily shifts loyalties

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Exhibits uncompromising integrity and commitment to the organisation's values and ethical practices • Knowledge of ethics in a specific workplace or team context • Uses a range of ethical decision-making techniques appropriate to the people involved and the situation • Complies with regulatory requirements, rules and standards governing behaviour and action • Identifies compliance requirements and proactively corrects practices, processes or conduct to meet the expected standards or codes of conduct • Accurately identifies professional standards, compliance requirements and processes for a given situation	• Understands the relationship between ethics, morals and beliefs • Applies in-depth knowledge of current regulatory requirements to develop and maintain up to date compliance policies and procedures • Models uncompromising integrity and commitment to professional and ethical standards • Investigates and resolves compliance issues • Communicates compliance requirements and secures relevant training for all employees • Assists to form and communicate a Code of Conduct to guide the behaviour of others • Continually monitors business/operational compliance	• Analyses and correctly identifies the ethical considerations impacting organisational decisions or choices • Promotes effective operational compliance frameworks • Continually monitors and prepares reports on organisational compliance • Provides strategic advice on compliance matters including the effective management of risk at all levels • Assesses effectiveness of controls and recommends changes to strengthen organisation compliance • Leads an operational or business area with integrity	• Promotes a culture of professionalism and integrity across the organisation • Builds and embeds a culture of compliance throughout the organisation • Sponsors the development and implementation of a Code of Conduct with specific guidance on professional and ethical standards and required behaviours • Establishes and maintains strategic relationships with key external stakeholders including regulatory bodies	• Promotes effective organisational governance and compliance management systems • Seeks and actively responds to external review of organisational governance and compliance management audits • Promotes compatible ethical practices and professional standards across the industry and with strategic partners

9. Empathy

For over a century most employers recognised intelligence as a means by which to recruit professionals, using tools such as the intellectual quotient (IQ) test to vet staff.

Today, employers look beyond IQ as their main recruitment tool and show increasing interest in a person's ability to positively engage with other staff members and customers. It involves the capacity to understand one's own emotions, the ability to regulate them and its facility to shape emotions and influence behaviour.

Empathy involves the ability to understand and consider other people's emotions. Those who are aware of their own and others' emotions are better able to guide their own actions and to make other people feel valued and appreciated. The human capability Empathy centres on a person's ability to recognise and regulate their own emotions in any situation.

Empathy is a human capability highly valued in some job clusters or career pathways. Because it is based on contextual feelings and emotions, the capability is difficult to automate, particularly where human interactions are highest, for instance in service industries, health care, counselling and related work.

Empathy

Able to recognise and regulate their own emotions in any situation and is good at identifying and respecting the needs and feelings of other people.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Is sensitive to the needs of others and knows how to comfort them ✓ Responds appropriately in emotionally charged or difficult situations ✓ Seeks to understand how they personally respond to people and situations ✓ Aware of own emotional responses and feelings ✓ Sensitive to needs of others ✓ Strong sense of how conflict may accentuate certain emotions and behaviours ✓ Non-judgemental and respectful	× Has no time to care about how others are feeling × Makes people uncomfortable or feel threatened × Insensitive to how they need to regulate emotions or responses in given situations × Ignores or ignorant of own emotions and feelings × Insensitive to others' needs or troubles × Sarcastic × Judgemental

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Respects others and considers their feelings, beliefs or rights • Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in a range of situations • Assesses the situation by viewing it from the other person's perspective • Seeks to identify emotional state and feelings of others by identifying verbal and non-verbal cues • Listens and displays concern, understanding and compassion for others	• Expresses emotions appropriately within a workplace even when under pressure • Assesses the impact emotions have on team success • Provides opportunities for others to freely express and share emotions • Models and consistently maintains empathy and respect for others in everyday activities • Acknowledges and demonstrates sensitivity and displays respect for cultural differences	• Remains open and approachable when resolving highly sensitive and complex issues • Builds and maintains a workplace culture of empathy and respect for others • Promotes sensitivity in the handling of disagreements or differences between groups or cultures • Manages differences in an inclusive, equitable and collaborative manner	• Demonstrates commitment, sensitivity and responsiveness to the emotional needs of different cultures and people • Researches and works with others to identify and understand the emotional dimensions when designing or providing products and services • Models and reinforces the organisation's culture and values • Identifies opportunities for engaging positively with different groups in the community	• Considers the implications that organisational strategy and decisions may have on others • Gathers and reviews ideas and preferences of stakeholders to improve understanding of their feelings towards the organisation and its behaviour • Presents professional or strategic views in a sensitive manner to audiences inside and outside the organisation • Guides and mediates the alignment of the organisation's culture and values with the external operating environment, society and stakeholders

10. Communication

Communication is consistently rated as one of the most vital capabilities in the modern workforce. How we communicate and the medium we use is changing more rapidly today than ever before. We have moved from printed media and interpersonal exchanges to the use of internet and digital technologies to connect with people across the globe. We can now rapidly access, create and share videos, digital images and audio. We can communicate on the move, in real time; we can synthesise and visualise complex information or data; we can message and verbally engage with people using chat, conferencing, and virtual platforms or applications; we can even configure and set preferences to filter what and when we connect with someone or something.

The Communication capability is not just about being able to communicate with other people, it is about working beyond the interpersonal scale to manage the vast amounts of information conveyed to you daily. It is about meaningful engagement with others in a physical and virtual setting and ensuring that how, what and when we communicate is sensitive to the needs of the audience.

The emphasis of the standard is therefore on clarity of meaning and impact. Using communication to facilitate individual and collective understanding, action and information exchange. It is about being purposeful: solving problems, collaborating, creating a dialogue to better understand another person's feelings, learning, influencing others or exposing yourself to others' beliefs.

Communication

Able to communicate with clarity and appropriate impact to facilitate individual and collective understanding, action and information exchange.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Others actively seek their opinion and ideas ✓ Has a natural ability to engage with others and influence their thinking and practice ✓ Appreciates and seeks the opinions and viewpoints of others ✓ Encourages others to present their views and feedback ✓ Listens and seeks to understand what others mean ✓ Crafts communication to the needs of the audience ✓ Confident dealing with complex issues or topics ✓ Is an engaging public speaker	✗ Focuses on their needs and conveying their opinions ✗ Is easily influenced and lacks an opinion ✗ Finds the opinions and viewpoints of others irrelevant ✗ Ignores and fails to engage with those that don't agree with them ✗ Is incapable of shaping a message for the given audience ✗ Is verbose or unable to get to a clear point ✗ Will avoid difficult or complex issues or topics ✗ Avoids public speaking

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Develops and communicates information that is well structured and understood by the audience • Collects and organises ideas and information in an accurate, concise and logical manner • Produces a range of basic business documents • Identifies and responds to non-verbal cues • Fosters two-way communication for mutual understanding • Presents information in a compelling and effective manner	• Plays an active role in facilitating productive interactions and removing barriers that limit input from others • Prepares compelling presentations to influence others • Coordinates the management and sharing of information and knowledge across groups • Establishes mechanisms to analyse, evaluate and report information • Uses a variety of techniques and methods to effectively conduct difficult conversations	• Prepares and presents specialist advice on a wide range of issues, demonstrating highly developed judgement and insight • Improves the processes and media used to communicate and share information and knowledge • Confidently represents the organisation or business area in external communication processes	• Promotes knowledge and information development and sharing within a major function, location or project • Prepares compelling presentations to influence senior executives and external decision makers • Establishes means to analyse information and knowledge • Takes decisions based on research, analysis and review of information and knowledge • Disseminates information to strategic and business stakeholders	• Promotes knowledge and information development and sharing across the organisation • Represents the organisation with authority and credibility in public forums and at events • Develops communication plans to engage internal and external audiences • Communications directly reinforce the organisation's brand and values

11. Collaboration

Collaboration emphasises more than just working with others or teamwork. It encompasses cooperation, building relationships between and across groups, and building formal and informal networks. Teamwork or team building is more focused on situations where individuals share a common goal, bring unique capabilities to a group and work together to achieve agreed outcomes in a structured environment.

Collaboration encompasses the interaction between the members within a team or across teams or informal groups. Individuals may have diverse values, purposes, locations or cultures but agree to work together to achieve a shared goal or produce a mutually beneficial output.

At the centre of modern society lies the need to encourage the rapid flow of ideas, diffuse innovations and interact in globalised markets. This means collaboration increasingly involves the use of technology to link people and organisations. Powered by a new array of video, chat, smart and mobile devices, group messaging apps or secure cloud-based file sharing, project management and other collaborative applications, everyone can contribute in shared spaces.

Achieving the capability will require a significant amount of context-based experience. This experience can be gained while working alone or when collaborating with others who are not part of a team structure. They may be part of an informal relationship or, as is increasingly the case in virtual environments, join a network solely based on their mutual interests.

Collaboration

Able to work collaboratively with all types of people, contribute to teamwork, contribute to outcomes and to build relationships and networks across a range of people or groups.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Is interested in people ✓ Feels comfortable engaging with others and building purposeful relationships ✓ Can make others feel at ease ✓ Employs a range of different influencing styles effectively ✓ Values having long-term close relationships with people ✓ Seeks to ensure mutual benefit from relationships ✓ Initiates and reaches out to people	✕ Avoids social situations ✕ Seeks to limit contact with other people ✕ Wishes to keep people at a distance ✕ Often fails to consult others ✕ Prefers to work alone ✕ Seeks to only promote what they can get out of the relationship ✕ Waits until people seek them

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Identifies and consciously maintains a network of contacts • Works with key stakeholders to complete work activities • Seeks opinions and feedback from others • Acts proactively to reinforce relationships with key stakeholders	• Uses personal and professional credibility and trustworthiness to form important relationships • Manages stakeholder relationships and risk • Navigates organisational politics • Works effectively with professional peers and colleagues • Manages and coordinates stakeholder engagement	• Forges consensus and cooperation across groups to enhance goal attainment • Influences stakeholder support for plans or decisions • Builds and leverages mutually beneficial relationships and networks across other organisations or professions • Establishes a profile with peers as a trustworthy source of accurate professional and/or strategic knowledge	• Builds collaborative relationships to enhance strategic capacity and capability • Influences and gains commitment from senior decision-makers and stakeholders • Nurtures high-level relationships through the open exchange of ideas and information • Forms collaborative relationships able to generate new ideas and perspectives on strategic challenges	• Forges connections that build enduring long-term strategic alliances and partnerships • Contributes to the expert body of knowledge possessed by the organisation or the profession • Anticipates and addresses how decisions or actions will impact collaborative endeavours and stakeholder relationships • Secures support from stakeholders to inform and support future plans

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12. Problem Solving

Effective problem solving is about applying a methodical process for correctly defining the problem, examining alternatives and making informed choices in the given situation. Not only are problem-solving skills useful in a learning and work context, they are a life skill. We are increasingly faced with situations with unknown solutions. By helping students correctly define a problem, decipher the complexities and variables involved and consider the alternatives in a rational manner, the problem-solving process helps people cope with many of life's challenges.

Having obtained a Problem Solving capability signifies to an employer that the individual can not only assess and analyse information to reach a decision, they can perform this capability in a range of contexts.

The Problem Solving capability is a capability that spans all professions and work roles. It is highly valued by employers because it shows an individual can resolve issues or barriers to success. In a VUCA world of work (volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous), it is vital teams have members who are strong at systematically identifying, analysing and resolving real world problems.

Problem Solving

Able to define and analyse problems, generate optimal solutions and make recommendations.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Is able to focus on essential elements of a problem ✓ Loves to investigate and resolve problems ✓ Can evaluate and understand complex interrelationships impacting a problem ✓ Can reason logically and formulate clear options ✓ Can picture and clearly articulate what a solution looks like ✓ Makes linkages between seemingly unrelated but important issues/information	✕ Fails to determine if the 'best' solution is realistic ✕ Avoids the unknown or problems without known solutions ✕ Fails to make connections between causes and effects ✕ Fails to understand abstract ideas ✕ Often acts without reason ✕ Unable to see linkages or make connections between issues or problems

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Identifies single-step cause and effect relationships correctly • Uses problem solving techniques to analyse and solve problems or issues • Identifies what led up to the situation and immediate consequences • Can map and understand cause and effect relationships • Uses established methods to deal with discipline-specific, conventional problems • Identifies and analyses alternatives to determine the optimal solution	• Anticipates potential problems and obstacles and thinks ahead about next steps • Identifies causal factors including steps that led up to the situation or patterns and similarities between different situations • Considers multi-disciplinary perspectives when analysing and solving problems • Integrates a large amount of information from diverse sources recommending solutions that span locations, disciplines or problems • Identifies and removes root causes to problems • Monitors and evaluates solutions implemented to resolve a problem	• Maps interrelationships and complex causes and long-term effects • Recognises several likely causes and several likely consequences of actions • Makes plans to maximise outcomes in the medium term, including contingency plans to deal with potential opportunities and problems • Uses sophisticated methods to deal with complex, escalated problems • Integrates complex multi-disciplinary perspectives • Evaluates problem identification and analysis processes and solutions implementation	• Identifies multiple chains of complex cause and effect • Maps out complex processes with multiple inputs and multiple outputs • Researches and anticipates problems and uncertainties in the environment likely to impact current operations • Systematically breaks multi-dimensional problems into component parts • Uses several analytical techniques to identify several solutions and weighs the pros and cons of each • Contributes to improvement of problem solving processes, techniques and tools	• Provides strategic responses to multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary problems • Monitors, analyses and reviews problems and developments in the environment to determine their long-term impact on the organisation • Develops predictive models or scenarios anticipating future problems and their effects • Sponsors and promotes systematic and scientific approaches to thinking and problem solving

13. Digital Acumen

Individuals need to develop the ability to use and manage digital technologies, platforms and information to improve learning, life and employability – now and in the future. As the pace of technological change transforms the world of work, employers increasingly seek employees who are ready and willing to adapt to new technologies. This means not only using computer and communication technologies, it is also about adopting new ways of working, looking for opportunities to automate or innovate, and improving efforts to access, share, manage, and evaluate information and knowledge.

Digital Acumen centres on how an individual can bring a mindset and the motivation to use digital technologies and data in a way that will enhance work effort, business functionality and/or the customer experience. Digital Acumen is centred on the ability to harness digital technology to undertake workplace tasks and improve productive outcomes. It is synonymous with technological acumen, but it is distinct to digital literacy. While the latter deals with using digital technologies to discover, use and disseminate information in a digital world, digital acumen moves beyond the information aspects to set a standard for how individuals use technology. At all levels of proficiency, the standard sets an outcome that can encompass a range of different work roles, contexts, people and technologies.

For most young people Digital Acumen is ever present. The use of digital technologies and information processing will often underpin the completion of activities in life, learning or work.

Digital Acumen

Able to use digital technology to undertake workplace tasks and improve productive outcomes.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Prepared to learn and adopt digital technology ✓ Explores new ways to deploy or use technology ✓ Monitors global trends and innovations in digital technologies and platforms ✓ Will go out of their way to learn how to use technology to improve life and work ✓ Looks for ways to improve how things are done	× Dislikes digital technology × Fears technology and changes to existing systems × Has no global view or perspective on technology trends × Will avoid technology in most aspects of work and life × Sticks with traditional ways to do things

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Sets up and uses a range of digital technologies to explore, access, create, publish and share information relevant to specialist areas of work • Accurately assesses and responds to changes in technology, thinking or practices that affect customer behaviour • Acquires the technological skills and capabilities required to optimise personal and work success • Uses records, information and knowledge management functions and systems	• Uses a range of digital technologies and media to effectively collaborate, create, conduct business or reach customers • Establishes the minimum value proposition for adopting digital technologies within an area of work • Manages the rapid deployment or testing of prototypes or new digital technologies • Assures digital information or data is managed in adherence to appropriate privacy, security and rights management principles	• Uses technology to create fundamentally new ways to collaborate, create, conduct business or reach customers • Critically assesses and identifies benefits derived from adoption of new technologies • Identifies and promotes opportunities to use technology to optimise customer, creative or operational outcomes • Ensures appropriate training of personnel prior to testing or use of new technologies • Coordinates the creation or sharing of complex content, data or information	• Coordinates work across diverse groups in virtual environments to create new content, ideas or insights • Analyses and assesses the effect of new technologies on existing business models, customers or work practices • Seeks and accesses advice from appropriate experts to leverage digital and other technologies to achieve improved business outcomes • Supervises others to assure compliance with regulations, policies and standards guiding the use of digital information and technologies	• Ensures personal and group adherence to appropriate practices, policies and standards in the use of digital information • Researches trends in digital technologies or disruptions that may impact existing business models or professional practice • Analyses and evaluates organisational benefit derived from the deployment of digital technologies • Works with technical leaders to introduce technology solutions that improve creative, customer or organisational outcomes • Identifies and communicates opportunities to improve digital technologies and information systems

14. Customer Focus

Across all aspects of the economy, employers need staff who understand customers and their expectations. In the age of social media and a digitally connected global marketplace, the ability to gain and retain a customer is a constant concern for business leaders. As a result, organisations seek to raise their focus on the customer and the quality of the customer experience.

The Customer Focus capability requires a person to serve customers internal or external to an organisation, and to deliver an experience that meets agreed standards and expectations. At the early levels this means becoming familiar with how you do this to the agreed standards and measures set in the customer experience strategy. At the higher levels it revolves around ensuring an organisation's greatest asset, its customers, are managed in a way that builds a long-term customer relationship and proactively improves the customer experience to meet future expectations.

Building the Customer Focus capability in their workforce is essential for forward-looking businesses. It goes beyond the knowledge of how to interact with a customer or how to use simple tools to identify and measure customer experience; it is about a willingness to build a culture where the customer is central to how we do business. It is about individuals who are passionate advocates for the customer.

Customer Focus

Able to focus on customer service requirements and acts proactively to raise the customer experience.

Indicators of Proficiency	Indicators of Development Need
✓ Strong and persistent focus on people/ customer ✓ Will always seek to put the customer's interests first ✓ Is genuinely interested in people ✓ Looks for opportunities to help people ✓ Cares about others and satisfying their needs ✓ Is friendly and easy to approach ✓ Is personally pleased and happy when a person's needs are satisfied	✗ Does not appreciate how their actions can affect internal culture and the resulting customer experience ✗ Focus on technical or professional role used as an excuse to avoid customer focus ✗ Will always place their own needs over a customer ✗ Avoids people and social interaction ✗ Sees others' needs as a distraction or wasting their time ✗ Is perceived to be arrogant or unapproachable ✗ Is self-absorbed or overwhelmed when having to consider the interests of others

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
• Isolates and correctly defines customer requirements • Responds to customer issues and acts with sincerity to secure a solution • Influences the customer to avoid poor choices that impact quality or their stated requirements • Adopts methods and techniques relevant to the context that ensure the customer has a positive experience • Defines customer requirements • Advocates honestly for the customer and problems they encounter	• Manages operations to provide an exceptional customer experience • Designs and deploys robust service strategy with key performance indicators for measuring the customer experience • Creates a compelling value proposition • Designs and develops products, services and solutions that build enduring customer relationships • Champions customer needs and overcomes internal obstacles to improving service and the customer experience	• Manages the planning, evaluation, design and implementation of complex solutions for the customer • Monitors and undertakes anticipatory action to enhance the customer experience • Analyses and redesigns systems, processes, skills and technologies to enhance service capabilities at critical customer touch points • Establishes technology and systems to identify, capture and report on customer experience across a function • Initiates action to improve how the organisation addresses factors impinging upon the customer experience	• Monitors and reports on the service strategy and targets for improving the customer experience • Analyses data on the customer experience and seeks ways to add value to the customer relationship in the medium to long-term • Researches and gathers intelligence related to customer experience needs and wants • Establishes technology and systems to identify, capture and report on customer experience across the organisation • Ensures the overall customer experience and value proposition reinforces the organisation's brand and values	• Holds senior leaders accountable for improving the customer experience • Incorporates balanced strategic targets for long-term customer relationship and value • Conducts international research into customer experience trends and future developments

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