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Competency-based Feedback:
Here's all that you need to know

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Competency-based feedback

Many are moving towards a system that provides feedback more frequently and supports peer-to-peer input. This is beneficial because employees are more likely to remember feedback, feel more engaged with the company, and improve their performance more quickly.

Competency-based feedback focus on developing the behaviors — the competencies — that are essential for developing employees. Competency-based feedback look at how an employee's actions over a defined time led to meeting or missing defined objectives, so you gain an understanding of where an employee stands at present and what additional behaviors they should develop for future success.

Most competencies can be developed through training or mentoring, and many can be improved with the right guidance and ongoing feedback.

When competency-based feedback is shared, you can address your employees with how the business wishes to function; what core values they should be focused on, what they can improve, and how they can meet the standards set by the company. This way you can improve performance as you and your employees have a firm understanding of one another's goals and how you plan to achieve those goals.

Defining competencies and roles

To implement competency-based feedback, you need to understand two concepts. The first is competencies, and the second is specific job roles.

Competencies reflect behaviors that are important to companies. These can be company values, attitudes, or the way in which you and your employees approach your work as a holistic organization. Job-specific competencies are more focused on how each employee will excel at their individual jobs. Competencies, in turn, help define roles. The behaviors you expect in a specific job become part of that job's definition.

1. Core Competencies are unique the set of skills that form the foundation of success for companies. Many companies outline a set of core company competencies for the entire in the form of a value statement. These skills are expected to be observed by all employees and form the DNA of the company.
2. Functional Competencies describe 'how' a specific job or role is expected to be performed and what behaviors or skills are expected from employees in their positions. Many companies work with their management team and leadership groups to carefully define job-specific competencies for every role plus additional for leadership or unique roles.

Competency-based feedback is one solution that many organizations are turning to in order to measure and evaluate on-the-job behaviors. Competencies allow you to quantify success for behavioral requirements, skills, knowledge, and abilities. By adding competencies into conversations about performance, you will be able to better position the conversation and articulate where there are gaps in an employee's skills.

Every company should have a competency framework, which consists of a set of core and functional competencies. This serves to strengthen and highlight the core culture while setting out expectations.

How can competencies be used for Employee Feedback?

This section addresses the connection between job competencies and the feedback process itself.

1. **Creating the Feedback**

The focus of the competency-based feedback is on the behaviors, and how the behaviors tie back to the successful execution of company goals. This type of feedback aims to link the overarching objectives and the competencies in a very clear, transparent way.

2. **Conducting the Feedback**

The manager must begin the actual feedback process by setting the competencies associated with the job role. Once the employee has expressed an understanding of the expectations, the manager can go into providing feedback. The feedback should lead to a dialogue between manager and employee. The ultimate goal is to move to the next stage, development, where the manager and employee agree on a course of action, next steps, and a commitment around specific competencies that will increase overall performance on defined competencies.

3. **Interpreting competency-based feedback**

As you collect more information from your competency-based feedback, you need to interpret the data you're getting. Nothing in the performance management life cycle is static. All of it needs to be adjusted according to the real data you're getting back. Based on the data you collect from competency-based reviews, there are a number of different scenarios that could present themselves for interpreting and acting on what you learn.

The manager will play a critical role during this process as he needs to play the role of the coach in helping the employee "proactively" interpret the results. The manager would need to utilize coaching techniques to minimize defensiveness and increase the likelihood for positive change that can result from the competency-based feedback process.

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Examples of Competencies

Competencies can vary between different industries and levels of seniority, though the majority are found across many industries. We outline the most popular competencies that are used by many organizations.

Execution Skills

- Making timely decisions
- Gathering relevant information if necessary
- Prioritizing well to meet objectives
- Keeping things simple
- Learning from past experiences
- Getting things done
- Delivering high-quality output

Communication skills

- Communicating clearly
- Writing clearly and concisely
- Speaking fluently and effectively
- Using the right channels and form of communication for each situation
- Adjusting message to the audience
- Listening carefully
- Presenting ideas and opinions clearly

Teamwork skills

- Supporting peers when needed
- Sharing success
- Acknowledging the contribution of others
- Providing useful feedback
- Taking ownership
- Building team spirit
- Being easy to get along with

Leadership skills

- Inspiring others
- Listening actively
- Empowering others
- Communicating vision clearly
- Working with integrity
- Involving the right people in the decision-making process

People Management skills

- Providing actionable feedback
- Taking care of the team's well-being
- Communicating expectations clearly
- Demonstrating expertise
- Keeping team focused on priorities
- Sharing relevant information
- Helping me understand how I am performing

Project Management skills

- Delivering excellent customer service
- Finding the right balance between customer needs and own goals
- Earning customers' trust
- Keeping things simple for the customer
- Identifying well how to influence decisions within the customer's organization
- Pitching solutions effectively
- Keeping up with trends to foster domain expertise

Collaboration skills

- Effectively informing colleagues
- Involving relevant people
- Clarifying the desired outcome of the meeting
- Keeping discussion relevant
- Communicating decisions and actions after meeting
- Contributing with valuable input

Competency-based feedback with PeopleGoal

With PeopleGoal you can easily set a competency-based feedback model. You can build your model from or scratch or install the app available in our App Store and then you are ready to go. With the competency-based app, employees and managers can create and share competency feedback forms easily and fast. The feedback is kept under each employee's inbox and can be easily accessed at any time by the employee and the manager as well.

Setting a competency-based feedback process starts with defining the competencies you would like to examine – taking under consideration company and role-specific goals. Once your feedback template has been created it can be used directly for collecting feedback and finally give you a 360 view of the employees' performance on the specific qualities the company has set. Finally, you can create a range of competencies expressed and aligned with the scope and context of your business needs.

PeopleGoal also offers the ability to create libraries of core and functional competencies with full descriptions, observable behaviors, increasing the relevance across the entire organization. HR admins can assign competencies into groups, and designate competency groups for each department or team, ensuring that all the skills or attributes that employees in certain areas of the company need to be evaluated on.
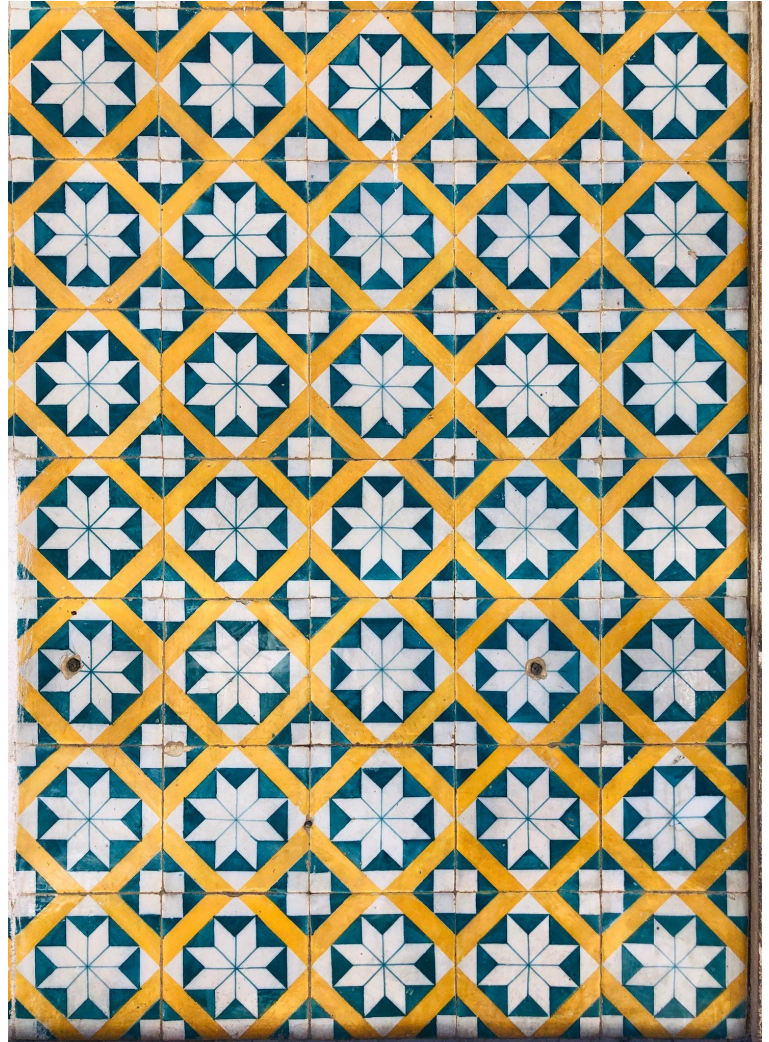
With PeopleGoal, you can create custom reports and analyze the data from the feedback process to draw the insights most needed for employee development. You can break down feedback and benchmark employees on a variety of dimensions to detect opportunities for growth.

PeopleGoal fully embraces customization and allows you to define the parameters of your feedback process. For example, you can define different competencies per job level, add additional fields for open-ended feedback questions, collect feedback from many different stakeholders and finally create a feedback culture.

Competency-based feedback with PeopleGoal

Benefits

- *Desired objectives and results of competency-based feedback*
- *Identify abilities and skills of employees*
- *Self-reflection of those being evaluated regarding their competences*
- *Open a channel of communication between employers and employees*
- *Learn about strengths and areas for improvement*
- *Identify training and development needs*
- *Employees who are better prepared for the company's future challenges*
- *Strategic vision. Align professional development with the objectives of the company*

With competency feedback you can help employees increase their self-awareness, understand their strengths and blind spots. On top of this, you will remove bias and drive a well-rounded review process that counts on opinions that matter the most.

Whether you are starting with core competencies, or would like to assign competencies at the position-level, PeopleGoal makes it easy for you create, assign, share and evaluate feedback on your employees competencies.

PeopleGoal

Engage, Develop, Perform.

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