Management Competency Framework

Middle Managers
Operational Managers
Specialists

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Introduction

Blaenau Gwent's new competency frameworks have been developed to support the Authority's ambitions to continually improve the services we provide to our customers. A group representing all Directorates within the Authority developed the frameworks, and consultation also took place with all department management teams to ensure the frameworks are appropriate and fit for purpose.

The frameworks are focused on attitudinal and behavioural competencies, rather than those that look at technical skills. This is because we traditionally have been able to address technical gaps in knowledge through established training and development activities. Behavioural and attitudinal development has not had the same intensity of attention, and the frameworks aim to address this, as it is a crucial aspect of continually improving the services we provide.

This particular framework applies to those who report to a Divisional/Service Manager and have an operational management role (which includes managing others), or where the professional /technical role requires regular operation at this level.

Below are answers to some of the questions you may have about the frameworks.

What is a Competency Framework?

Competency frameworks are a method of describing the underpinning values that shape and define the culture of the Authority. They also provide clear focus to support the development of staff in order to deliver the best possible services.

The competencies within the frameworks have been substantially derived from the People Strategy, the Staff Opinion Survey, and consultation with senior managers, and are focused on ensuring we have the capacity to deliver the strategic objectives of the Authority and make Blaenau Gwent a better place to live and work.

There are two generic frameworks that the Authority will be using;

1. Management Competency Framework - this will apply to you if your job involves you supervising or managing other people. The Management Competency Framework splits into 3 levels. The particular level that applies to you depends on the level of your management responsibilities.

2. Generic Competency Framework - this will apply to you if your job does not include supervisory or management responsibilities.

There are a number of competencies in each framework. Underneath each is a general description of the competency, followed by a list of attitudes/behaviours that would indicate competence in the relevant area. The list is not exhaustive but is designed to give a flavour of the approach that the Authority encourages in all staff that the framework applies to. There is also a negative statement at the end of each competency to indicate the sort of behaviour that is actively discouraged, as it works against the principle of continual improvement that the Authority is striving for.

Why do we need a competency framework?

The competency framework serves several purposes, which together enable the Authority to improve and develop its staff and services.

The framework:

1. Informs prospective recruits what is expected of them
2. Informs staff of the sort of attitudes and behaviours the Authority encourages when carrying out their duties
3. Informs staff of what they can expect from their managers
4. Shapes and defines a culture based around strong principles such as partnership, continuous improvement, constructive challenge, and being citizen centred
5. Supports staff at all levels in their development in order maximise their potential

The frameworks also link to some of the key strategies that drive the objectives of the Authority, such as the People Strategy and the Training & Development Strategy & Policy.

The headline competencies are closely linked with the Authority's strategic objectives, as these are crucial to fulfilling our obligations to our customers.

How will they be used?

Initially all staff will receive information about the frameworks and be encouraged to informally assess themselves against the framework that applies to them, with a view to developing their skills in all areas of the framework.

The frameworks will also be built into a revised Performance Review Scheme (PRS) and recruitment process.

The frameworks will be reviewed and revised to ensure they reflect the needs of the Authority and its staff.

Leading People

Leads and motivates others to continually improve performance. Is approachable, supportive, and demonstrates integrity, fairness, and high personal and professional standards.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Sets the standard of leadership for the service

Provides clear direction and goals for the service

Takes direct responsibility and is accountable for actions

Ensures the principles of equality and diversity are embedded in the service

Recognises and celebrates others' contributions & achievements

Challenges inappropriate behaviour

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Consider it someone else's job to inspire the service

Communicating the Vision

Sees the "big picture". Interprets and sets out how the vision is linked to the service.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Translates the vision into operational objectives

Develops long term objectives and strategies for own service area to achieve the vision

Proactively promotes the vision to others

Ensures others understand how their role contributes to achieving the vision

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Regard the vision as unconnected from service objectives

Facilitating High Performance and Results

Is enthusiastic, ambitious, determined, and confident to challenge, ensuring high levels of personal and service achievement. Has stamina and willpower to deliver results.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Is committed to continually improving performance of self and others

Sets ambitious performance targets and priorities for self and others

Gives regular, constructive feedback on team/individual performance

Motivates others to achieve and improve performance

Recognises and celebrates success

Challenges poor performance appropriately

Seeks learning opportunities from results

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Regard the status quo as acceptable

Maximising Potential

Develops and encourages personal development to improve performance and contribute to continual improvement.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Encourages and develops personal accountability in others

Encourages others to think for themselves

Promotes risk-taking and supports appropriately

Develops the skills, experience, and ambition of others at all levels to enhance flexibility of services

Promotes development in self and others

Supports and trains others in own areas of expertise

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Make negative assumptions about others' ability to contribute

Communicating

Communicates openly and effectively, ensuring that messages are clear and concise. Adapts content and style to help others understand.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Promotes a culture of open communication

Communicates effectively, using a variety of styles, with a broad range of people

Creates and develops networking opportunities to influence

Actively listens and respects others' points of view

Checks own and others' understanding

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Fail to consider the most effective way of communicating

Making Informed Decisions

Ensures decisions are based on sound evidence and linked to improving services.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Considers implications of proposed decisions

Ensures decisions link to continually improving performance

Understands problem solving is part of the improvement process

Has the confidence to make ambitious, difficult, or unpopular decisions

Is able to justify and explain decisions

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Accept decisions without reviewing or challenging

Working Together

Understands and contributes to effective working across all sectors, and identifies potential areas of improvement, ensuring partnerships are focused on outcomes. Works effectively with colleagues in all departments.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Understands partnerships in the context of the "big picture"

Promotes and contributes to multi-agency partnerships to continually improve services for the citizen

Networks effectively internally and externally

Identifies the expertise of others

Proactively shares knowledge and information

Seeks out the most appropriate people to contribute to partnership working, both inside and outside the service

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Pay lip service to partnerships or work in isolation

Promoting a Citizen Centred Culture

Drives and promotes an outward-facing culture and service that is genuinely citizen focused.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Recognises the importance of contributions from the community to setting and achieving continually improving services

Promotes and develops a continually improving citizen-focused culture within the service

Contributes to initiatives enabling regular consultation and feedback from citizens on the quality and appropriateness of service delivery.

Engages with the community appropriately and respectfully

Is an ambassador for the organisation and the community it serves

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Deliver services that meet organisational needs rather than the needs of citizens

Working With Councillors

Understands the political context and is aware of own role and responsibilities when communicating with Councillors or referring to others.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Establishes and continually improves positive and appropriate interaction with all Councillors

Provides timely, constructive, high quality professional advice to assist the political decision making process

Abides positively with the protocols relevant to the political relationship

Is confident to refer enquiries to others when appropriate

A Blaenau Gwent Manager does not

Allow self or colleagues to be intimidated or fail to adhere to appropriate protocols when self or colleagues interact with Councillors, including inappropriately influencing, or being influenced, to the detriment of the organisation

Pushing the Boundaries

Is creative and innovative in seeking to continually improve the service. Manages change effectively and is willing to take calculated risks. Challenges where appropriate.

A Blaenau Gwent Manager

Regularly and constructively challenges the status quo

Proactively thinks how potential change will affect the citizen

Taps into the innovative and creative potential of others

Considers different methods/approaches

Encourages others to suggest new ideas

Supports and develops others' ideas

Looks creatively inside and outside the organisation for new ideas and actively shares good practice

A Blaenau Gwent Manager is not

Satisfied with maintaining the existing arrangements and performance of the service