THE COMPETENCY TOOLKIT

VOLUME II

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THE COMPETENCY TOOLKIT

PART III

USING A COMPETENCY-BASED MULTI-RATER ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

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Using a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment System

CONTENTS

USING A COMPETENCY-BASED MULTI-RATER ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

I. Introduction

Now that your organization has at least one competency model for a key, strategic job in the organization, you are ready to use the model to the advantage of the organization and its employees.

There are several options for doing so, *assuming that your model meets the reliability and validity requirements essential to the application.* You can use the model to:

- Select new employees for the job
- Identify training needs for current and future employees
- Create a competency and outputs/results-driven pay system for the job
- Design succession planning and career management systems
- Assess employees' competency strengths and areas for improvement (this is called *competency assessment*)
- Use competency assessment results for individual development planning, to narrow gaps between necessary and existing competencies

The most logical next step for most organizations is to use the competency model elements to design, develop, and create a competency assessment system for use in employee development planning. Specifically, competency assessment results provide the critical raw materials needed to plan for competency development, to understand and plan ways to meet employee training and individual development needs, and to assess the impact of workers' competencies upon productivity and organization performance.

In this part of the *Toolkit*, we describe what a competency-based multi-rater assessment system is and explain how you might gain support from senior managers in the organization for the concepts, how you will gather data for that system, and how you can create and implement such a system.

It is especially important that you introduce competency assessment practices to the organization's senior managers. Senior managers generally have little information and a very limited perspective on the performance of their subordinates. The accuracy and specificity of this performance information declines in detail with each subsequent layer of performance for which the manager is responsible. Senior managers are expected to focus their attention on such topics as profit and loss indicators, production data, and service statistics, as well as the employee performance issues that influence those factors. These managers are not always aware of the roadblocks employees face as they attempt to produce the outputs or results expected of them. Yet these roadblocks can and do influence individual and organizational performance.

A. Purpose

The purpose of this part of the *Toolkit* is to inform you of the basic concepts, principles, and practices involved in using competency-based multi-rater assessment systems in an organizational setting. The materials included in this part of the *Toolkit* will help you assess your organization's needs and readiness for such a system. It will also provide you with guidance on how to design, implement, and evaluate a system of this kind in your organization.

First, this part of the *Toolkit* provides step-by-step guidance for an organizationally identified project manager to prepare, use, and interpret a competency-based multi-rater assessment system based on a competency model, such as that developed through the use of Part II in the Competency *Toolkit*.

Second, it includes a set of facilitator guidelines with accompanying presentation transparencies that can be used to explain and justify the value of competency-based multi-rater assessment to senior leaders of the organization.

Third, it provides the project manager with a list of print- and web-based resources that can enhance the information provided in this part of the *Toolkit*.

B. How Part III is Organized

The contents of this part of the *Toolkit* include a review of the "basics" of a competency-based multi-rater assessment system: what it is; how it can be used; who benefits from having one in the organization; how one benefits; the system requirements for such a system; and the steps for designing, implementing and evaluating a competency-based multi-rater assessment system.

A management briefing component that you can use to obtain endorsement for such a system from your organization's senior managers is also included.

We have included sample pages from assessment materials as they would appear in actual use. A comprehensive Master Bibliography including print materials and web-based references on the key topics is included at the close of the *Toolkit*.

II. The Basics of Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessments

A. What is Competency Assessment?

We have said that competencies are the tools that employees and other persons use for effective performance, regardless of the performance setting. *Competencies* were defined in an earlier part of the *Toolkit* as the knowledge, skills, values, social roles, and other characteristics that an individual uses, in appropriate ways, to produce some product or render some service to meet the needs of a customer, client, constituent, or some other person. This definition has a significant corollary: not all human characteristics are competencies. A human characteristic is a competency only *if it can be shown to be required for successful performance*.

Once a performance requirement has been defined, the competencies soon follow. Before we assign a performance requirement to an employee, we must make certain that the employee possesses the necessary competency—or competencies—at the appropriate level of strength needed to meet the organization's performance requirement, and that the employee can apply it appropriately. In order to do this, we must first conduct a *competency assessment* of some sort to make that determination.

Competency assessment, to define it simply, is an evaluation of an individual performer's competence in comparison to some performance requirement or expectation—such as a competency model. There are many types of competency assessments being used today in the business world. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Paper-and-pencil tests
- Assessment centers
- Simulation exercises
- Multi-rater feedback methods
- Licenses (which are usually government-issued)
- Certification practices (which also might be government-run)
- Credentialing
- Board examinations

This part of the *Toolkit* focuses on what is required to design and gain support for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system, or what is more commonly known as a "360-degree (or multi-rater) full-circle feedback system." The term *360-degree assessment* takes its name from the number of degrees in a circle. A *360-degree assessment* examines an individual or performer from the perspective of those surrounding that individual or performer in a full circle—such as subordinates, superordinates (bosses), peers, customers, suppliers, distributors, or even family members. A *competency-based multi-rater assessment* refers to a competency assessment carried out for an individual by more than one person.

This term will be used throughout the remainder of this Part of the *Toolkit*. Alternative terms are sometimes used, based on the notion of a 360-degree assessment. For instance, a *180-degree assessment* is an examination of an individual performer by some of the participants in a 360-degree assessment, such as only subordinates, and superordinates without peers. While a 180-degree assessment is not as rigorous as a 360-degree assessment, it is faster and less expensive to do.

B. How are competency-based multi-rater assessments used?

Competency-based multi-rater assessment results are often used to:

1. Help supervisors, managers, executives, and other organization employees understand how other persons with whom they interact perceive the degree to which they possess, and appropriately use, the competencies required for successful job performance. Multi-rater feedback can identify an individual's strengths and needs for development in a quick and relatively inexpensive way, providing it is properly designed and used.
2. Provide supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers.
3. Identify specific employee competency strengths and shortfalls, compared to what the organization needs to achieve its strategic objectives, values, and visions.
4. Provide information to employees that is useful for career development and that will help them identify ways they might be able to move inside or outside the organization.
5. Provide information about performance management services and/or pay-for-performance decisions, but only when exceptionally high technical standards are adopted and maintained for the administration and when multi-rater assessment information is used.

C. Who benefits from using competency-based multi-rater assessments, and how do they benefit?

All levels of the organization benefit from having high-quality competency-based multi-rater assessment practices in place and working.

First, the organization benefits because a competency-based multi-rater assessment can help:

1. Identify employees possessing key competencies that are critical to an organization's success.
2. Identify employees' competency gaps *before* they create a problem.

3. Provide data that justifies employee development expenditures.
4. Provide valuable information for succession planning and career planning—such as assessments of individual potential (Rothwell, 1994).

Second, employees benefit because a competency-based multi-rater assessment:

1. Can provide the necessary justification for the organization to devote time, money, and other resources to help an individual receive specific support for competency acquisition and application.
2. Dramatize the importance of the affective elements (that is, the feelings or attitudes) affecting job performance and employees' impact upon others.
3. Help individuals identify their competency strengths and weaknesses as perceived by others within the organization.
4. Suggest the need to consider alternative career choices, pursuits, and areas of exploration for career satisfaction.
5. Provide sensitive personal information to employees about the influence of their behaviors upon those with whom they interact.
6. Improves communications among peers regarding key performance issues.
7. Improves team relationships and performance.

Third, supervisors and managers benefit because a competency-based multi-rater assessment:

1. Provides insights into subordinate and peer competency strengths and weaknesses.
2. Provides information on the manager's strengths and development needs.
3. Suggests possible alternative career choices that might be more consistent with the managers' preferred work styles and approaches.
4. Uncovers otherwise-unknown expectations of others.
5. Provides ideas for the development of new or different job behaviors that might not have been considered or valued by managers in the past.

In summary, employees at all organizational levels need timely, concrete, and specific feedback on their individual performance and on the organization's performance in order to have a well-rounded, comprehensive view of how well objectives are being addressed and achieved. Indeed, it is lack of feedback that causes many human performance problems; improvements in the timeliness and specificity of feedback is a key way by which organizations can enhance human performance (Rothwell, 1996).

D. Additional Benefits of Multi-Rater Assessment Information

Additional benefits can be realized from competency-based multi-rater assessment.

1. *Unrevealed expectations are discovered.* A well-designed multi-rater assessment system often reveals otherwise unrevealed expectations, directions, views, strengths, or weaknesses in the organization or its employees.
2. *Comprehensive information is provided.* A competency-based multi-rater assessment system can provide assessment data from many sources, some of which may have never been consulted on performance issues in the past. This helps improve performance in new ways.
3. *Job performance requirements are established.* Competency lists can be used to establish job performance requirements and expectations that are often manifested in feedback comments and ratings. Many decision-makers in organizations believe, sometimes without foundation, that their organization has established and communicated clear and useful job performance feedback standards. However, competency-based multi-rater feedback often reveals that workers are not fully aware of all performance standards or how they should be used.
4. *Accountability is established for performance improvement.* The person who is rated is immediately responsible for competency assessment data and how they are to be used for action planning and improvement in future performance periods.
5. *Competency-based multi-rater assessment is systems-based and systems-compatible.* Competency-based multi-rater assessment systems integrate well with other human resource management subsystems in terms of the data they provide for input to those systems and the data those subsystems generate to the multi-rater system.

The establishment of a competency-based multi-rater assessment system in an organization can reveal other information about workers and their performance. The approach, for example, can answer questions such as these:

1. How much and how well are employees at all organizational levels given the fullest support possible by their managers to achieve maximum performance?
2. How much and how well do employees receive adequate positive and corrective performance feedback?
3. How well are employees treated with respect?
4. How well are employees treated with dignity?

It is clear from the points listed above that a well-designed and implemented competency-based multi-rater assessment system can provide powerful intended and unintended benefits to the organization and its employees.

Exhibit 1: A Diagram Representing Potential Participants of a Multi-Rater Full-Circle Assessment

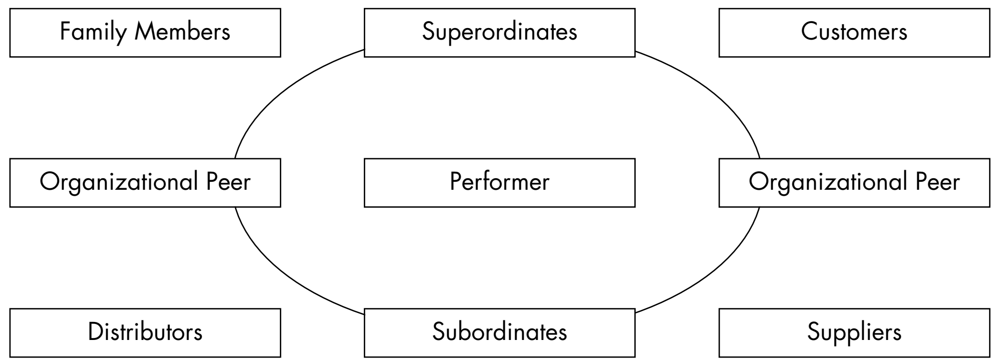
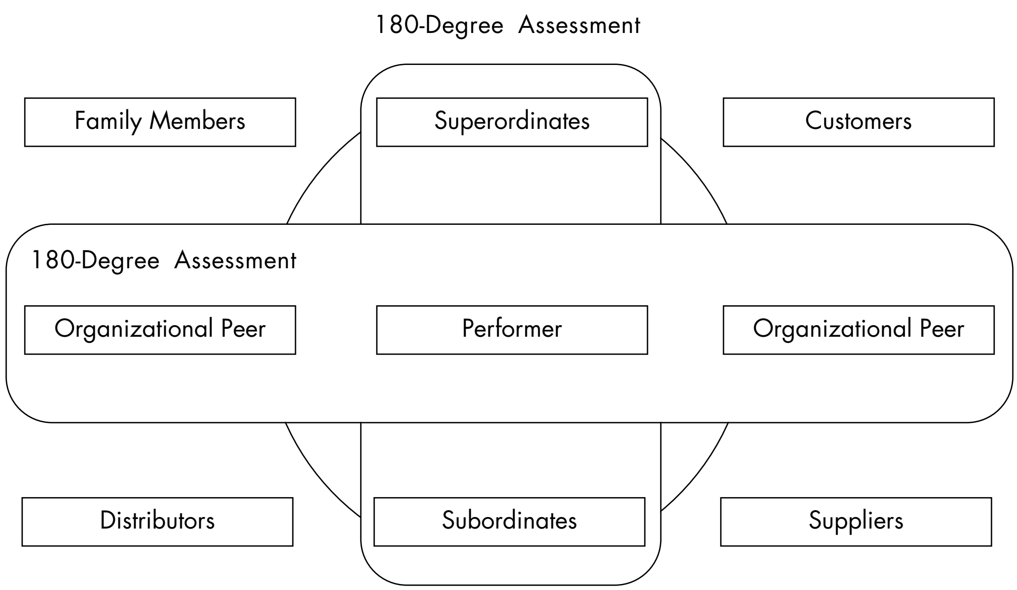


Exhibit 2: A Diagram Representing Some Potential Participants in a 180-Degree or Half-Circle Assessment



E. Requirements for a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment System

As you begin to think about implementing a competency-based multi-rater assessment system in your organization, here is what you will need to construct, already have in place, or be aware of in order to ensure project success:

- Valid and reliable competency models are available to employees and supervisors for all jobs to be included in the assessment system.
- All parties trust the processes and are open to possibilities for learning about their own performance strengths and their performance improvement needs and opportunities. Building trust takes time, and it requires that confidences are maintained and that promises are kept.
- Confidentiality of the system outputs must be assured.
- The anonymity of the assessment ratings must be assured.
- The job competencies must reflect the organization's priorities.

Comment: Small organizations might find it difficult to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of assessment information. Consequently, alternative assessment approaches might need to be considered.

- Raters must know, or learn how to provide, high-quality assessment information that will be useful to the recipients.
- Recipients of multi-rater assessment data must be trained in how to receive, acknowledge, accept, and use the information they are given to identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance. Subsequently, they must take corrective action to close performance gaps.
- Technical human resources and technology must be available to the organization. If necessary, arrangements must be made to obtain them externally.

Proceed with Caution! Rigid and highly competitive organization cultures can make it difficult to effectively implement a competency-based multi-rater assessment system because people are resistant to give or receive performance feedback in such a setting. Alternative assessment methods might need to be identified for these organizations.

F. Key Quality Criteria for a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment System

Since the information that is produced by a multi-rater assessment system can have major impacts on individual employees, their performance, and life-work decisions, it is absolutely essential that the system produce high-quality outputs. The following minimum, although key, criteria can be used to assess the quality of a competency-based multi-rater assessment system:

1. *Reliable data are collected.* Ratings should change in the same direction and with the appropriate intensity as changes occur in an employee's or a manager's performance over time.
2. *Consistent assessment methods are used.* The same (identical) scales are used throughout the instrument and across assessment applications so that reliable and valid comparisons can be made, assuming other assessment variables are held constant across multiple applications of the system.
3. *Valid and reliable data collection is maintained.* The instrument and data-collection methods should measure what they claim to measure, and they must do so consistently.
4. *The competency-based multi-rater assessment approach is easy to use.* When using repeated measures, raters must understand the meaning of each item and the correct and consistent way to respond to the items.
5. *The assessment items are focused on performance.* The assessment items should focus on the competencies that are most important to the organization and the achievement of its objectives, values, and vision. The assessment should be as brief as possible, and it should also provide space for the rater to provide narrative comments that will give the user useful and performance-related feedback from the rating information.
6. *The assessment system design and outputs support the strategic business plan of the organization.* The project sponsor and manager must be able to provide ample illustrations of how the system outputs contribute to meeting the organization's bottom-line results.

G. Designing a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment System

Now that you understand some of the basics of competency-based multi-rater assessment systems, you are at a decision point: do you choose to proceed with implementing your own system? To help you make that decision, we suggest that you review the twelve action steps listed on page 3–15, and then think through, on a preliminary basis, whether the business need exists in your organization for such a system, whether senior management would support the project, and whether you are likely to have the necessary resources and time to design, implement, and evaluate a competency-based multi-rater assessment system. In addition, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Have you already researched and developed at least one or more competency models and obtained management endorsement of them? If not, then you need to return to Part II of the *Toolkit* and get on with the work described there.
2. Will you be able to assure rater anonymity and the confidentiality of the assessment outcomes, once data have been collected? Your answer must be *yes* for project success.
3. Can you provide training to the raters on how to give performance feedback? This is a critical success factor for any competency-based multi-rater assessment project.
4. Can you acquire the technical resources required to carry out the project—including the survey instrument, cover letters, procedures for administering the instrument, data collection, and management mechanisms for report production? These requirements are an absolute "must" for project success.
5. Do you have, or can you acquire, the resources needed to administer the assessments, including follow-up calls to non-respondents?
6. Who will process the data and prepare the assessment reports for the participants? This must be clarified.
7. Can you provide training for the participants in how to accept, adequately interpret, and use the assessment data in constructive ways through the completion of formal action planning?
8. How and who will evaluate the project, both at its formative and its implemented stages?

As you can see, each item above can pose formidable challenges to you along the way. Avoid being "blind-sided" by them; plan your path with great care using the information included in the next section.

H. The Steps for Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment System

So, how do you begin to design, implement, and evaluate a competency-based multi-rater assessment system? We have identified twelve steps, many of which either overlap or are closely related to each other, that must be successfully completed to create and implement a competency-based multi-rater assessment system in an organization setting. You won't find an absolute agreement on the exact steps that should be followed, since organization applications differ. As you may have already discovered, the way you create and implement such a system will depend on many things. One factor with particular impact, for example, is whether the participants and the raters in a competency-based multi-rater assessment system are geographically near one another. If participants are not centrally located, then the degree of geographic dispersion heavily affects the data-collection approaches and options that are available to the organization, and the degree to which the participants have flexibility and the capability to select alternate methods. This could also potentially affect raters' opinions. The need to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of multi-rater assessment data further affects the complexity of the data collection and security issues. Numerous other operational examples can be cited.

Accordingly, we give you our suggestions for successful practice, including ways to surmount the challenges of setting up and maintaining an efficient and effective competency-based multi-rater assessment system in your organization.

Finally, competency assessment data should only be used as guidelines to help employees improve their performance. *The competency assessment data collected through implementation of this system should* never *be used as part of an employee's performance appraisal.* This issue is discussed later.

Briefly stated, the major steps you must complete to design, implement, and evaluate a competency-based multi-rater assessment system include the following:

1. Deliver a briefing on competency assessment to senior managers.
2. Identify the organization's business needs.
3. Select a project manager and project team.
4. Allocate project resources.
5. Make a "Go/No-Go" project decision.
6. Create or obtain a competency model for each job.
7. Develop data-collection instruments.
8. Train the raters.
9. Develop and test the data input, analysis, and reporting system.
10. Collect the assessment data from raters.
11. Train the assessment participants to interpret their ratings.
12. Assess the achievement of the project objectives.

Multi-rater performance assessment systems and their outputs are currently being used by many organizations around the world for a variety of purposes, such as to identify individual employee-development needs, to analyze performance circumstances and situations confronted by individual employees and teams to conduct and to determine employee compensation decisions.

The approaches, practices, procedures, and processes described in this part of the *Toolkit* are intended to help users obtain data and understand strengths and areas where employee

> **Note:** The information that follows is not intended to be a legal opinion or legal guidance for your organization (or any other organization, for that matter) on the use of an employee's competency assessment information for human resource management practices, and especially for performance appraisal purposes. You should consult your organization's legal counsel for professional opinions in these areas.

performance can be enhanced by acquiring or more effectively using competencies necessary to meet performance requirements. The assessment information generated from an application of the approaches and the suggestions that follow can be used to identify areas of strength as well as weak areas in terms of competencies that are required for the participant's job, as defined by a valid and reliable competency model for the job. After further analysis of the employee's competency needs, performance improvement action planning can proceed.

On the other hand, *we advise against using the data obtained from these assessment systems (as described here) for making sensitive personnel or human resource decisions, including (but not necessarily limited to) decisions associated with or related to hiring or dismissal, rewards and compensation, or the use, referral to, or the inclusion of data from this system in conducting or reporting performance appraisals*. We believe they can be safely used by supervisors and their subordinates in day-to-day performance management activities *that are strictly intended to help employees improve their performance when assessment data are identified and integrated with highly specific human resource development initiatives intended for performance improvement*.

Why is this so? In order to use multi-rater assessment results as a basis for sensitive human resource decisions, the user must be able to *guarantee*, usually through the use of rigorous empirical procedures and evidence, that the results to be used for these purposes are highly reliable and valid performance assessments. This requires the organization to adopt the use of considerably higher technical standards in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation from project inception to reporting than we are able to include in the context of this publication. The content of this *Toolkit* and the practices recommended are solely focused on the collection, analysis, and reporting of assessment information that is to be used only to plan improved performance—*and for no other purposes*. The issues associated with this recommendation are highly technical, and they usually require the assistance or advisory support of a statistical specialist.

In the event that you must create a competency-based multi-rater assessment system that provides assessment results that can be used for these more sophisticated purposes, we recommend that you consult Bassi and Russ-Eft (1997, pp. 87–108) and that you review selected passages from Edwards and Ewen (1996) for guidance. However, the basic practices included in this *Toolkit* must also be followed to create these more sophisticated systems. The major difference in the two approaches rests in the degree of statistical and other technical rigor that must be imposed to obtain assessment results of very high quality.

As we said in the introduction of this part, the system development steps listed and discussed in detail below are presented with the intent that you will be able to develop and implement a competency-based multi-rater assessment system that provides the data required to support performance planning and enhancement with employees of your organization. As you recall, many of the steps included below are interrelated; later steps often repeat key points that are important at multiple places in the development and implementation processes.

When certain processes or practices have already been developed in significant depth or detail by others and this information is readily available from other sources, we will refer you to those sources rather than reproduce that information here. We now proceed to a discussion of each step we recommend that you take to create a competency-based multi-rater assessment system for performance improvement in your organization.

Step 1: Deliver a Senior Management Briefing

In this step, you are provided with information on planning and delivering a Senior Management Briefing on competency-based multi-rater assessment systems. We have provided you with a starting point for this Briefing. (See Section III later.) However, you will need to modify this Briefing so that it is consistent with the specific needs of your organization and its key decision-makers.

In the briefing section of the *Toolkit*, we recommend that the Project Manager hold informal discussions with the organization's formal and informal leaders and key persons on the topics discussed in this part of the *Toolkit*. The outcomes of these discussions will provide you with a sense of how well a competency-based multi-rater assessment system might be accepted in your organization. These individuals will be able to advise you on how to proceed (or not proceed). By the time of the briefing session, you will be prepared to specifically address the audience's information and discussion needs in ways that will lead to the endorsement of a plan to proceed to design, develop, and implement such a system. We have provided far more information in the briefing materials than you will probably need in order to gain support for competency assessment in the organization, so your role is to tailor the briefing to your organization's corporate culture.

Your objective in conducting a management briefing is to introduce key leaders in your organization to the concept of using a competency-based multi-rater assessment system as a next logical step in the drive toward gaining competent job performance, and especially for those employees at any given time who are critical to the organization's business needs.

We have also provided an overview of competency-based multi-rater assessment systems and the benefits of their use that you can distribute to the participants before the briefing session. Participants can use this brief paper as an advance organizer for the briefing content. Its purpose is to stimulate responses to briefing issues, and it should facilitate managers' decision-making on whether to adopt the approach.

The objectives of the Management Briefing are to:

1. Define competency-based multi-rater assessment and clarify other important terms and concepts associated with it.
2. Explain the benefits and costs associated with competency-based multi-rater assessment and describe preconditions that must be met before doing it.
3. Clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based multi-rater assessment (that is, state measurable objectives that will be accomplished by implementing a competency-based multi-rater assessment system, even if the effort is a pilot test).
4. Determine the organization's commitment to establishing and maintaining a competency-based multi-rater assessment system.
5. Plan the action steps needed for implementing a competency-based multi-rater assessment system in the organization.

All the materials you need for the Briefing, including the pre-briefing handout and hard-copy transparency masters, are included later in Part III. We suggest that you pause in reviewing the remaining steps and carefully read the Management Briefing in Section III.

Step 2: Identify business needs

Competency-based multi-rater assessment systems make sense in the context of understanding the organization's business needs, both now and in the immediate future. Organizations handle the gathering of such business needs in various ways. The purpose of this step is to review the outcomes and alternatives in the event that managers were unable to clearly identify their current or future business needs.

Organizations handle this situation in various ways. If business needs are not available and the assessment system is to serve the entire organization, then it might help to review the organization's strategic business plans or objectives. You may recall that in your work with Part I of this *Toolkit*, we recommended that you complete a Worksheet to determine linkages among competency identification, modeling and assessment, and achievement of the organization's strategic business objectives. We suggest that you return to Part I and review those results before proceeding. Remember that your goal should be to obtain answers to these questions:

- What are the current business emphases of the organization?
- What do strategists want to accomplish in the near term?
- Where do strategists want to position the business within the next two or three years?
- What issues are strategically important, and what are not important?
- How stable is the organization and the industry or business it is in?

Sometimes practitioners deliberately choose to have a competency-based multi-rater assessment system serve only one department or work area, rather than the entire organization. This is frequently the case when senior managers want to introduce the use of multi-rater assessment in their organization by conducting a limited pilot test of the assessment processes and the use of the assessment results. At other times, they will decide to focus on only one or two areas of the organization for other reasons. These could include, for example, the use of a limited investment to address a current strategic issue, improve performance in a traditionally difficult area of the organization, and so on.

What kind of information do you gather in these situations? If one of these reasons or similar ones exist, you and the sponsoring department can identify what their immediate business needs are and the key jobs or competency sets that are of most importance to them both now and in the immediate future. This might require that you interview key managers or individual contributors and then document the findings, in writing, for endorsement by the department's senior leader. This additional research has a payoff for all steps in the process. Remember that the assessments must be related to performance, and that performance occurs because somebody has one or more ultimate business objectives or needs that must be met. Interpreting the assessment findings depends upon an awareness of these relationships and issues.

Step 3: Select the Project Manager and Project Team

Every organization project of this type must have, at a minimum, a project manager. There are additional advantages to having a Project Team that can lend realistic support and advice to the project manager and interpret the project to others in the organization units where the assessment system is to be introduced. Members of the Project Team might also make contributions to the work of the project by being individual contributors for select project tasks.

First, the project needs the support of a *full-time* Project Manager. The project can also be developed by a project team, but if this option is selected, a clearly defined team leader with organizational authority to take action when it is most needed is essential to project success. It is best that these decisions are made by the managers during the management briefing session. If those decisions were not made at that time, then they must be addressed immediately. Work should not begin until such time as this person is clearly recognized and appointed by a manager with the authority to do so. Further, this person should be officially recognized by the chief project sponsor. If this cannot be achieved, then the project should probably be abandoned.

Second, once the decisions about a Project Manager have been successfully resolved, a decision must be made as to whether a Project Team will be used. If the answer is "yes," then a group of "influence leaders" from the departments or work areas who will be directly affected by the assessment system must be identified, and their participation ensured for the duration of the project. Their roles will be multi-faceted. The part-time Project Team will review the project policies, processes, and procedures and suggest improvements or revisions to the Project Manager. Members of the team will also serve as “ambassadors” for the project objectives and activities in the work areas where it is to be implemented. Team members will, in effect, be advocates for the system and its benefits to individual employees and the organization as a whole. Similarly, team members can also alert the Project Manager to sources of resistance or operational problems associated with system design or implementation. Completing select tasks or aspects of the project products or processes might be an ideal developmental assignment for certain team members (see Rothwell, 1999). There are many other benefits to using a Project Team, outlined in the work of Rothwell and others cited in the Bibliography.

Step 4: Allocate Project Resources

Without resources, the project objectives cannot be accomplished. What resources will be needed and at what time(s) in the project? How can they be acquired, and what will they cost? Is the cost worth the investment that is needed to achieve the project results and outputs? Once again, we call your attention to the fact that at this stage of the project, goals of the briefing session should be to determine what sources will be needed, how they will be allocated, and how you will gain commitment of those resources.

It is time for you to answer this difficult question, at this stage of your work: Have adequate resources been allocated to the project? If not, will additional resources be made available at a later time? Are the resources coming from internal or external sources? You will need to know the answers to these highly important questions. The difficulty here is that you will need to revisit these questions and repeatedly answer them as the project progresses!

As an example, let’s consider one aspect of the project from a resource perspective. As the Project Manager, you must assure the anonymity of raters’ responses to the assessment items they will complete AND hold yourself accountable for maintaining the confidentiality of the assessment responses once the data have been analyzed and the reports written. This requires that you have computer-literate personnel and appropriate technology readily available to the project staff shortly following the project’s inception. The accountability and integrity of the project’s products can be guaranteed only to the degree that the persons working with you can be trusted to maintain anonymity and maintain confidentiality. That is why some organizations use external vendors or temporary workers to handle the assessment data and resultant reports. Consequently, before you need these resources, you will have to determine what the best combination of assistance will be and how those persons can be procured, for what time period, and at what cost. Certainly you know you will need this resource, but not the specifics. Senior managers need to understand this dilemma when you discuss project resources.

Step 5: Make a "Go" or "No-Go" decision

Should the project be pursued further in the organization at this time? Should it be postponed? Abandoned altogether? *Now is the time to decide*.

Without human and technological resources assurances of trust, you and your assessment system will eventually crash and burn, to use a popular 1990s expression. This is not just frivolous talk: We are absolutely serious when we advise you of this important matter at this time. There are those persons in organizations who believe that they can accomplish just about anything they set their mind to accomplish, with or without adequate resource support from their organization. *This is* not *one of those projects!* The sheer workload involved in data-gathering and processing, even for a small number of assessment participants, can be a full-time and daunting burden to the most competent of workers.

What do you do if you find yourself in an unfortunate situation? For example, what if you are expected to produce the outputs and results outlined here, yet the resources that have been made available to achieve those results or outputs are inadequate? We cannot encourage you too strongly to approach the project sponsor or organizational unit head with a suggestion to cancel or delay the project until such time as the *appropriate* resources can be devoted to it. Cite the risks of a system failure and the longer-term implications of that failure upon the installation of a competency-based multi-rater assessment system in the organization. Unless you are successful in changing a decision-maker's mind to allocate the resources needed for project success, then you must recommend that the project be a "NO-GO" at this time, with this organizational unit. An alternative, of course, is to find a sponsor elsewhere in the organization who is sympathetic to the resource needs and feels that the results to be achieved will justify the necessary resource expenditures, and who has the clout to obtain them.

In the event that you are forced to begin work on the project without the necessary resources, then you should take the time to keep extensive notes on your performance and the decisions you are making in an attempt to successfully perform as expected. (In fact, this is a perfectly sensible practice, even when adequate resources have been provided to the project.) Be certain to document the project-performance barriers you encounter, and how you overcame (or failed to overcome) them. In the meantime, you will want to diligently work to achieve as much as possible on the project tasks and outputs. Perhaps you will, as is oftentimes the case, have an opportunity at a later time to convince decision-makers of the value of the approach by virtue of the work you have already accomplished with limited resources. One way to successfully deal with low resource allocations is to extend the times for the completion of major project milestones. This is not always a satisfactory resolution of this problem, however, and should be a consideration of last resort.

Once you decide that there is a "GO" for the project, then you're ready to proceed to Step 6 of the design process: Creating or obtaining one or more competency models, which will serve as the key elements of your assessment tool.

Step 6: Create or obtain a competency model(s)

Without at least one valid and reliable competency model, there can be no results from a competency-based multi-rater assessment system. Discussion of this step will be brief. We assume that you, or others in your organization, have generated one or more competency models that can now become a foundation for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system for the targeted job (or jobs) of this project.

At times, organizations will acquire a competency model (or the "raw" competencies) for a job from another organization, or they will rapidly research the competencies for a job that managers have made highly visible in the organization and will then create a model for that job. If the acquired model (or raw competencies) is a fully reliable and valid one, then you can proceed to system development, again assuming that the resource issues have been successfully addressed. If they have, you are now ready to move to the next project step.

Step 7: Develop competency-based multi-rater data-collection instruments

This step sounds difficult. Yes, it can be a daunting task, but here we provide the help and some suggested print resources that you need, and just in time for you to use them to best effect.

It has often been said that designing survey data collection forms is somewhat of an "art," since experienced persons who spend much of their work time designing data collection forms know that certain technical and formatting standards must be followed if optimum results are to be achieved from their survey activities.

Survey data collection forms used for competency-based, multi-rater assessment purposes must:

- Be visually pleasing
- State the purpose of the survey and what will be done with the data respondents provide (for example, for assessment data they must be told that their responses will be combined with those of other respondents in such a way that their ratings cannot be identified by the assessment participant, thereby assuring anonymity)
- Indicate who will have access to the data that they and other respondents provide, and how those data will be used
- Contain specific, clear, unambiguous directions for providing responses and returning the data to the survey manager
- Be easy and quick to complete
- Include language that is familiar to the respondent
- Contain content that is not offensive or demeaning to the respondent

- Include rating options or categories that allow the respondent to accurately and precisely express her or his opinions on the issues presented in the instrument
- Allow space for respondents to provide their own comments or suggestions relevant to the subject matter of the survey
- Never compromise the respondents' anonymity if the requested information can in any way jeopardize the safety or privacy of the respondents if their true identities were to be revealed
- Be of a reasonable length
- Include specific instructions for the return of the completed instrument with minimum respondent effort. If a paper-and-pencil response is used, for example, include a pre-addressed envelope for return of the survey with the survey materials, with adequate return postage or a prepaid label attached if the piece is to be returned using an alternative service source

For an overview of survey materials needed for this type of survey, pause now in your reading and locate the Appendices section at the conclusion of this part of the *Toolkit*.

Since multi-rater assessment survey instruments are a specialized form of survey research, you will want to avoid asking any questions on the survey whose answers might compromise the identity of the respondent. Asking for demographic information such as a respondent's length of service, job title, or work location might reduce response rates. This forces you to ask and answer the question: "Why do we need that information anyway?" Simply stated, the only data of real importance on a multi-rater assessment survey form are the ratings of the competency strengths of the assessment participant. Of course, you must also have the name or some way of identifying the respondent for survey-management purposes. Most frequently, the authors imprint only the assessment participant's name at the top right-hand side of the survey form. We NEVER imprint the respondent's name or other identifier on the survey form. That raises a critical survey-management issue. How do you "manage" the survey—identify survey non-respondents in order to follow up with them during the data-collection period? This is a serious problem, because you are collecting only small samples of assessment information on the assessment participants, and all of it is critically important.

This survey issue plagues many multi-rater assessment system project managers, especially those who work in low-trust, authoritarian, and less-than-empowering organizations. How, then, can you identify survey nonrespondents *for survey management purposes only* when the data are respondent-sensitive? We'd like to explain a way that works for us when a paper-based survey is used for data collection. (This is usually not a problem when electronic accountability is used.)

Here's how we do it. Assign each rater a number or some other identifier (for example, 346-A8, 453) and maintain the security of the encoded list of identifiers and raters for the duration of the survey. You also need to note whether the rater is the supervisor, peer, or subordinate of the assessment participant; write this identifier on a small index card. When you send the survey package, include the index card, and explain to respondents that they should enclose the index card with their completed assessment forms so that their specific ratings can be used. Explain that this identifier will permit the survey manager to know that they returned the survey. However, their names cannot in any way be aligned with the ratings they provide, since this information was not written on their ratings report. In this way, the survey coordinator will be able to easily manage the survey.

We have had high success using this approach. It encourages a larger than usual initial response rate, which reduces the effort needed to follow up with nonrespondents. There are other creative ways to achieve a high response rate; see what fits best with your circumstances.

How many points should a performance assessment rating scale include when doing multi-rater assessments? There are arguments both for and against various evaluation levels. Experience indicates, however, that for collecting competency-based multi-rater assessment data, a ten-point assessment scale is useful; raters suggest that this type of scale allows them to finely discriminate their performance observations. A ten-point scale also helps the rater more readily identify an assessment participant's less-developed or less-used competencies in the performance context. Here is one that we particularly favor:

10 – 9	=	Strongly Agree
8 – 7 – 6	=	Agree
5 – 4 – 3	=	Disagree
2 – 1	=	Strongly Disagree
N/A	=	Not Appropriate

A sample page from a multi-rater data collection assessment form is included in the Appendices for your information. It is designed to collect data from the assessment participant and from persons who work with or are associated with the assessment participant in the performance context. These persons might include a participant's subordinates or peers, or other persons who have a close association with the participant.

For additional suggestions and illustrations of survey instrument design and operational issues associated with organization surveys, you should pause now and consult one or more of the following: Bourque and Fielder (1995), Edwards and Ewen (1996), Fink (1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 1995d, 1995e), Frey and Oishi (1995), Jones and Bearley (1995), and Litwin (1995). These sources include comprehensive descriptions of all aspects of survey design and management as well as related topics.

Step 8: Train the raters

Before the performance raters can be trained, the project manager or one of the support staff must do the following: (1) Identify the assessment participants; (2) Inform them of the purposes of the assessment process; (3) Have them identify the raters who should provide the assessment data (*see suggestions later*); (4) Provide information on how to contact each of the proposed raters and themselves, including their name, organization division or unit, mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, their work days and hours, and electronic mail addresses—including the e-mail address the survey office should use.

When staff are the persons being assessed in a competency assessment project, they are usually asked to identify ahead of time the following types and number of raters:

- Their immediate supervisor or manager
- Five to seven organization peers who are most familiar with their day-to-day performance
- Five to seven customers, clients, adult family members, and others who are highly familiar with the participant's day-to-day performance

When managers or supervisors are the assessment participants in a competency-based multi-rater assessment system, they are asked to include, at a minimum, the following types and numbers of raters:

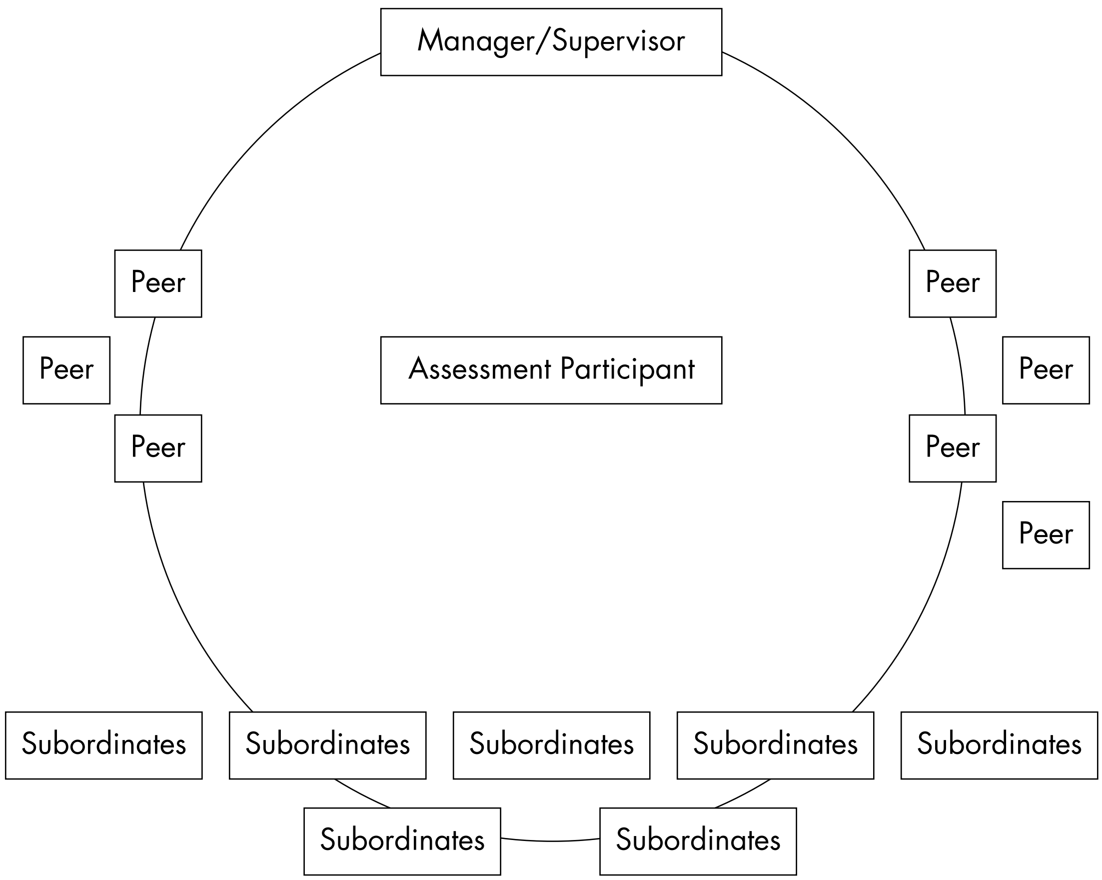
- Their supervisor or manager
- Five to seven subordinates
- Five to seven organization peers (persons at approximately the same level within the organization)

In this scenario (*see Exhibit 3*), each participant has the advantage of having performance feedback from his or her manager and up to 15 other persons, in addition to their own self-assessment. One data-reporting principle that must *never* be violated is that ratings for any competency should never be reported for a respondent group (for example, peers) unless at least three persons from that respondent subgroup reported a rating. Therefore, you will want to make sure you have as high a response rate as possible for your multi-rater system. This is another reason why as many as seven subordinates or seven peers should be named by the supervisor or manager for their assessments.

The assessment participants should be given a schedule of the survey activities—including training for the raters, and how they will participate in the assessment process.

"But why would you want to do that? Our people are smart and they don't need that kind of nonsense to waste their time! They complete organization surveys all the time," you are now thinking. Think again.

Exhibit 3: The Minimum Number of Participants in a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment



Training raters to adequately and accurately assess the job performance of other people is an absolutely essential project activity. Giving accurate and fair performance assessment ratings is quite a different process from that of completing a survey on the kind of foods one prefers from the company cafeteria! The training content should include the eight steps described below, but before you work through them, we suggest that you give the raters some background on the competency-based multi-rater assessment system that is being implemented in their organization. Include an overview of its purpose and expected outcomes, and an overview of how the system is designed and will be implemented and evaluated. Be certain to answer the following question, whether or not it is ever articulated this directly by the participants: "What is in all of this for me?" The answer to that question *must* be organization-specific, and possibly work-unit specific. Here are our suggested agenda items:

1. Describe the competency-based multi-rater assessment process and list key benefits of the use of the process to the organization and to those whose performance they will rate.
2. Explain the benefits to raters.
3. Describe the roles of each rater in the process.
4. Explain how the anonymity of the raters' responses will be maintained.
5. Describe who will receive the ratings and the use(s) to be made of the ratings.
6. Explain the importance of and procedures for having raters provide fair and objective ratings for those whose performance they are assessing (inaccurate or biased ratings will be of no value to the person rated, or to the organization).
7. Explain the value that is added by having a rater's written explanations of the ratings they provide.
8. Have raters demonstrate the ability to provide objective, unbiased ratings and supportive developmental suggestions that will support the participant's performance improvement.

The raters should actively participate in the training experience. Use an interactive instructional style, including the use of simulations, values-clarification exercises, and actual application exercises designed to help the raters provide highly accurate, yet unbiased, ratings for sensitive performance areas. Give participants ample opportunities to have their questions answered and their anxieties allayed concerning issues such as anonymity. Finally, all assessment scenarios should represent the performance context of the rater and the individual who is to be rated.

> **Caution:** A single breach of anonymity or confidentiality can ruin your competency-based multi-rater assessment system's reputation in the organization—and this will have serious long-term consequences!

Here's another essential: You must be fully prepared to keep your promises to the raters with respect to their anonymity and the confidentiality of the assessment information. This requires that you plan, implement, and frequently test system security as you proceed.

Step 9: Develop and test the data input, analysis, and reporting system

By the time you reach this step, you should have already given a great deal of thought to how you will collect, analyze, and report the findings of the multi-rater assessment system. This information was most probably determined during, or shortly following, the delivery of the management briefing, since the allocation of human and technological resources should have been an outcome of the briefing experiences.

For those who may need this information, we will briefly review below the various options that organizations consider during the planning process to collect, analyze, and report multi-rater assessment information. In most cases, the project manager will immediately rule out certain options (for example, on-line data collection and accountability) since their organization does not possess the technologies—or have them at the required level of sophistication necessary to support the use of the discarded option(s). Consequently, oftentimes the options for assessment data collection are minimal. This will often be the case with smaller organizations.

The generic data collection and inputting options include (but may not be limited to, due to rapid advances in technology) the following resources to support your data input, analysis, and reporting system:

- *Paper-and-pencil data-collection forms*, accompanied by the use of paper-and-pencil rating tallies and the computation of rating statistics using the tallies and a hand-held calculator. The probability of error when using this approach is very high.
- *Paper-and-pencil data collection* as described above, but *have the ratings entered into a statistical spreadsheet program*. These spreadsheets usually contain more than adequate statistical power to produce ratings and output assessment reports useful for development purposes. The probability of error is moderate.
- *The same paper-and-pencil approach* as first described, but *have the ratings marked on a form that can be "read" by a scanning optical character reader*. These data can be entered into a spreadsheet or some other software program that produces the ratings. Many software programs that often accompany scanner hardware will produce more than adequate assessment rating statistics that can be used for development purposes. Scanning technology does not render error-free statistics. To minimize errors with this approach, a person should audit the forms before scanning and should eradicate blemishes, multiple ratings, and so forth using a set of predetermined "editing criteria" prior to scanning the data forms. This can be a very time-consuming process for a project staff member to complete.

- *Use a telephone response to the rating information.* This can be done by using a touchtone telephone keypad. Raters sometimes question how well their anonymity can be protected when this approach is used. They are unable to provide narrative comments unless their responses are taken by a live person, which limits the richness of the data they can provide. This data-collection mode is very error-prone, but does lend itself to an audit by the project staff.
- *Use the organization's internal e-mail system* to distribute and collect competency-based multi-rater assessments. Questions about anonymity can be raised when this approach to data collection is used. For instance, how "secure" is the e-mail system? However, narrative comments are easy to make.
- *Have responses sent out and/or returned by fax.* This approach is really a form of paper-and-pencil response. Knowing how faxed pages tend to sometimes "wander across numerous desks" in an organization setting, this approach appears to de-emphasize anonymity, since others may see the fax. It does not allow for automated input, even by an optical character reader, unless a person records the responses on a mark-sense form while speaking with the rater.
- *Use a disk-based data-collection approach* especially popular with vendor products. Respondents are provided with a disk that includes survey items. They provide their ratings, which are then encrypted. Respondents feel more certain about their anonymity. They must have access to a personal computer, however. This approach is especially useful for obtaining narrative statements.
- *Use networked personal computer system data collection.* While costly, this approach provides a way of rapidly "institutionalizing" a competency-based multi-rater assessment system within an organization. The total cost decreases with larger user populations and with the number of uses made of the system over time. The system could be a local or wide area network. The assurance of respondents' anonymity exists in direct proportion to the level of trust employees have in the security of the organization's automated systems.

Most people have found that the advantages of electronic data collection outweigh the disadvantages, except for the continuing concern that some persons may express regarding the security issues associated with this approach.

But we realize that the data-handling approaches you select will depend upon the internal or external resources you have available, the software and personal computer platform that your organization uses, and the reaction of people in your organization to the assessment processes. For example, we have generally found that in low-trust, autocratic organizations, even the most secure electronic approaches are regarded with suspicion. In any case, we suggest that you do the following in order to evaluate methods:

1. Consider the number of assessment participants and raters to be included in the project start-up phase.
2. List the people who will work on the project.
3. Enumerate the technical and affective (or "attitudinal") competencies of people assigned to the project.
4. Identify the paper-and-pencil options that are available.
5. Identify the electronic resources that are available.
6. Assess the level of trust in the respondent and assessment participant population(s).
7. Identify the time requirements for achieving key project milestones.
8. Use some systematic analytical method to identify and evaluate the major advantages and disadvantages of each option, given the organizational setting.

To give you an idea of how long data collection takes and the staff one needs to do it, here are our observations: When the multi-rater assessment population includes up to about 25–30 persons with an estimated 12 sets of ratings for up to 25 competencies per rating set provided for each assessment participant, then you can create a spreadsheet program and input and process the data and print the reports in about 160–200 available work-hours. Although this estimate was not scientifically determined, if the time lines are liberal, then two full-time persons can complete the prescribed work in about a month, and possibly less. This is only a rough estimate; our experience indicates that even a small problem can heavily influence elapsed project time, and there are many "small" problems!! Consequently, please do not place blind faith in this estimate; every organizational situation is different.

The Master Bibliography found later in this *Toolkit* includes a list of web sites for vendors of survey design, development, and management software, as well as vendors of multi-rater assessment products. However, one caveat: We do not endorse these vendors or their products or services; we are simply providing them as sources of information so that you can locate specific information or determine the costs associated with certain services. This list of web sites is far from complete, since it changes frequently.

Multi-rater assessment software is also available in the share-ware market. You can use most Internet search engines to identify sources of free or inexpensive shareware from these sources. We cannot attest to the quality or security offered by these packages. The issues surrounding the adoption of the use of shareware products includes the following:

- Are they free from viruses?
- Are they up to date?
- What are the data-holding and analytical capacities of each program and its sub-programs?

- How much random access memory (RAM) does a system need to ensure smooth data handling and output operations?
- What are the printer requirements and settings necessary for optimum software use?
- Does the software have security protection?
- What data analysis and output report formats are available?
- How can software be used—local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN), single platform workstation, or others?
- Is the software compatible with the organization's operating systems?
- Can disk-based data gathering and input be accomplished using any of the shareware software products?
- What other data-acceptance capabilities does it have?

Other questions will come to mind as you gain experience with assessment elements and the hardware and software choices you have made. Now, at least, you know the critical questions to ask. Without knowing more about your organization setting and opportunities that exist there, the authors find it difficult to provide you with specific guidance on this topic.

We have found that once you have selected the data collection, analysis, and report development options that are most appropriate for your organization and for meeting the project requirements, you should do a "walk through" of the system elements and debug them well in advance of beginning any data collection activities. Once the raters' assessment data begin to arrive in the project office, you will want to begin survey management immediately and make sure that the data received have been translated to electronic form. Consequently, fighting fires with data systems at the next stage of the project will be most difficult and would adversely affect project success.

We suggest that you do a comprehensive "walk-through" of the data collection, inputting, analysis, and reporting phases by producing several mock competency assessment results packages. (See the Appendices section later in this part of the *Toolkit*.) Have your project staff handle those packages as though they were "live" data received by the project office. If they are in paper form, for example, have the data input person do that step to determine how well it works. You should get an estimate of the time required to complete each step of the process. In this way, you can determine whether you can meet your production schedule as you have planned it, given available resources. We find that these estimates are reliable, unless of course there is some drastic change in resource commitments or an emergency (such as a fire in the office) that affects the completion of key project stages. In summary, now is the time to identify as many "glitches" in the flow of project materials as possible.

Step 10: Collect and analyze the assessment data from raters and prepare the assessment report

If you have taken the actions noted above, your assessment support staff should be well-prepared to "go live" with the assessment operations. Review the Checklist that follows to assess project readiness. Depending upon how you have decided to collect, analyze, and report the assessment findings and the geographic dispersion of the assessment participants and raters, review checklist items four or five business days before the first day of data-collection activities.

Once the competency ratings have been collected and entered into a software program, then outputs such as spreadsheets, bar graphs, and specialized or customized assessment reports can be produced. Producing the ratings for each competency and for each type of respondent group is a major issue that deserves attention here.

The format for an assessment report is usually a horizontal bar graph, such as the example shown in the Appendices to this part of the *Toolkit*. For each competency statement that was assessed, the participant's self-rating is represented as the first bar of the horizontal bar graph, followed below by a parallel horizontal bar that represents the supervisor's rating, followed below that by a horizontal bar representing the mean or arithmetic average of the ratings presented by *at least three* subordinates, and finally a horizontal bar representing the mean or average of the ratings provided by *at least three* peers.

Some users of competency-based multi-rater assessment methods also report a mean rating bar graph for all respondent ratings, usually excluding the participant's own rating. We question the usefulness of this statistic, since it was computed in a way that implies that all of the subgroup ratings are of equal importance. This assumption may or may not be valid in all rating situations, especially in organizations where opinions from some stakeholder groups of the organization are more valued by management than others.

Although the data that are obtained from our proposed competency-based multi-rater assessment system are intended to be used for developmental and performance-enhancement purposes only, one should still question the inclusion of biased data in the means for subgroups of raters, such as one's peers or subordinates. Raters sometimes report universally high or universally low ratings. Data of this sort are difficult to interpret because universally positive or negative ratings reveal a need to answer the question of *why* the person was rated the way he or she was.

From a statistical point of view, this introduces the phenomenon of "skewness" into the statistical estimate (in this case, the average or mean rating). This is especially of concern with multi-rater or multi-source statistical analyses, since we are usually dealing with relatively small samples. Consider for a moment the following example: Five subordinate ratings have been obtained from a group of raters for their supervisor's performance of the competency of "Interpersonal Sensitivity." The ratings from the five raters were: 9, 8; 1; 8; and 7. The mean rating is 6.6. If you remove the rating of "1" (known as an *outlier*) and find the mean of the remaining four scores, the mean becomes 8.0! Obviously, the person who rated the supervisor a "1" has an "axe to grind" with the supervisor (or from their work history elsewhere) that introduces bias into the performance rating.

One way to successfully manage the inclusion of outlier ratings in the rating set is to adopt the use of *trimmed mean scoring,* or *Olympic scoring*. First, experience teaches that you must have *at least* five ratings in the data set for any competency before the technique can be used. *Trimmed mean scoring* is based on the technique that before a mean rating score is computed, the highest and lowest ratings that were given by all of the raters are removed from the ratings set. This rule consistently removes any "outlier ratings" at both ends of the rating scale. The mean rating is then computed by using the remaining ratings in the data set. Consequently, if you collect five ratings for a competency for a participant and remove the highest and lowest ratings, then you will need to compute the mean rating using the remaining three (and not five) ratings.

For the example given previously, recall that the mean rating when all five ratings were used was 6.6. By removing the highest and lowest ratings, 9 and 1, from the rating set, then the trimmed mean rating is 7.7 (rounded). The ratings that were used to compute the trimmed mean rating were 8, 8, and 7.

This example illustrates how trimmed mean scoring results in a stable mean rating when small samples of opinions are analyzed. Our experience is that raters who know that trimmed mean scoring will be used express less concern about having their anonymity compromised in the reporting of the ratings. Most (but not necessarily all) performance assessment raters have the best interests of the individual they are rating at heart. However, when they feel strongly that a low rating is appropriate, they also show concern that their opinion just might not be in accordance with the opinions of their fellow raters. Knowing that the highest and lowest ratings will be eliminated from the mean rating given to the assessment participant relieves their rating anxiety. Interestingly enough, it seems to actually improve survey response rates, although we have not scientifically researched this hypothesis.

Some critics of trimmed mean scoring claim that the system designer is shielding the assessment participant from receiving bad news or rate-inflated "good news." If raters have been encouraged from the outset of the rating process to provide as much narrative detail to support their ratings as possible, then the narrative information will oftentimes close the perceived information gap, especially on the "bad news" end of the rating scale.

Another down side of the use of the technique, as we mentioned earlier, is that you should have at least five ratings for the competency when trimmed mean scoring is to be applied. The reason for this is that we strongly insist on the ground rule that every mean rating should include ratings from *at least three* raters in order to avoid the possibility of identifying the raters who provided the information.

When the survey manager receives insufficient data from any respondent group to compute a mean performance rating for a competency without compromising the anonymity of the members of the rater group (that is, when there are less than three valid ratings from the

A Checklist to Assess Project Readiness

Questions to Consider	Yes ☒	No ☒	Comments
1. Have the survey instruments been reviewed for readability and clarity by three or four objective parties?	❑	❑	
2. Has the instrument been revised to reflect the reviewers' suggestions and comments?			
3. Have adequate numbers of instruments been reproduced (in case you are using a paper-and-pencil approach)?	❑	❑	
4. Have all the data collection, analysis, and reporting programs been debugged and fully tested?	❑	❑	
5. Have the assessment participants and their raters been informed of the administration schedule?	❑	❑	
6. Has management been informed of and has it endorsed the assessment data-collection schedule?	❑	❑	
7. Have data security provisions been successfully made?	❑	❑	
8. How will the survey responses be managed? How will the survey non-respondents be identified for follow-up purposes?	❑	❑	
9. Have the physical facilities that are needed for this phase of the project been secured?	❑	❑	
10. Are we meeting the dates agreed to for the key project milestones? Why or why not?	❑	❑	
11. Has sufficient time been allocated for the timely completion of the tasks included in this step, based upon an earlier completed "walk through" of the processes?	❑	❑	
12. Is the organization climate and the climate within affected work units conducive to project implementation?	❑	❑	
13. *Notes:*			

rating group for the competency), then the words “No Rating” or “Rating Not Available” are printed in the space where the bar graph would normally appear on the statistical report for the assessment participant.

Step 11: Instruct the assessment participants on how to interpret their ratings

Most persons in organizations do not have experience with this type of detailed information. This training session presents a golden opportunity for organizational improvement that just should not be missed.

How long should this training last, and what should you include in it? Our experience is that training of the type we will describe later in this section requires approximately three to four hours to complete. Setting aside less time only tends to compromise the outcomes of the training, since time has not been set aside to go over key elements of participants’ self-analysis. They must leave the training having arrived at this level of self-understanding in the context of the daily performance environment. Remember: When they leave the training environment, they will probably be asked to put out fires—responsibilities that fall to many senior management. Enumerated below are the key elements we believe you should include in this training.

1. Provide participants with information that will help them understand how the data were collected, the safeguards that were used to protect raters’ anonymity, and the confidentiality of the information collected. Participants must know how the information found in their assessment reports was derived from the rating information that was received. Show a sample page from a report. Explain the key elements of the report. How were the mean ratings derived? Was trimmed mean scoring used? What are its advantages and disadvantages? What standard was used as a minimum number of respondents for computing a mean rating? Was a mean rating for all respondents computed? If so, what are the values and assumptions underlying the use of this mean rating? Explain that perceived injustices in providing the ratings might be an issue for some assessment participants. Describe what they might do to resolve this issue. Explain the Project Manager’s role in helping participants with this and similar issues.
2. Have the participants assess the significance of each competency relative to how it helps the organization meet its business needs. They can categorize the competencies into three groups: Highly Significant; Significant; Somewhat Significant. If those categories are not appropriate for your organization, change them.
3. Using the competencies of highest significance, explain how the ratings can be interpreted for each competency. Show three or four rating settings for the rater groups. One setting might be where the participant rated herself a 9, the boss rated her a 6, her subordinates rated her a 10, and her peers rated her a 3.

Another setting might be where the participant rated herself a 3, while the boss rated her a 9, her subordinates rated her an 8, and her peers rated her a 7. What are the implications of the performance and perceptual hypotheses that can be drawn from each of these rating profiles? Next, have the trainees consider the narrative comments and how they might clarify, support, or defeat each of the performance or perceptual hypotheses.

4. Next, present the possibility that assessment participants might find it useful to share the ratings and comments with members of the rating groups and/or their supervisors. The purpose of this activity is to gain in-depth insights on which of the performance hypotheses are accurate and which can be discarded. The assessment participants will probably need guidance on how to facilitate a session of this sort. This process tends to reveal very useful and supportive information when it is completed in an open and empowering organizational environment where free discussion of performance is a standard. It's more of a problem when it is completed in closed, authoritarian, or autocratic organizations, but it is still valuable. In the latter case, especially, a trained facilitator should probably be used to facilitate the discussion, with each assessment participant in a private session.
5. Allow participants time during the training session to analyze their own data for at least the highest value competencies. They can be given the option to either work with others or complete this as a singular activity. Our experience is that most persons want to share this experience with "trusted others" in the organization.
6. Conclude the training by suggesting that the assessment participants take their performance analysis results to their supervisors for further discussion, insight, and support. We prefer that this be done after the participant has met with her or his rater groups, if that is to happen. The participants should be advised that a follow-up session will be conducted in two or three weeks that will help them do action planning, using the competency rating data and their own analyses and verifications from their supervisor.
7. Thank the participants for attending, and encourage them to work with the Project Manager for any other support they might need.

Step 12: Assess the achievement of the project objectives

"Let's plan it now, and be prepared when the time comes. We already know the project's objectives, so let's start there." If this is your initial reaction, GREAT!

Before we give you a few suggestions, we must clarify one thing: We assume that you and any colleagues involved in the competency-based multi-rater assessment project have been doing continuous assessments of systems operations—both formal and informal—from the project's outset. These evaluations should be focused on the procedures, processes, and policies for the system, and the users' responses to them. Once the assessment participants and management have completed the action planning stage described in the next part of this *Toolkit*, the project manager should administer a reaction assessment of the project outcomes and impacts. This can be easily done by using a brief assessment questionnaire. We recommend that you design this questionnaire first for the assessment participants since they are the primary client or customer for the project and it is their work and career life that will be most affected by the project outcomes. A similar instrument should be designed to determine the perceptions of supervisory managers who have participated in one or more of the project activities. But first, focus your resources and attention on getting high-quality feedback from the assessment participants.

You can design a rather straightforward assessment questionnaire using the information below as its contents. (*See Appendices*.)

You can use whatever rating scale you believe to be appropriate. Two useful (and generally popular) ones include the following:

5	= Strongly Agree		10 – 9	= Strongly Agree
4	= Agree		8 – 7 – 6	= Agree
3	= Neither Agree nor Disagree/Undecided	OR	5 – 4 – 3	= Disagree
2	= Disagree		2 – 1	= Strongly Disagree
1	= Strongly Disagree		N/A	= Not Appropriate
N/A	= Not Appropriate			

The experiences of the authors suggest that responses from the assessment participants to the following items reveal highly useful information on the outcomes for the competency-based multi-rater assessment system described in this part of the *Toolkit*.

The assessment ratings that were provided to me:

1. . . . helped me understand my supervisor's perceptions of my performance.
2. . . . helped me understand my peers' perceptions of my performance.
3. . . . helped me understand my subordinates' perceptions of my performance.
4. . . . helped me identify areas for performance improvement.
5. . . . helped me pinpoint my performance strengths.

6. . . . helped me understand that I might be underutilizing one or more of my performance strengths within the organization.
7. . . . are biased in a negative direction.
8. . . . are biased in a positive direction.
9. . . . are fair ratings of my performance.
10. . . . were adequately protected from unauthorized distribution.
11. . . . Overall: I am satisfied that the information I was given will help me enhance my future performance.

Of course, an assessment report should be written and shared with senior management, especially if the initial effort is a pilot project.

In summary, some *Toolkit* users might be concerned that we have not included in our discussions above every tiny point or experience that a Project Manager or others who work with competency-based multi-rater assessment systems might experience during their work with persons in their organization. As your experience with competency-based multi-rater assessment processes and procedures increases in your organization, you will gain valuable insights into what works and what does not. These things are impossible to outline in a product such as this *Toolkit*: you simply must experience it for yourself. Those who write about multi-rater assessment system issues often speak of them only in generalities, as you will discover if you review a sample of the literature we have cited in the Master Bibliography found later in the *Toolkit*. As we have said, there is no "one size fits all" approach in this area of human resource development work. Like buying a comfortable pair of shoes, you will oftentimes need to try on many pairs/alternatives before you get the correct fit or approach.

One thing we can say with confidence, however, is this: Make tactical errors but *not* strategic errors on your pathway to understanding competency-based multi-rater assessment work. Part 4 of this *Toolkit* deals with the use of competency-based assessment results and analyses to plan for future performance enhancement.

III. Evaluating the Results of Part III

How do you determine that you have achieved the desired results from Part III? To answer that question, the Project Manager should consider whether the desired results were achieved before, during, and after using this part of the *Toolkit*. More specifically, the Project Manager should focus attention on the desired outcomes or results sought from the competency assessment effort. Before the competency assessment project was conducted, did the Project Manager research and develop at least one competency model and obtain management endorsement of it? Did the Project Manager base the competency assessment process on that model? Were raters trained on how to give performance feedback? Were adequate resources secured to carry out the competency assessment project? During the competency assessment project, were reliable data collected? Were consistent assessment methods used? Were valid and reliable data collection methods used? Was the competency-based multi-rater assessment approach easy to use? Were the assessment items focused on performance? Were rater anonymity and the confidentiality of the assessment outcomes ensured once data were collected? Were project responsibilities clarified, such as data processing and auditing, and was appropriate training conducted before the tasks were performed? Were participants trained on how to accept, adequately interpret, and use the assessment data in constructive ways through the completion of formal action planning? After the competency assessment project was conducted, was it apparent that the assessment system design and outputs supported the strategic business plan of the organization? See pp. 3–40 and 3-41 for a prepared assessment instrument.

Take a moment to rate the success of these things by completing the following Worksheet. The Project Manager may complete the Worksheet on her or his own or else hand the evaluation form out to others such as stakeholders in the competency project for their candid assessments. It could also be used with project staff at key decision steps or points in the project.

IV The Management Briefing on Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessments

A. How to Obtain Management Support to Conduct a Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment Project

Before you boldly rush into presenting an executive or other management briefing on competency assessment, you must be very secure and confident in your own knowledge and information on the topic. You must be fully conversant on the competency modeling and assessment practices included here and in other sources. In particular, we *strongly* recommend that the competency assessment Project Manager consult various references included in the Master Bibliography found later in the *Toolkit*.

As you begin to plan your briefing session, you will need to identify the issues you want executives to address. Ask them to make a resource commitment to at least a limited competency-based multi-rater assessment pilot project. Do not make assumptions that managers or executives will necessarily anticipate your resource support requirements as an outcome of their comprehension of competency assessment and the benefits of its use to their organization. Resource issues are, we fear, not one of their favorite topics!

We mentioned the need for a program sponsor from inception through implementation of the pilot project. Prior to a briefing, you must analyze the issues surrounding that need and help executives or managers identify the best place to start with competency assessment in the organization. Key to this, we believe, is to have executives identify an organizational

Exhibit: A Worksheet to Evaluate the Results of Part III

Directions: Use this Worksheet to evaluate the results of Part III. (This Worksheet is to be completed by the Project Manager.) For each question appearing in the left column below, check a box in the center column and write any appropriate notes in the right column.

Question	Answer			Notes
	Yes ☒	No ☒	Not Applicable ☒	
Before the Management Briefing				
1. Did the Project Manager research and develop at least one competency model and obtain management endorsement of it?	❑	❑	❑	
2. Did the Project Manager base the competency assessment process on that model?	❑	❑	❑	
3. Were raters trained on how to give performance feedback?	❑	❑	❑	
4. Were adequate resources secured to carry out the competency assessment project?	❑	❑	❑	
During the Competency Assessment Project				
5. Were reliable data collected?	❑	❑	❑	
6. Were consistent assessment methods used?	❑	❑	❑	
7. Were valid and reliable data-collection methods used?				
8. Was the competency-based multi-rater assessment approach easy to use?	❑	❑	❑	
9. Were the assessment items focused on performance?	❑	❑	❑	

Exhibit: *(continued)*

Question	Answer		Notes
	Yes ☒	No ☒	Not Applicable ☒
10. Were rater anonymity and the confidentiality of the assessment outcomes assured once data were collected?	❑	❑	❑
11. Were project responsibilities such as data processing and auditing clarified and appropriate training conducted before the tasks were performed?	❑	❑	❑
12. Were participants taught how to accept, adequately interpret, and use the assessment data in constructive ways through the completion of formal action planning?	❑	❑	❑
After the Competency Modeling Project			
13. Was it apparent that the assessment system design and outputs supported the strategic business plan of the organization?	❑	❑	❑
14. What other comments do you have to make about the results of this part?	❑	❑	❑

area where a controlled try-out or a pilot study can be conducted. This should be an area of "strategic significance" for the organization, where performance support would enhance the probability of strategic organization success. (In simpler terms, it is the place where people believe that a competency assessment effort would have the greatest payoff and would likely lead to a quick success that could provide evidence of the value of the resource commitment.)

Once you are conversant with competency modeling and assessment vocabulary and methods, you must answer this question: *What types of commitment and resource support do I need from executives or managers to ensure the success of a pilot study?* The answer to this question, as you have probably already determined, is highly organization-specific; only you, with help from others in your organization, can adequately answer this question.

Before you deliver a formal executive or leadership briefing, you should hold informal discussions with key persons about competency assessment and the benefits that are likely to result from such an effort to persons at all levels of the organization. (You might begin by circulating the White Paper found in the Handouts Section of this *Toolkit*.) This discussion will help you understand the implementation environment, and it will suggest areas you will want to include in your briefing agenda. Then persons who are nearest to the organization's "hot spots" will provide you with specific examples of potential competency assessment applications. These areas should also be those recognized by senior leaders as having strategic significance for organization success. You will want to gain deep understanding of each of these areas before approaching senior leaders. Be certain to identify not only the potential benefits of the approach, but also any organization-specific risks that leaders must take. You might want to suggest "firewalls" that will allow the project to proceed while minimizing those risks. Some might call these plans "fall-back" positions. Under any circumstances, our overall suggestion for success with leaders and executives is to be sincere and honest at all times regarding your proposals, explanations, and assessments.

Now that you have done your organizational homework, you are ready to plan your briefing session. We have taken great care in the preparation of the briefing materials found in this kit to ensure a consistent presentation of the definitions and other conceptual elements needed to gain support for multi-rater competency assessment for senior leaders or executives. You can tailor these items to suit the needs of your audience, but you must do this carefully. We suggest that you tailor, for example, only the examples for the definitions and concepts included in our briefing transparencies. A safe rule-of-thumb is to follow this same advice for the remaining materials found in the *Toolkit*. If certain terms are already in use in the organization, it is useful to show how these suggested uses relate to what is already being used by the organization.

You may wish to invite executives to the Management Briefing after they review the White Paper. (*see Handout 1*)

Prior to the briefing, you or a team of persons from affected units within the organization should prepare several broadly defined plans for one or more pilot tests in each of the organization areas. Traditional project planning elements (lists of tasks, responsible people, starting and ending dates, deliverables, and so forth) should be prepared for potential use during the briefing session. Do not present minutely detailed project plans during the briefing session unless they are specifically requested. Instead, use "broad brush" plans that show only key milestones for successful completion of the work. You might consider using only the major project task statements, allowing the briefing participants an opportunity to fill in the missing information either during or immediately following the briefing session.

Under any circumstances, we strongly recommend that you arrive at agreement on highly specific next-steps and dates for their completion prior to the close of the briefing. You should also try to set a date to update the briefing audience on project progress. Finally, you should also attempt to get the briefing audience to assign one person to act as liaison.

Although we make no guarantees. we can say that if you adopt most of the suggestions mentioned above, you are more likely to achieve long-term success with your competency-based multi-rater assessment project.

[A few days before the Briefing, distribute Handout 1 at the end of this Part to each participant; at the opening of this Briefing, display Overhead 1]

B. Briefing Overview [Display Overhead 2]

1. Briefly explain that the purpose of this session is to explain the nature of a competency-based multi-rater assessment system and its value to the business. *[Display Overhead 3]*
2. Share the following objectives for this Briefing. *[Display Overheads 4 and 5]:*
   - To define multi-rater assessment and clarify other important terms and concepts associated with it
   - To explain the benefits and costs associated with competency-based multi-rater assessment and to describe preconditions that must be met before undertaking one
   - To clarify what the organization expects to achieve with a competency-based multi-rater assessment
   - To determine whether there is organizational commitment to establishing and maintaining a competency-based multi-rater assessment system
   - To plan the action steps for implementation of a competency-based multi-rater assessment system in the organization

C. Defining multi-rater assessment and clarifying the other important terms associated with it [Display Overhead 6]

1. Explain that a special vocabulary is required to discuss the concept of competency-based multi-rater assessment. *[Display Overhead 7]*
2. Present the following terms and elicit examples, in addition to those included below from participants:
   - *Competency assessment* is an evaluation of an individual performer's competence in comparison to some performance requirement or expectation, such as a fully-validated competency model.
   - *A competency-based multi-rater assessment* is, quite literally, a competency assessment carried out for an individual by more than one person.
   - *Multi-rater feedback* refers to the process of gathering up the results of multi-rater assessment and feeding them back to the individual who was assessed. *[Display Overhead 8]*
   - *360-degree assessment* takes its name from the number of degrees in a circle. It examines an individual from the perspective of those who surround that individual or performer in a full circle. Examples of raters in a 360-degree assessment might include superordinates (immediate organizational supervisors), subordinates, peers (people with the same job title or at the same reporting level), customers of the organization or of the individual inside the organization, suppliers or distributors of the organization, and even family members (such as spouse, children and/or significant others).
   - *180-degree assessment* is a "half-circle" assessment. It is sometimes done to reduce the time and cost involved in collecting multi-rater data. In other words, it is not a full "360," but more like half of that. *[Display Overhead 9 & 10]*
   - ❑ *Job competence* is an employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993).* Note that this definition is built upon individual production of the expected job outputs [or results] within expected levels of quality while successfully coping with and surmounting the challenges of both the internal and the external environments of the organization. *[Display Overhead 11]*
   - ❑ A *job competency* is an underlying characteristic of an employee (a motive, skill, aspect of one's self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge) that results

* *Note:* Items in this briefing marked with a ❑ indicate that the topic was previously covered in Part I of *The Competency Toolkit* (*Gaining Organizational Support for Competency Identification*). However, the topic is repeated here to remind executives why the organization is using a competency-based approach.

in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982). Note that a person's knowledge and skills are the traditional "competencies" that individuals bring with them to their job, or which they acquire while on the job. Most persons think of a competency as knowledge or skill. However, this is only part of an individual's compendium of job competencies. Motives or social roles, when their use can be shown to directly contribute to the successful achievement of one or more job outputs or results, are also competencies. Have you ever known an individual with a strong desire to achieve some output or result? This person most probably has what is generally referred to as high "achievement motivation." *[Display Overhead 12]*

D. Explaining the benefits and costs associated with competency-based multi-rater assessments and describing the preconditions that must be met before beginning one [Display Overhead 13]

1. Point out that there are several important reasons to use competency-based multi-rater feedback. A competency-based multi-rater assessment process does the following: *[Display Overhead 14]*
   A. Helps supervisors, managers, executives, and other organization employees understand how other persons with whom they interact perceive the degree to which they possess and appropriately use the competencies required for successful job performance.
   B. Provides supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers.
   C. Addresses the identification of specific employee competency strengths and shortfalls relative to what is needed by the organization for the achievement of its strategic objectives, values, and visions. *[Display Overhead 15]*
   D. Provides information to employees that is useful for career development and for helping them identify ways to move inside or outside the organization.
   E. Provides information for performance appraisals or for making pay-for-performance decisions, but only when exceptionally high technical standards are adopted and maintained when administering and using multi-rater assessment information. *[Display Overhead 16]*
2. Emphasize to participants that any decision about using a competency-based multi-rater assessment should consider: *[Display Overhead 17]*
   A. How individuals, the organization, managers, and individual contributors benefit from the competency-based multi-rater assessment process.

   B. How much it will cost.
   C. How much gain is expected from the multi-rater assessment process.

3. Explain how the organization benefits. Point out that the assessment activities: *[Display Overhead 18]*
   A. Identify which employees possess key competencies that are critical to the organization's success.
   B. Identify employees' competency gaps *before* they create a problem.
   C. Provide data that can be used to justify employee-development expenditures. *[Display Overhead 19]*
   D. Provide valuable information that can be used in succession planning, such as assessments of individual potential
4. Explain how individuals benefit. Point out that the assessment activities: *[Display Overhead 20]*
   A. Can provide the necessary justification for the organization to devote time, money, and other resources to help an individual receive specific support for competency acquisition and application.
   B. Dramatize the importance of the affective (that is, feeling-oriented) elements affecting job performance and their impact upon others.
   C. Help individuals identify their competency strengths and weaknesses as perceived by others within the organizational context. *[Display Overhead 21]*
   D. Suggest the need to consider alternative career choices, pursuits, and areas of exploration for career satisfaction.
   E. Provides sensitive personal information to employees about the impacts of their behaviors upon those with whom they interact. *[Display Overhead 22]*
   F. Improves communication among peers regarding key performance issues.
   G. Improves team relationships and performance. *[Display Overhead 23]*
5. Point out that managers benefit because the assessment results: *[Display Overhead 24]*
   A. Provide insights into the competency strengths and weaknesses of subordinates and their peers.
   B. Provide information on the manager's strengths and weaknesses (development needs).
   C. Suggest possible alternative career choices that could be more consistent with the managers' preferred work styles and approaches.
   D. Uncover otherwise-unknown expectations of others. *[Display Overhead 25]*

E. Provide ideas for the development of new or different job behaviors that might not have been valued or considered by managers in the past

6. Explain that there are additional benefits from a competency-based multi-rater assessment process. Among them: *[Display Overhead 26]*

   A. It can identify *unrevealed expectations*. A carefully designed multi-rater assessment system oftentimes reveals otherwise unrevealed expectations, directions, views, strengths, or weaknesses in the organization or its employees.

   B. It can provide *comprehensive information*. A competency-based multi-rater assessment system can provide assessment data from many sources, some of whom may have never been consulted on performance issues in the past. This helps to improve performance in new ways.

   C. It can help establish *job performance requirements*. Competency lists can be used to establish job performance requirements and expectations that are oftentimes manifested in raters' feedback comments and ratings.

   D. It can help establish *accountability for performance improvement*. The person who is rated is immediately responsible for the competency assessment data and how they are to be used for action planning and improvement in future performance periods.

   E. A *competency-based multi-rater assessment is systems-based and systems-compatible*. Competency-based multi-rater assessment systems integrate well with other human resource management subsystems in the data they provide for input to those systems and the data those subsystems output to the multi-rater system.

7. Explain that there are costs as well as benefits associated with a competency-based multi-rater assessment system. Among the costs: *[Display Overhead 27]*

   A. The costs of developing a performance-related competency model on which to base the multi-rater system

   B. The costs of validating a performance-related competency model

   C. The costs of preparing an instrument or approach to collect multi-rater information

   D. The costs of administering the instrument *[Display Overhead 28]*

   E. The costs of the time involved for individuals to rate others

   F. The costs of collecting and processing the data received through the multi-rater assessment

   G. The costs of interpreting results

   H. The costs of providing feedback

8. Emphasize that the costs and benefits associated with the competency-based multi-rater assessment effort should be carefully assessed before data are collected, to determine whether the benefits of the multi-rater assessment effort outweigh the expected costs. *[Display Overhead 29]*
9. Note: There are essential preconditions that must be met before a competency-based multi-rater assessment and feedback process is used. *[Display Overhead 30]*
   A. Distribute the instrument "Assessing Preconditions for Multi-Rater Assessment" to participants. *[Distribute Handout 2 to participants.]*
   B. Ask each participant to read the directions on the instrument, fill it out, and score it individually.
   C. Ask participants for a show of hands on each item to indicate how many people marked the item "no."
   D. After participants have listed by item how many "no"s they marked, emphasize that each "no" answer represents a barrier to installing a competency-based multi-rater assessment and feedback system.
   E. Ask why participants marked any items "no." Note the frequency of "no" responses by item and focus attention on discussing the items most often marked "no."

E. Clarifying what results are sought by the organization from a competency-based multi-rater assessment [Display Overhead 31]

❑ 1. Ask participants to list the 2 or 3 major business needs affecting the organization at present. [Display Overhead 32]

❑ 2. Point out that no matter what the needs may be, anything that can help individuals and the entire organization perform better will help meet the needs.

3. Explain that this briefing is intended to show participants how a competency-based multi-rater assessment process can help meet business needs and current business challenges. *[Display Overhead 33]*
4. Emphasize that a competency-based multi-rater assessment and feedback process is one means by which to implement a competency-based approach within an organization. (Point out that the competency models (if valid and reliable for these purposes) can also be used in selection, promotion, transfer, training, development, and appraisal, as well as for other decisions or actions made by an organization.)

F. Determining organizational commitment to multi-rater assessment [Display Overhead 34]

1. Explain that there are key requirements for any multi-rater assessment system to be effective. Among them: *[Display Overhead 35]*

   A. Valid and reliable competency models are available to employees and supervisors for all jobs to be included in the assessment system.

   B. All parties have trust in the processes and are open to possibilities for learning about their own performance strengths and their performance improvement needs and opportunities.

   C. Those participating in the process must be assured of confidentiality of the system outputs. *[Display Overhead 36]*

   D. Assessment ratings must be kept confidential.

   E. The job competencies must reflect the organization's priorities.

   F. Raters must know or learn how to provide high-quality assessment information that will be useful to the recipient. *[Display Overhead 37]*

   G. Recipients of multi-rater assessment data must be trained in how to receive, acknowledge, accept, and use the information they are given to identify strengths and weaknesses in their performance, and subsequently, to take corrective action to close performance gaps. *[Display Overhead 38]*

   H. Technical human resources and technology must be available to the organization, even if these resources have to be obtained externally. [Display overhead 39]

2. Judge the quality of any multi-rater assessment process by reviewing the following: *[Display Overhead 40]*

   A. *All collected data must be reliable*. Ratings should change in the same direction and with the appropriate intensity as changes in a manager's (or other employee's) performance over time.

   B. *Assessment methods must be consistent*. The same (identical) scales are used throughout the instrument and across assessment applications so that reliable and valid comparisons can be made, assuming other assessment variables are held constant across multiple applications of the system.

   C. *Methods for data collection must be valid and reliable*. The instrument and data-collection methods should measure what they claim to measure and they must do so consistently.

   D. *The competency-based multi-rater assessment approach is easy to use*. When using repeated measures, raters must understand the meaning of each item and the correct and consistent way to respond to the items.

E. *The assessment items are focused on performance*. The assessment items should focus on the competencies that are most important to the organization and the achievement of its objectives, values, and vision. The assessment should be as brief as possible, and it should also provide space for the rater to provide narrative comments that will give the user useful and performance-related feedback from the rating information.

F. *The assessment design and outputs support the strategic business plan of the organization*.

3. List steps in establishing and implementing a competency-based multi-rater assessment and feedback process and discuss them: *[Display Overhead 41; Distribute Handout 3]*

   A. Deliver a briefing on competency assessment to senior managers.

   B. Identify the organization's business needs.

   C. Select a project manager and project team.

   D. Allocate project resources.

   E. Make a "Go/No-Go" project continuation decision.

   F. Create or obtain a competency model(s) for the job(s). *[Display Overhead 42]*

   G. Develop data-collection instruments.

   H. Train the raters.

   I. Develop and test the data input, analysis, and reporting system.

   J. Collect the assessment data from raters. *[Display Overhead 43]*

   K. Train the assessment participants to interpret their ratings.

   L. Assess the achievement of the project objectives.

4. Emphasize to participants that a competency-based multi-rater assessment system requires adequate and appropriate resources. Among the resources needed are: *[Display Overhead 44]*

   A. Clerical assistance

   B. Word-processing capability for survey instrument design and development

   C. Photocopying or printing capability

   D. A person with data-management and statistical-analysis skills and report-format design skills who is knowledgeable about software packages such as SPSS, SAS, and EXCEL. *[Display Overhead 45]*

   E. A person who can assist with survey management, including follow-ups with nonrespondents

   F. A personal computer with the capability of storing and analyzing moderately large data sets.

5. Review how to obtain the resources listed above: *[Display Overhead 46]*
   A. Internally
   B. Externally through contract support by a vendor
   C. Through local college or university faculty, or students on contract to the organization
6. Check the willingness and commitment of participants to provide the resources necessary to carry out multi-rater assessment in the organization. The project manager should prepare a recommended budget for the project, with the resources listed above included. Senior managers must provide these resources or the project will assume a "No-Go" status.

G. Action planning for implementation of a multi-rater assessment system in the organization [Display Overhead 47]

1. Ask participants: *How do we move from where we are to where we need to be? [Display Overhead 48; Distribute Handout 4]*
   A. List participant/organizational objectives for having competency-based multi-rater feedback.
   B. Review steps in conducting a competency-based multi-rater assessment system.
   C. Cite the resource requirements and budget requirements for designing and implementing the system.
   D. Ask participants: *How will the resources for competency-based multi-rater assessment be provided or obtained?*
   E. Ask participants: *Should there be a pilot test and, if so, who should participate?* (Emphasize that if executives volunteer to participate in a multi-rater assessment first, they will send a powerful and positive message to workers throughout the organization.) *[Display Overhead 49]*
   F. Ask participants: *Are there any special issues or considerations for this project?*
   G. Ask participants: *What are the next steps? Are we agreed on a target group and a group on which to pilot test?*
   H. Ask participants: *How will we organize this effort? Will we place one person in charge? A team? [Display Overhead 50]*
   I. Ask participants: *When do we want the first pilot test completed?*

J. Ask participants: *Where should the pilot test be conducted, and why is that a good place?*

K. Ask participants: *How will we measure the results of the effort, and when do we determine that it has been successful?*

Thank participants for their attendance and adjourn. [*Display Overhead 51*]

V. Overhead Masters

(Part III)

The Management Briefing: Using Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment

Overhead *Part III: #1*

Briefing Notes:

Briefing Overview

Overhead *Part III: #2*

Briefing Notes:

Purpose of the Briefing

The purpose of this session is to explain the nature of competency-based multi-rater assessment and its value to the organization.

Overhead *Part III: #3*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To define multi-rater assessment and clarify other important terms associated with it
- To explain the benefits and costs associated with competency-based multi-rater assessment, and to describe preconditions that must be met before undertaking such an assessment
- To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based multi-rater assessment

Overhead *Part III: #4*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To determine organizational commitment to establishing and maintaining a competency-based multi-rater assessment
- To plan the action steps for implementing competency-based multi-rater assessment in the organization

Overhead *Part III: #5*

Briefing Notes:

Defining Multi-Rater Assessment and clarifying other important terms associated with it

Overhead *Part III: #6*

Briefing Notes:

Need for a Special Vocabulary

There is a need for a special vocabulary to discuss competency-based multi-rater assessment.

- **Competency assessment** is an evaluation of an individual performer's competence in comparison to some performance requirement or expectation—such as a fully validated competency model.
- **A competency-based multi-rater assessment** is, quite literally, a competency assessment carried out for an individual by more than one person.

Overhead *Part III: #7*

Briefing Notes:

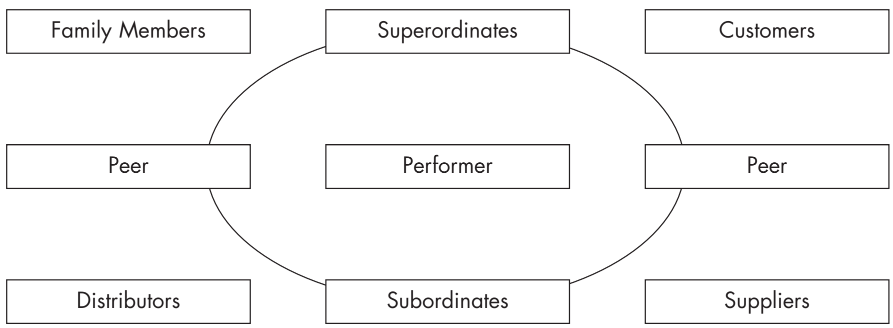
Definitions

- **Multi-rater feedback** refers to the process of gathering up the results of multi-rater assessment and feeding them back to the individual who was assessed.
- **360-degree assessment** takes its name from the number of degrees in a circle and examines an individual from the perspective of those who surround that individual or performer in a full circle.
- **180-degree assessment** is a "half-circle" assessment.

Overhead *Part III: #8*

Briefing Notes:

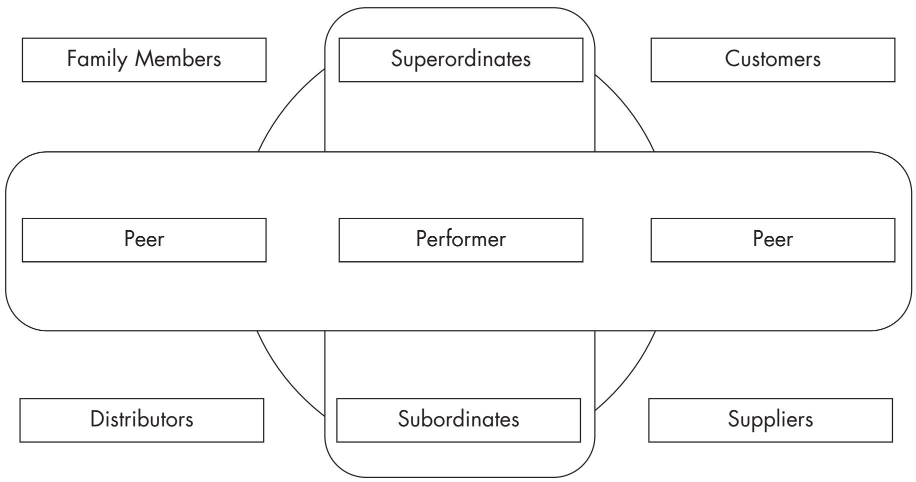
"Full-Circle Assessment"



Overhead *Part III: #9*

Briefing Notes:

Half-Circle Assessment



Overhead *Part III: #10*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- **Job competence:** An employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993).

Overhead *Part III: #11*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- **Job competency:** An underlying characteristic of an employee that results in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982).

Overhead *Part III: #12*

Briefing Notes:

Explaining the benefits and costs associated with Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessment and describing preconditions that must be met before doing it

Overhead *Part III: #13*

Briefing Notes:

Managerial Performance

There are several reasons to use competency-based multi-rater feedback:

- It helps supervisors, managers, executives, and other organization employees understand how other persons with whom they interact perceive the degree to which they possess and appropriately use the competencies required for successful job performance.
- It provides supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers.

Overhead *Part III: #14*

Briefing Notes:

Managerial Performance

There are several reasons to use multi-rater feedback:

- It addresses the identification of specific employee competency strengths and shortfalls relative to what is needed by the organization for the achievement of its strategic objectives, values, and visions.
- It provides information to employees that is useful for their career development and for helping them identify ways to move inside or outside the organization.

Overhead *Part III: #15*

Briefing Notes:

Managerial Performance

There are several reasons to use multi-rater feedback:

- It provides information for performance appraisals or for making pay-for-performance decisions, but only when exceptionally high technical standards are adopted and maintained for the administration and use of multi-rater assessment information.

Overhead *Part III: #16*

Briefing Notes:

Decisions

Before making any decision about using a competency-based multi-rater assessment, first consider:

- How individuals, the organization, managers, and individual contributors benefit from the competency-based multi-rater assessment process
- How much it will cost
- How much gain is expected from the multi-rater assessment process

Overhead *Part III: #17*

Briefing Notes:

How the organization benefits from competency-based multi-rater assessment

The organization benefits in four key ways. The organization is able to:

- identify employees possessing key competencies that are critical to organizational success
- identify employees' competency gaps *before* they become a problem

Overhead *Part III: #18*

Briefing Notes:

How the organization benefits from competency-based multi-rater assessment

The organization is able to:

- provide data useful to justify employee development expenditures
- provide valuable information that can be used in succession planning, such as assessment of individual potential

Overhead *Part III: #19*

Briefing Notes:

How the individual benefits from competency-based multi-rater assessment

The individual benefits from multi-rater assessment. Assessment activities:

- can provide the necessary justification for the organization to devote time, money, and other resources to help an individual receive specific support for competency acquisition and application
- dramatize the importance of affective (that is, *feeling-oriented*) elements affecting job performance and their impact on others

Overhead *Part III: #20*

Briefing Notes:

How the individual benefits from competency-based multi-rater assessment

The individual benefits from multi-rater assessment. Assessment activities:

- help individuals identify their competency strengths and weaknesses as perceived within the organizational context
- suggest the need to consider alternative career choices, pursuits, and areas of exploration for career satisfaction

Overhead *Part III: #21*

Briefing Notes:

How the individual benefits from competency-based multi-rater assessment

The individual benefits from multi-rater assessment. Assessment activities:

- provide sensitive personal information to employees about the impacts of their behaviors upon those with whom they interact
- improve communications among peers regarding key performance issues

Overhead *Part III: #22*

Briefing Notes:

How the individual benefits from competency-based multi-rater assessment

The individual benefits from multi-rater assessment. Assessment activities:

- improve team relationships and performance

Overhead *Part III: #23*

Briefing Notes:

How managers benefit from competency-based multi-rater assessment

Managers benefit from multi-rater assessment because assessment results:

- provide insights into subordinates' and their peers' competency strengths and weaknesses
- provide information on each manager's strengths and development needs
- suggest possible alternative career choices that might be more consistent with the managers' preferred work styles and approaches

Overhead *Part III: #24*

Briefing Notes:

How managers benefit from competency-based multi-rater assessment

Managers benefit from multi-rater assessment because assessment results:

- uncover heretofore unknown expectations of others
- provide ideas for the development of new or different job behaviors that might not have been considered or valued by managers in the past

Overhead *Part III: #25*

Briefing Notes:

Additional benefits from a competency-based multi-rater assessment process

Additional benefits can be gained from a competency-based multi-rater assessment process.

- It can identify unrevealed expectations.
- It can provide comprehensive information.
- Job performance requirements are established.
- Accountability is established for performance improvement.
- Competency-based multi-rater assessment is systems-based and systems-compatible.

Overhead *Part III: #26*

Briefing Notes:

Costs associated with a competency-based multi-rater assessment process

Costs as well as benefits are associated with a competency-based multi-rater assessment process. Among them:

- The cost of developing a performance-related competency model on which to base the multi-rater system
- The cost of validating a performance-related competency model
- The costs of preparing an instrument or approach to collect multi-rater information

Overhead *Part III: #27*

Briefing Notes:

Costs associated with a competency-based multi-rater assessment process

Costs as well as benefits are associated with a competency-based multi-rater assessment process. Among them:

- The costs of administering the instrument
- The costs of the time involved for individuals to rate others
- The costs of collecting and processing the data received from multi-rater assessment
- The costs of interpreting results
- The costs of providing feedback

Overhead *Part III: #28*

Briefing Notes:

Costs and benefits of a competency-based multi-rater assessment process

The costs and benefits associated with the competency-based multi-rater assessment process should be carefully assessed before data are collected to determine whether the organization benefits of the multi-rater assessment effort outweigh the costs.

Overhead *Part III: #29*

Briefing Notes:

Consider essential preconditions for a competency-based multi-rater assessment and feedback process

- Complete the instrument entitled "Assessing Preconditions for Multi-Rater Assessment".
- Raise your hands to indicate how many times and on what items you marked "no."
- Why did you mark them that way?

Overhead *Part III: #30*

Briefing Notes:

Clarifying what results are sought by the organization from doing multi-rater assessment

Overhead *Part III: #31*

Briefing Notes:

Business Needs

- List 2 or 3 major business needs affecting the organization at present.
- Anything that can help individuals and the entire organization perform better will help meet the needs.

Overhead *Part III: #32*

Briefing Notes:

Point Worthy of Emphasis

- This briefing is intended to show participants how a competency-based multi-rater assessment process can help meet business needs and current business challenges.
- A competency-based multi-rater assessment and feedback process is one means by which to implement a competency-based approach within an organization.

Overhead *Part III: #33*

Briefing Notes:

Determining organizational commitment to multi-rater assessment

Overhead *Part III: #34*

Briefing Notes:

Key requirements for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system

Key requirements for any competency-based multi-rater assessment system to be effective:

- Valid and reliable competency models must be available to employees and supervisors for all jobs to be included in the assessment system.
- All parties must have trust in the process and be open to possibilities for learning about their own performance strengths and their performance improvement needs.

Overhead *Part III: #35*

Briefing Notes:

Key requirements for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system

Key requirements for any competency-based multi-rater assessment system to be effective:

- Those who are participating in the process must be assured of confidentiality of the system outputs.
- Assessment ratings must be kept confidential.
- The job competencies must reflect the organization's priorities.

Overhead *Part III: #36*

Briefing Notes:

Key requirements for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system

Key requirements for any competency-based multi-rater assessment system to be effective:

- Raters must know or learn how to provide high-quality assessment information that will be useful to the recipient.

Overhead *Part III: #37*

Briefing Notes:

Key requirements for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system

Key requirements for any competency-based multi-rater assessment system to be effective:

- Recipients of multi-rater assessment data must be trained in how to receive, acknowledge, accept, and use the information they are given!

Overhead *Part III: #38*

Briefing Notes:

Key requirements for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system

Key requirements for any competency-based multi-rater assessment system to be effective:

- Technical human resources and technology must be available to the organization, even if these resources must be obtained externally.

Overhead *Part III: #39*

Briefing Notes:

Judging the quality of any multi-rater assessment process

Judge the quality of any multi-rater assessment process by reviewing the following:

- All data collected must be reliable.
- Assessment methods used must be consistent.
- Data collection methods must be valid and reliable.
- The competency-based multi-rater assessment approach is easy to use.
- The assessment items are focused on performance.
- The assessment design and outputs support the strategic business plan of the organization.

Overhead *Part III: #40*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in establishing and implementing a multi-rater assessment and feedback process

The steps in establishing and implementing a multi-rater assessment and feedback process include the following:

- Deliver a briefing on competency assessment to senior managers.
- Identify the organization's business needs.
- Select a Project Manager and Project Team.
- Allocate project resources.
- Make a "Go/No-Go" project continuation decision.

Overhead *Part III: #41*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in establishing and implementing a multi-rater assessment and feedback process

The steps in establishing and implementing a multi-rater assessment and feedback process include the following:

- Create or obtain a competency model(s) for the job(s).
- Develop data-collection instruments.
- Train the raters.
- Develop and test the data input, analysis, and reporting system.

Overhead *Part III: #42*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in establishing and implementing a multi-rater assessment and feedback process

The steps in establishing and implementing a multi-rater assessment and feedback process include the following:

- Collect the assessment data from raters.
- Train the assessment participants to interpret their ratings.
- Assess the achievement of the project objectives.

Overhead *Part III: #43*

Briefing Notes:

Point Worthy of Emphasis

Completing the work for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system requires:

- Clerical assistance
- Word-processing capability for survey instrument design and development
- Photocopying or printing capability
- A person with data-management and statistical-analysis skills

Overhead *Part III: #44*

Briefing Notes:

Point Worthy of Emphasis

Completing the work for a competency-based multi-rater assessment system requires:

- A person who can assist with survey management
- A personal computer with the capability of storing and analyzing moderately large data sets

Overhead *Part III: #45*

Briefing Notes:

How do we obtain the resources?

- Review how to obtain the resources listed above.
- Check the willingness and commitment of the participants to provide the resources necessary to carry out multi-rater assessment in the organization.

Overhead *Part III: #46*

Briefing Notes:

Planning Action Steps for implementing multi-rater assessment in the organization

Overhead *Part III: #47*

Briefing Notes:

How do we move from where we are to where we need to be?

- What are your objectives for having multi-rater assessment?
- What are the steps in the multi-rater assessment process?
- What are the resource requirements, and who is providing them?
- How will the resources for competency-based multi-rater assessment be provided or obtained?

Overhead *Part III: #48*

Briefing Notes:

How do we move from where we are to where we need to be?

- Should there be a pilot test? If so, who should participate?
- Are there any special issues or considerations for this project?
- What are the next steps? Have we agreed on a target group and a group on which to pilot test?

Overhead *Part III: #49*

Briefing Notes:

How do we move from where we are to where we need to be?

- How will we organize to conduct this effort? Will we place one person in charge? A team?
- When do we want the first pilot test completed?
- Where should the pilot test be conducted?
- How will we measure the results of the effort, and when will we determine that it has been successful?

Overhead *Part III: #50*

Briefing Notes:

Briefing Conclusion

Overhead *Part III: #51*

Briefing Notes:

VI. HANDOUT MASTERS (Part III)

Handout I

A White Paper for Management: Questions and Answers about Competency-Based Multi-Rater Assessments

Directions: The purpose of this White Paper is to prepare you for the forthcoming Briefing Session. Read over the questions and answers appearing below. As you read, think about how you feel about the question and answer as it applies to *this* organization.

1. What is multi-rater assessment and feedback?

A *multi-rater assessment* is an evaluation of an individual by more than one other person. It is sometimes called *360-degree assessment*, which takes its name from the number of degrees in a circle. Possible raters in a multi-rater assessment include subordinates, peers (other people with the same job title or at the same hierarchical level as the individual who is being rated), superordinates (immediate organizational supervisors of the individual being rated), customers of the organization, suppliers of the organization, distributors of the organization, and even family members (such as a spouse and/or children or parents) of the individual being rated.

Multi-rater feedback is the process of summarizing and interpreting the results of the multi-rater assessment and sharing it with the individual who was assessed.

2. What business needs do we want satisfied by a multi-rater assessment?

Multi-rater assessment and feedback can be a time-consuming and expensive process. For that reason, it is important to clarify exactly what business needs should be met through the process.

Possible business needs that can be met through multi-rater assessment and feedback include any one or all of the following:

- To validate selection processes
- To appraise individual performance

- To identify developmental needs
- To assess and/or build the organization's bench strength
- To assess individuals relative to the organization's requirements for succession planning
- To prepare individuals for clarifying and establishing career plans

It is important to clarify how much importance is placed on each one, since they should not be considered of equal weight and importance. Decision-makers of the organization should take the lead in identifying which business needs are most important and which needs should be met through the multi-rater assessment and feedback process, and will be used.

3. What exactly do we want as an outcome from multi-rater assessment and feedback?

Desired outcomes from the multi-rater assessment and feedback process will depend, in large measure, on the business needs to be met through the process.

Consider:

If the *business need* is to:	Then the *Desired Result(s)* of the Multi-Rater Assessment and Feedback Process should be:
1. Validate selection processes	▪ To have an assessment of how well previous selection decisions have worked out relative to the selection criteria
2. Appraise individual performance	▪ To have an evaluation of individual performance as assessed by many different people and from many perspectives
3. Identify developmental needs	▪ To identify target competencies individuals should develop
4. Assess and/or build the organization's "bench strength"	▪ To determine how much "bench strength" the organization has in the targeted job category or level, and where the gaps are
5. Assess individuals relative to the organization's requirements for succession planning	▪ To target individuals for development as future leaders in keeping with succession planning requirements, so that there is continuity of organization leadership in the required area
6. Help individuals clarify or develop their career plans	▪ To give individuals information and feedback so they can meet their career goals

4. What has been the benchmarking experience of other organizations with competency-based multi-rater assessment?

- Most *Fortune 500* companies are now using some form of multi-rater assessment with at least some groups, such as executives or managers. (See Yammarino and Atwater, 1997.)
- Well-known companies such as Monsanto, Texaco, and NALCO use multi-rater assessment and feedback.

5. Is multi-rater assessment being advocated for the organization only to mask the need for performance information on a single individual or group of individuals?

Unfortunately, multi-rater assessments are sometimes implemented because an executive or manager wants to demonstrate that one or several people are not adequately performing. Rather than take responsibility for conducting coaching sessions with a single "problem" performer, an executive may request that the entire organization adopt the use of multi-rater assessment. That is expensive and wasteful. If this is the reason to use multi-rater assessment, then the organization should explore alternative courses of action (for example, individual coaching), since multi-rater assessments are expensive and may not even affect the performance of one resistant person.

6. What level of rigor do we want from multi-rater assessment and feedback?

Generally, the rigor required from a multi-rater assessment and feedback process depends on the business need to be met.

If only one person requires a multi-rater assessment, then rigor requirements may not be high.

However, if employment decisions are to be made based solely on multi-rater assessment, then the need for rigor dramatically increases. If, for example, the organization plans to terminate individuals who are assessed as poor performers, then a high level of rigor is needed to protect the organization from possible subsequent litigation and protect the performer from unfair (inequitable) treatment.

7. Are executives willing to role model the multi-rater assessment process and demonstrate its value in performance enhancement?

Workers will watch organization leaders pretty closely during multi-rater assessment. If executives ask for "other people" to do this, then workers will figure that management is not genuinely committed. It is best if executives take the lead, submitting to the assessment process first and using the results to improve their competency levels and the use of those competencies in their daily performance. An added advantage of doing that is that executives are then well-positioned to explain to their workers what they expect of them from the process, since they will have experienced it first-hand. Each executive must understand that he or she will become the role model and coach to their next-level subordinates, as they work on competencies identified through the multi-rater process.

8. What is the foundation for multi-rater assessments?

A competency model becomes the typical foundation for content.

An organization that purchases one of the many commercially available multi-rater assessment survey instruments is relying upon a competency model that isn't necessarily consistent with the organization's corporate culture, business objectives, vision, values, or strategic emphasis. Such commercially available multi-rater assessment instruments should be evaluated at the micro level before they are used in the organization. We cannot stress this point enough. We have heard many tales of woe expressed by senior human resource professionals who were told one thing by the instrument distributor and then discovered, painfully, that the instrument was of little or no value to the organization.

This is a strategic error and will result in delay of project implementation and at a huge cost to the organization.

9. Will the results be handled confidentially?

First, what do we mean by *confidentiality*? Actually, there are two components to this question. First, who will have access—either directly or indirectly—to a participant's ratings? Second, will the anonymity of rater responses be maintained at all stages of the project, including completion? All workers, including executives, will ask these kinds of questions soon after the organization's decision-makers announce that multi-rater assessment will be used. Decision-makers need to be ready to answer these questions at the outset of the project and then publish responses so that all affected persons throughout the organization have correct and consistent information.

Of course, the confidentiality of results depends on how the results will be used. If the results will be used to make employment decisions such as hiring, firing, promoting, or transferring workers, then the results of multi-rater assessment should be kept strictly confidential. By "confidential," we mean that access to the results are restricted solely to the individual who is targeted for assessment and his or her immediate supervisor.

Under no circumstances should positive *or* negative outcomes be made available to anyone *except* the individual being rated and his or her immediate supervisor. Note: *This means that multi-rater assessments should* never *be placed in Human Resource Department files*. We further recommend that if the person being rated wants another individual in the organization—including someone in the Human Resource Department—to have access to their results, then they must sign a disclosure statement indicating that they are giving that permission and that they understand that confidentiality of the written record can no longer be assured.

10. What are the legal implications of using multi-rater assessments to make personnel decisions?

If the organization plans to use multi-rater assessment results for any purpose other than career development, then competent legal counsel should be sought before doing so. If multi-rater assessment is to be used to make employment decisions, then the multi-rater assessment process should be judged as to job-relatedness and adverse implications. For the most part, multi-rater assessments should *never* be the sole determinant for making employment decisions; rather, they should be combined with other performance or employment data as appropriate.

11. What are the risks of using multi-rater assessments?

Key risks of using multi-rater assessments and feedback include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Lawsuits stemming from misuse of multi-rater data because they were inappropriately used to terminate an employee
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission grievances stemming from inappropriate use of multi-rater data
- Union grievances that might be filed if the individuals who are targeted for multi-rater assessment are union members

12. What are the most common mistakes made in using multi-rater assessment and feedback?

Perhaps the most common mistakes made in using multi-rater assessment and feedback include all of the following:

- Decision-makers do not clarify with the participants what business needs will be met by the process.
- Decision-makers undertake the process without clearly understanding what it is, how much time it will take to do it correctly, or how the results will be used.
- Confidentiality and anonymity issues are not clarified at the beginning of the process, and this will only cause organizational problems later on.
- People complete the multi-rating assessments as requested, but nothing is done with them afterward.
- People have not been trained to receive and use multi-rater feedback, and this results in misinterpretation and misunderstanding of information found in the

report. When this occurs, the typical worker not only tends to discount the information as invalid, but also becomes resentful and callous toward the raters and their supervisor.

- The instrument chosen for multi-rater assessment bears no relationship whatsoever to key competencies required for work success in the organization. As a result, the results become useless and the project loses credibility.
- When delivering any type of performance assessment data or feedback, the individual delivering the feedback focuses on personality traits, rather than on performance or lack thereof, which is most important.

13. Once we have the results of a multi-rater assessment, what do we do with them?

The answer to this question depends upon the business need that is to be met by the multi-rater assessment process. Typical uses of results include:

If the business need is to:	What Uses Are Made of Results?
1. Validate selection processes	▪ They can be used as a basis for a critical review of how the organization makes selection decisions and recommendations for improvement of the selection process.
2. Appraise individual performance	▪ The results can be used for individual performance reviews.
3. Identify developmental needs	▪ They can help target competencies on which the individual needs to be developed. ▪ They can provide the basis for Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to narrow the gap between an individual's current competencies and those required for successful or exemplary performance in the work.
4. Assess and/or build the organization's bench strength	▪ They can be used to identify how much bench strength the organization has in the targeted job category or level and identify the gap.
5. Assess individuals relative to the organization's succession planning requirements	▪ They can help identify individuals for development in keeping with succession planning requirements, so that there is continuity in organization leadership.
6. Prepare individuals to clarify or establish career plans	▪ They can give individuals information and feedback to help them meet career goals.

14. Are we shifting the assessment responsibility from the manager or supervisor to other people such as subordinates or peers?

Truth be told, some managers want to avoid the difficult responsibility for giving bad news to poor performers. Some of those managers would like to introduce multi-rater assessments so that they can focus improvement efforts on specific individuals, rather than take responsibility for delivering bad news and coaching everyone on how to improve. The authors believe that this is the wrong reason to install a multi-rater assessment and feedback system. Decision-makers should take care to clarify just why the process is being undertaken.

Handout II

Assessing Preconditions for Using Multi-Rater Assessments and Feedback in the Organization

Assessing Preconditions for Using Multi-Rater Assessments and Feedback in the Organization

Directions: Use this assessment questionnaire to record your individual opinions or views about the multi-rater assessment and feedback process. For each statement provided in the left column below, check a box ☒ in the right column to indicate your preferred response. Use the following scale to score your responses when finished: 2 = Yes; 1 = No; and 0 = Don't Know.

Statement	Response		
	Yes ☒	No ☒	Don't Know ☒
1. Is there at least one business reason to justify the use of multi-rater assessment and feedback in the organization?	❑	❑	❑
2. Do senior executives of the organization agree on the reason(s) for undertaking multi-rater assessment and feedback?	❑	❑	❑
3. Is the organization willing to devote the time, money, and other resources to conduct multi-rater assessment and feedback?	❑	❑	❑
4. Is the multi-rater and assessment process based on characteristics or competencies that are clearly work-related in the organization?	❑	❑	❑
5. Have issues of confidentiality and anonymity been addressed and resolved before data are collected?	❑	❑	❑
6. Have issues about access to the results of multi-rater assessments been resolved before data are collected?	❑	❑	❑
7. Is there a commitment in the organization to use the results of multi-rater assessment?	❑	❑	❑
8. Is there a commitment to hold people accountable for taking action based on the results of multi-rater assessment?	❑	❑	❑
Total Score			
Interpreting the Score			

Handout III

Project Steps in Implementing a Multi-Rater Assessment in an Organization

Project Steps in Implementing Multi-Rater
Assessment in an Organization

Step 1: Deliver a briefing on competency assessment to senior managers

Step 2: Identify the organization's business needs

Step 3: Select a project manager and project team

Step 4: Allocate project resources

Step 5: Make a Go/No-Go project continuation decision

Step 6: Create or obtain a competency model for the job

Step 7: Develop data collection instruments

Step 8: Train the raters

Step 9: Develop and test the data input, analysis, and reporting system

Step 10: Collect the assessment data from raters

Step 11: Train the assessment participants to interpret their ratings

Step 12: Assess the achievement of the project objectives

Handout IV

Action Planning Form

Action Planning Form

Directions: Use this Action Planning Form to help structure group thinking about important issues in moving to next steps in Competency Identification, Modeling, and Assessment. For each question appearing in the left column below, jot down some thoughts in the right column. When you are finished, be prepared to share your answers.

Question	Answer
1. How do you believe competency assessment should be tested in this organization? (*Should it be pilot-tested? What group in the organization might yield the greatest leverage for improved organization performance?*)	
2. How should the competency assessment effort be done, in your opinion, and who should lead the effort?	
3. What resources might be needed to conduct competency assessment?	
4. When should competency assessment begin, and how long should it last?	
5. What results must be achieved from competency assessment for it to demonstrate success? How can "success" with the targeted group be defined in measurable terms?	
6. What other thoughts do you have about next steps?	

APPENDICES (Part III)

Appendix I

Assessment Survey: Sample Pages

Assessment Survey: Sample Pages

Person Being Assessed:

Directions: You have been named by the person listed above as someone who can provide helpful information to the person being assessed regarding his or her day-to-day performance. Unless you are the person's supervisor, the information you provide will be combined with that received from other persons and then fed back to the person you rated. You cannot be identified by the person you are rating. Space is provided under each item for any comments you may wish to make that clarify your rating.

Check (✓) one of the following:

❑ Self	❑ Peer/Colleague	❑ Internal Customer
❑ Employee's Supervisor	❑ Subordinate	❑ Family Member

Listed below are competencies or characteristics that are associated with successful performance. Rate how well you believe this person applies each competency during his or her daily performance. Use the rating scale provided by circling the number that best represents your rating. Return your survey to [*name*] at [*location*] by [*date*].

Rating Scale

N/A	1–2	3–4	5–6	7–8	9–10
Do Not Know	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent

Competency	Your Rating										
	Do Not Know	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent	
1. **Bias for Action:** Takes action in the face of apparent roadblocks	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Comment:

Assessment Survey: Sample Pages *(continued)*

	Do Not Know	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent	
2. **Supports Teamwork:** Encourages cooperation and collaboration among persons having shared or similar goals	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Comment:											
3. Fill in with competencies from the competency model you created for this group.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Comment:											
4.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Comment:											

Final Comments:

Appendix II

Assessment Report: Sample Page

Assessment Report: Sample Page

Prepared for:

Competency: Bias for Action

											Your Ratings	
Do Not Know	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent			
N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Rater	Rating
											Self	8.10
											Supervisor	5.43
											Average of Peers	6.76
											Average of Subordinates	7.81
											Average of Family Members' Ratings	2.54

Assessment Report: Sample Page *(continued)*

Prepared for:

Competency

											Your Ratings	
Do Not Know	Poor		Fair		Good		Very Good		Excellent			
N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Rater	Rating
											Self	
											Supervisor	
											Average of Peers	
											Average of Subordinates	
											Average of Family Members' Ratings	

Fill in with the ratings you received, using this format for all competencies.

Appendix III

Evaluation Questionnaire

Evaluation Questionnaire

Directions: Use this Evaluation Questionnaire to indicate how well you believe the competency-based multi-rater assessment worked for you. For each question appearing in the left column below, circle a response in the right column. When you finish, return your Questionnaire to [name] at [location] by [date]. Thank you for your cooperation.

Questions	**Your Answers**					
The assessment ratings that were provided to me:	Not Appropriate	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree/ Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Helped me understand my supervisor's perceptions of my performance.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
2. Helped me understand my peers' perceptions of my performance.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
3. Helped me understand my subordinates' perceptions of my performance.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
4. Helped me identify areas for performance improvement.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
5. Helped me pinpoint my performance strengths.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

Evaluation Questionnaire *(continued)*

Questions	**Your Answers**					
6. Helped me understand that I might be underutilizing one or more of my performance strengths within the organization.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
7. Are biased in a negative direction.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
8. Are biased in a positive direction.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
9. Are fair ratings of my performance.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
10. Were adequately protected from unauthorized distribution.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5
11. Overall: I am satisfied that the information I was given will be useful for enhancing my future performance.	N/A	1	2	3	4	5

THE COMPETENCY TOOLKIT

PART IV

HELPING INDIVIDUALS BUILD THEIR COMPETENCIES: INDIVIDUAL AND MANAGERIAL CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

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HRD

PRESS

Helping Individuals Build Their Competencies: Individual and Managerial Contract Development

CONTENTS

HELPING INDIVIDUALS BUILD THEIR COMPETENCIES: INDIVIDUAL AND MANAGERIAL CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT

I. Getting Started

A. Purpose

The four parts of this *Toolkit* contain virtually all of the items (except copies of the reference materials) that you will need to initiate and implement competency modeling, assessment, and development in an organization. This fourth part of the *Toolkit* includes:

- *Information*, some of it in considerable depth, for the competency project manager who must have in-depth understanding of an individual development contract system for workers and corresponding manager-development support contracts (MDSC), so that they can spearhead the implementation of a competency-based individual development system within their organization.
- *A structured briefing package*, including overhead masters, briefing delivery guidelines, and a formal action-planning process (with a form) that can be used to plan and gain commitment on next steps from decision-makers during the briefing.
- A second *structured briefing package*, including overhead masters and briefing delivery guidelines, that can be used to explain the concept, procedures, and responsibilities for individual development to employees and their supervisors or facilitators. The Individual Development Planning Contract (IDPC) and the Manager's Support Contract (MSC) will be used during the briefing as guidelines for the process.
- *Materials*, including a sample IDPC, a sample MSC, and other information needed to plan and conduct competency-based individual development planning.
- *Suggestions, approaches, and sample materials* for conducting the individual development planning processes.

B. Approach and Organization

Practitioners have, for many years, struggled with attempts to communicate the basic principles and techniques of competency identification, modeling, and assessment, as well as the use of those products for individual development planning. What is frustrating is that once one or more competency products are available, there is little understanding about how to effectively use them. A good example of this is the organization unit that spends money and time creating a competency model, and then is not sure exactly what to do with it!

You may remember that Part II of this *Toolkit* was included to help organizations identify competencies that workers must possess and apply in appropriate ways to achieve fully successful job performance. Successful performance and particularly performance at the exemplary level help meet and even sometimes exceed their organization's business objectives.

Competencies are characteristics that employees own and use in appropriate ways to produce work-results. These characteristics include the knowledge, skills, thought patterns, self-image dimensions, mindsets, and so forth that, when used in appropriate situations, result in successful performance. Part II of this *Toolkit* was included in order to make this step of job analysis—the *competency identification process*—easier and less costly than other research methods, yet capable of resulting in models of high quality. Once the key competencies have been identified, they are verified by job experts (for example, managers and/or external experts) and also by those who hold the job to ensure that they are the correct competencies and that they are accurately stated. Now the competencies are ready to be used to advantage by workers, their managers, and other persons.

Part III of this *Toolkit* was included to help members of the organization learn how to design and implement a competency-based multi-rater assessment system and incorporate the elements of the competency model(s) that resulted from the use of materials or information from Part II of the *Toolkit*. The system was used to produce competency assessments for employees who participated in the system.

Valid competency statements are used by managers and workers alike to assess the degree to which subject workers possess and can appropriately apply the use of the competencies for successful performance. This is called *competency assessment*. Part III of this *Toolkit* provides resources needed for completing the assessment process. When the suggestions for Part III are used, workers can obtain an assessment of their competency strengths from people who are familiar with their performance—their managers, subordinates, peers, family members, customers, and so on. The assessment results are usually reported to workers as assessment core profiles or reports. These profiles typically include discrete data and graphic representations of the survey results, as well as any comments made by respondents.

Once workers receive their profiles, they go about the process of identifying their competency strengths and possible areas for improvement. Some organizations handle this in other ways, while in other organizations little or no assessment is made. For instance, some organizations consider competency assessment data to be confidential, and reserve it solely for worker self- assessment and self-development. Other organizations implement a process of elaborate team-based review sessions of the results, where the worker is present to receive performance improvement feedback in person from her or his peers and supervisor or facilitator. We believe the most successful approaches result when the worker and her or his supervisor or facilitator form a "developmental alliance" based upon mutual trust and a commitment to achieving mutually successful outcomes. Part IV of the *Toolkit* provides what you will need in order to achieve this latter objective.

The next section of Part IV opens with an explanation of individual development contract planning (IDCP). IDCP is a process that brings together "what is" with "what should be"—thereby usually reflecting a need to plan for employees' competency development and the application of those competencies once they have been acquired. Common problems that practitioners experience with IDCP are presented and explained, followed by a discussion of who benefits from using IDCP and how. Every system of this type must be of the highest quality possible in order for the outcomes of its use to be beneficial, and the requirements needed to achieve that quality will be described. Key quality criteria for a competency-based individual development system are specified, and design issues that must be addressed before launching a competency-based individual development system are noted, as well. Nine questions are included to help you focus on whether or not an IDCP system should be implemented in your organization at this time.

If you have reached this point in your reading and have decided to proceed to develop an IDCP system, locate the key steps that must be completed in order to have such a mechanism in your organization. Ten steps are recommended; each is fully explained or referred to in already-available materials.

The materials discussed above are augmented by a briefing package that can be used with senior managers. It includes a presenter's guide, the visuals, and appropriate information handouts that can be used to brief senior managers on the IDCP system. We have also included an outline, handouts, and visuals for briefing employees on IDCP. A comprehensive Master Bibliography of print materials is also included later in the *Toolkit*.

In summary, this part of the *Toolkit* focuses on the values and uses of *Individual Development Contract Planning*, which is sometimes called *Individual Development Planning*. It transforms vague plans for future development into specific goals and learning and practice strategies that are intended to close competency gaps and to identify important goals of individuals and the organizations that employ them.

II. Aligning competency assessment results with individual development initiatives

A. What is individual development contract planning?

As we discussed in various other parts of this *Toolkit*, a competency model describes the characteristics that typify exemplary or fully successful job performers. Multi-rater assessment, on the other hand, links individual strengths and weaknesses to elements of validated competency models. Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are written at the individual level to narrow the competency gap between the competency model elements and the multi-rater assessments of individuals. The competency model expresses *what should be*; the multi-rater assessment indicates *the individual's current rating*. The IDCP brings together what is and what should be to create an action plan for performance improvement for individual workers.

The authors' philosophy of employee development is that the primary responsibility for employee growth and development rests with the employee. (See Rothwell and Sensenig, 1999; Rothwell, 1996.) In brief, they must be responsible for their own learning and the appropriate application of what they have learned in order to achieve their work outputs or results and the business objectives of their organization(s).

The performance manger's role in the process is to provide objective performance feedback, consultation, suggestions, and long-term support for the learning and its application for the achievements that are expected of them.

In this context, the worker is the first and foremost person who must be responsible for identifying his or her own competency development needs. Those needs might be affirmed by the outcomes of the use of a multi-rater assessment system. Alternatively, they might have been jointly identified by the employee and the performance manager. When you use the approach and products recommended in this *Toolkit*, you'll identify competency development needs. The worker takes the first major steps required for his or her own development to establish and receive his or her supervisor's or facilitator's professional and financial support for development. For purposes of the planning suggested here, we assume that a development period will consist of one calendar year, although shorter periods ranging from weekly to quarterly to project-by-project are possible.

There are many operational strategies by which to prepare IDCPs. Some organizations attempt to develop an IDCP during the employee performance-appraisal process. This is rarely successful. The main reason is that employees are focused on what they are learning about their past performance (which cannot be retroactively improved); it is difficult for them to reverse the process and think about future development. Thus, we advocate IDCP as a proactive rather than a reactive performance improvement practice. We prefer to remove it in time and place from the traditional employee performance-appraisal process. This is psychologically better and more efficient for employees, their managers, and ultimately the organization.

B. How is individual development contract planning used?

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used:

1. To help individuals narrow the competency gap between their current competencies and those that are necessary for exemplary, or at least fully successful, performance.
2. To provide supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers and provide a climate to encourage workers to take charge of their own development in line with organizational requirements.
3. To provide information to the organization that can be useful in implementing succession plans.
4. To provide a targeted and focused way to develop individuals based on their individual needs, rather than treat all employees the same.

C. Common problems with IDCP

In 1994, the American Society for Training and Development reported the findings of an informal survey on the topic of individual development planning. The survey revealed that development planning "is mostly an illusory phenomenon. It is often talked about but seldom practiced in ways that are likely to yield beneficial results for individuals or organizations" (*Training & Development,* November, 1994, p. 29).

According to the article's authors, common problems with individual development planning include all of the following inappropriate strategies:

- *"Laissez-fairing":* In this type of organization, the vast majority of the people do not have development plans.
- *Making resolutions:* The plans these people claim to have are vague and barely qualify as plans, per se. Like New Year's resolutions, they are soon forgotten.
- *"Merit-badging":* The individual takes advantage of a development opportunity, but the learning that might occur does not get translated to improved job performance. However, the employee has a certificate (the "merit badge") to hang on the wall.
- *Sinking or swimming:* This involves giving an employee a challenging assignment—perhaps too challenging for the individual at the time of the assignment—to determine his or her fitness for greater responsibilities in the organization. In these situations, only the strong survive: some sink, while others swim. It is too bad that not all employees are given opportunities to *learn how to swim*.
- *Dodging the axe:* "This is development by threat." Meet the quality standard within the next X days, or you are history: *That* is not a very nurturing improvement plan, in our opinion! And, of course, this approach can have unintended

side effects such as "encouraging" otherwise-productive workers to seek employment elsewhere.

- Our experience with resource-development activities concurs with the problems cited above, even now—several years later.

D. Who benefits from using an IDCP, and how do they benefit?

By contrast, our approach to individual development planning has several benefits for several different groups, and maintains the purpose of IDCPs.

First, the organization benefits.

- IDCPs provide individualized and therefore highly tailored and specific plans for the development of people. These are not "one-size-fits-all" or "cookie-cutter" plans; rather, they are focused on individualized needs and differences, while remaining sensitive to individualized strengths and values. This sends a strong message to the employee that their organization cares about them and their other employees.
- IDCPs identify organizational and individual development needs and address them *before* they create a problem.
- IDCPs provide data to help justify individual-development expenditures.
- IDCPs provide valuable information that can be used in succession planning, such as an action plan to groom individuals or groups to meet future needs in critical areas or in critical positions (Rothwell, 1994).

Second, employees benefit.

1. IDCPs (Individual Development Contract Plans) provide employees with performance feedback and developmental opportunities as a matter of organization policy.
2. IDCPs can provide a management-authorized justification for the individual to develop himself or herself by acquiring and applying competencies.
3. IDCPs help individuals address their competency weaknesses and enhance their competency strengths.
4. IDCPs permit individuals to exercise creativity in acquiring competencies, thereby enriching the quality of their work lives.
5. IDCPs provide specific strategies to close competency gaps.
6. IDCPs improve the individual's self-awareness about his or her personal development needs—and how to meet them inside or outside the organization.

Third, managers benefit.

1. IDCPs provide a basis for determining the collective competency gaps of an entire department or work unit.
2. IDCPs provide information on how to close those gaps, taking full advantage of knowledge about the relative strengths and weaknesses of individuals in the department or work unit.
3. IDCPs uncover otherwise-unknown strategies for developing individuals in line with organizational, departmental, and unit needs and requirements.

E. Requirements for an effective individual development system

As a result of our collective experience in human resource development, we know that for an individual development system to be effective, the following must be done:

- Senior management must incorporate consequences of participation or non-participation into system implementation.
- Valid and reliable competency models must be available to employees and supervisors for all jobs that are to be included in the competency assessment and individual development planning systems.
- All parties to the system must have trust in the processes and be open to possibilities for learning about their performance strengths and improvement needs and opportunities, as well as their role in helping others with their development. Building trust takes time, and it requires that confidences be maintained and promises kept.
- Those who are participating in the process must be assured of confidentiality throughout the process.
- You must commit to total and continued anonymity of competency assessment ratings and other personal information.
- Participating employees should be informed in advance when their development plans, progress reports, or outcomes are to be made available to others in the organization (for example, to other managers for succession planning purposes).
- The job competencies must reflect the organization's business priorities, and strategies for achieving them.
- Recipients of multi-rater assessment data must be trained in how to receive, acknowledge, accept, and use the information they receive in order to take corrective action to close performance gaps.
- As mentioned in Part III of this *Toolkit*, small organizations might find it difficult to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of assessment information. Consequently, alternative assessment approaches might need to be considered.

- Technical human resources and technology must be available to the organization, even if they have to be obtained externally.

F. Key quality criteria for a competency-based individual development system

It is essential that the project manager make sure that any human resource system and output that is created for performance management or enhancement purposes is of highest quality. Otherwise, the outputs or results may end up being of little or no use for their intended purposes. The following minimum but key criteria can be used to assess the quality of a competency-based individual development system; information needed to close quality gaps must be provided and any product that results must be suitable for its intended purposes.

1. *The data that is collected must be reliable*. The ratings on which an Individual Development Contract Plan (IDCP) are based should change in the same direction and with the appropriate intensity as changes in a manager's (or other employee's) performance over time. Subsequent applications of identical multi-rater assessment practices should be sensitive enough to reveal employee successes.
2. *Assessment methods used must be consistent*. The same (identical) scales should be used throughout any multi-rater assessment instrument on which IDCPs are based as well as across assessment applications so that reliable and valid comparisons can be made (assuming other assessment variables are held constant across multiple applications of the system).
3. *Data-collection instruments and methods must be valid and reliable*. The instrument and data-collection methods used for multi-rater assessment—the foundation and basis for the IDCP—should measure what they claim to measure, and they must do so consistently.
4. *The system must be easy to use*. The competency-based individual development system procedures should be easy to use by workers and their supervisors or facilitators.
5. *The assessment items and individual development plans are focused on performance*. The assessment items and subsequent individual development plans should focus on the competencies that are most important to the organization and to the achievement of its objectives, values, and vision.
6. *System outputs are tied to the organization's business objectives*. An organization's senior managers value that which they believe or know will help meet expected business objectives. Consequently, the Project Manager must make sure these linkages have been established and are fully understood by the organization's senior leaders.

G. Designing a competency-based individual development system

To design and install a competency-based individual development system in an organization, you and/or another individual assigned to spearhead such an effort must accurately anticipate the actions that you will need to take to design and plan the system, from start to finish. You should only proceed after you have completed this process if you believe that you can obtain organization support and necessary resources for project success. You might want to pause at this point and complete a detailed review of the action steps for system development outlined in the next section of this part of the *Toolkit*. This will give you further insight into just what is ahead.

Questions to Ask Yourself

1. Have you already researched and developed at least one or more competency models and obtained management endorsement? If not, then you need to return to Part II of the *Toolkit* and carry out the foundational work described there first.
2. Will you be able to gain support from senior managers and their subordinate managers for system design and implementation?
3. Can you provide training to the participating employees and their immediate supervisors or facilitators in how to use the system procedures, processes, and documents? This is a critical success factor for any competency-based individual development project.
4. Can you acquire the resources needed to complete the project steps (presented later)?
5. Do you have or can you acquire the organization resources needed to administer the system in the long-term?
6. Can you provide training for the participants and their immediate supervisors or facilitators in their individual responsibilities and how to complete the development planning processes?
7. Who will evaluate system procedures, processes, and outcomes at its formative and implemented stages, and how?
8. Will participating employees be able to access the development resources that have been identified but might not be readily available to them without release time? Will management provide release time so that employees can complete development activities of this type?
9. Will the individual development system provide for follow-up incentives for performance, and disincentives for nonperformance? In other words, will there be consequences for successfully completing—or not completing—one's individual development contract? Individual development should be linked to the organization's rewards or compensation system. What incentives will be offered to individuals for their full and committed participation in the system?

As you can tell, each item can pose formidable challenges to you along the way. Avoid being blindsided by them. Plan your path with great care and use the information included in the next section.

H. The steps for designing, implementing, and evaluating a competency-based individual development system

So how do you begin to design, implement, and evaluate a competency-based individual development planning system? We have identified a number of steps that must be successfully completed to create and implement a competency-based individual development approach in an organizational setting. Some of them overlap and some of them look similar, but follow them, nonetheless.

Individual Development Planning Project Steps

1. Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders and use a "working draft" concept of the individual development planning system.
2. Create a project plan, review the details of the plan with the project steering committee, and obtain endorsement from the project sponsor.
3. Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system.
4. Help individual development system participants identify, using their competency-based multi-rater assessment results, 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs.
5. Link the needs of the work unit or the organization's business needs with the competency gaps. Prioritize the competency gaps in cooperation with the supervisor or designee. Identify up to three competency gaps for development in the forthcoming year.
6. List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan. Name the person(s) with whom the individual is to confer in order to set up alliances for growth and development. The worker will be responsible for enlisting the long-term support, not to exceed one year, needed to achieve development objectives.
7. Take action to implement the plan.
8. Revise the individual development plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested.
9. Evaluate the individual development results.

These steps are depicted in Exhibit I which appears later.

Absolute agreement on the exact steps that should be followed is a difficult issue, since each organization application could very well be different for all others because of differences in available resources and corporate culture. Numerous organization characteristics will shape your system and how it is implemented. One factor with particular impact, for example, is the degree to which performance leaders have become accustomed to the practice of giving developmental feedback to their subordinates, and how comfortable and skilled they are in doing so. This implies knowing more about the organization's performance management practices and ideas about change, growth, and development. Are employee competencies continually developed and appropriately used within the organization? What roles do employees and managers play in the employment-development process? How are individual development activities balanced with day-to-day work objectives and getting the work out?

The Program Manager for the creation and implementation of the individual development system must be flexible in selecting his or her approach to system design and implementation. Our suggestions provide you with successful practices and a wide sampling of the elements you will need to create a successful individual development system.

I. Completing the steps

Step 1: Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders.

As with the major organization competency initiatives described in earlier parts of this *Toolkit*, obtaining senior management or leadership support for an individual development system is essential to the long-term success of the initiative. Senior managers must make sure that their subordinates understand the importance and value of using the outputs of the earlier competency systems to realize the ultimate objectives of improving individual and organizational success at the highest strategic level.

This particular competency-based human resource subsystem is a highly sensitive one in human terms. Making a commitment to actively participate in another's development means risking confrontation and being willing to face developmental challenges or roadblocks, with sincere regard for the dignity and respect of others. That is quite a challenge!!

Those who are not secure in these areas of human endeavor will tend to shy away from accepting a developmental role with their subordinates. Senior managers must take the first step and set an example by introducing and implementing an individual development system in their organization. They must demonstrate their own vulnerability and willingness to learn by doing—sometimes they will get it right and other times they will get it not-so-right. Performance managers or others who find themselves faced with troubling issues in this area should review an article published by the American Society for Training and Development

Exhibit 1: Major Steps for Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating a Competency-Based Individual Development System

Step 1:
Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders for an individual development system

Step 2:
Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the Individual Development System

Step 3:
Help individual development system participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies for development

Step 4:
Link the needs of the work unit or the organization's business needs with the competency gaps

Step 5:
List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan

Step 6:
Take action to implement the plan

Step 7:
Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested

Step 8:
Evaluate the individual development results

on the topic of individual development planning (*Training & Development*, November 1994, p. 29). Organizations with open and empowering corporate cultures will find it easier to implement individual development systems than will authoritarian organizations.

Before planning and delivering a management briefing on this topic, you should create a working draft of an individual development system for your organizational setting. It should reflect the realities of your organization's culture, including realistic assessments of what will be required versus that which might be optional. If you have a conceptual prototype of an individual development system in mind at the time of the formal briefing, this will help you focus the system in organizational terms.

The first step in the briefing process is to inform the organization's leaders of what an individual development system is, why it is so important for success, and how the organization will specifically benefit by making the investment in the process. They should be informed as to how this competency subsystem is related to others in the organization, and told what will be lost if they do not implement such a system (they will have assessment results, but will do nothing with them except maybe use them to punish selected employees). Tell them why their leadership is needed and give them an overview of processes and anticipated outcomes of an initial pilot study at the senior manager level with their direct reports. Help them understand that the completion of such a pilot study will be useful, since they will ideally be prepared to advocate implementation of the subsystem throughout the organization once they have seen the benefits of their labor. They will also be able to guide the project manager on pitfalls to avoid when moving the subsystem down through the organization. Finally, senior managers should be given an opportunity to modify or revise any of the proposed plans or procedures during the briefing session. This will encourage them to support implementation.

A suggested briefing package, including transparencies and the information needed to deliver the briefing to senior managers, is provided later in this part of the *Toolkit*.

Step 2: Create a project plan, review the details of the plan with the project steering committee, and obtain endorsement from the project sponsor.

Every project of this type requires a concrete, well-defined plan that will lead to the successful completion of steps critical to achieving the intended objectives. Competency-based performance enhancement projects that are poorly planned or not planned at all are especially vulnerable to mishaps. This project is no exception.

Part II (see pages II-28–II-30) includes a detailed discussion of the elements for a high-quality project plan. We suggest that you use the same planning elements and organization-presentation plan suggested therein.

Once again, we do recommend that you use a project steering committee. As with the other competency-based initiatives described in this *Toolkit*, project steering committee members can help you plan, implement, and evaluate outcomes of an individual development planning system. You should review your project plan with them and seek their suggestions for improvements prior to briefing your project sponsor. Depending upon when you plan to activate the use of a project steering committee, their endorsement might also help obtain the acceptance and support of senior managers for your work. Your project sponsor will undoubtedly make additional comments and suggestions for improving the plan and procedures outlined for the project; once these revisions have been made and the project sponsor feels satisfied that it is worthy of full support, you can proceed to Step 3, the information briefing, which is discussed next.

Step 3. Provide employees and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system.

Recall that, in an earlier part of this *Toolkit*, we suggested that you should pilot-test the competency-based performance enhancement process recommended throughout all parts of this *Toolkit*. Once the pilot test of the subsystem has been evaluated and revisions have been made, you will be prepared to implement it in other organization units. This will require that you introduce the concepts and processes to those affected by the implementation. The revised system objectives and processes should be the elements of this briefing and discovery session. In general, the contents of this briefing session should parallel many of the topics included in the senior manager briefing. It should emphasize the specific steps and details of the roles and responsibilities of the parties to the individual development process.

Since it is impossible at this point to know exactly how the subsystem design will look in your organization following the pilot study, the authors have included a smaller briefing package later in this part of the *Toolkit* for this purpose. The Project Manager will most probably want to modify what we have included there and include items that are more specific to your situation.

Step 4. Help Individual Development System participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs.

The process of identifying individual competency gaps using multi-rater assessment data without specific information on the rating scales and other instructions is difficult. Allow us to offer some general guidelines that we have found useful when attempting to use multi-rater assessment information to pinpoint individual development needs. We will suggest several useful references later in this section.

Participants must ultimately answer the following question: *What competency gaps must I fill in order to bring to the organization the performance that is required for it to achieve its business objectives?* Participants will usually reach the answer to this question by first identifying between three to six potential competency areas where perceived gaps between "what is" and "what should be" with the individual have been identified.

To identify these gaps, the individual should first review his or her "self" ratings (from the multi-rater assessment and feedback) in comparison with his or her supervisor's or facilitator's ratings. In general, when a five-point rating scale has been used to gather the assessment data, ratings that differ by one full scale point in either direction should be examined further. With a ten-point rating scale where ratings differ by two or more scale points in either direction, further examination is warranted. When the rating of the supervisor is one or more scale points lower than the participant's rating, then a gap analysis is warranted. *Gap analysis* attempts to explain why there was a difference.

An important information resource for conducting gap analysis exercises is to review raters' narrative comments, assuming they were permitted to be part of the assessment process. In the absence of narrative comments or detailed comments, the participant can collect additional useful anecdotal information regarding their performance by asking for additional feedback from the rater group. If you find it necessary to take such steps in your organization, we suggest that you review Kouzes and Posner (1997) and/or Weiss and Hartle (1998) for details on how this can be accomplished.

The second level of analysis is to compare the subordinates' ratings with the "self" ratings and complete performance gap analyses. The same suggestions as those provided for the supervisor-to-self differences are suggested.

The third level of analysis is to compare peers' (or others') ratings with the "self" ratings, and complete performance gap analyses. Once again, the same suggestions as those provided for the supervisor-to-self differences are suggested.

Once the three levels of performance analyses have been completed using whatever analysis methods are appropriate for the assessment situation, compare analysis findings from the three settings. Here are some questions and answers to explore:

- Which competency gaps appeared in all three comparisons? In two of the three comparisons? In only one of the comparisons? How are the rating patterns similar to each other? How do they differ?
- What gaps exist between the supervisor's and the "self" ratings? Did a similar pattern reveal itself with other rating groups? How are the rating patterns similar to each other and how do they differ from each other?
- Did the supervisor or facilitator rate any of the competency areas for the participant as "Unacceptable" or "Must acquire the competency," or "Is deficient in the competency areas"? Which competencies were rated this way by the supervisor or facilitator? Did the subordinates or peers of the participant agree with the supervisor's or facilitator's rating? What are the implications of such a rating?

Once the analyses have been completed, the participant should identify up to six competency areas for discussion with her or his supervisor or facilitator. The focus of this discussion will be at a strategic level relative to the work unit contributions of the participant. We advise participants to first include those rated as "unacceptable" or receiving "minimal competence" ratings by the supervisor or facilitator.

During the competency assessment conference with the supervisor or facilitator, the two parties to the process should address the purpose of the session, individual roles, what it is that must be accomplished, and any follow-up actions both parties must take for the session to have greatest long-term meaning, impact, and value.

Step 5. Link the needs of the work unit or the organization with the competency gaps. Prioritize the competency gaps in cooperation with the supervisor or a person designated by him or her. Identify up to three competency gaps for development in the forthcoming year.

The completion of this step of the process is essentially explained within the context of the description above. Since the authors have no information as to exactly how your organization goes about business planning and development, the project manager will need to seek out this information from planners, senior managers, or others familiar with the process. You completed a Worksheet in Part I of this *Toolkit* that should have revealed the linkages between the organization's strategic business objectives and the competency gaps of key employees. We suggest you refer to the results of that Worksheet now, before proceeding. We must assume that the work unit exists within the context of the organization, since it has one or more roles in helping the organization achieve its business objectives or strategic plans. The work unit supervisor or facilitator is the key person who should be knowledgeable about this topic. The immediate supervisor or the facilitator will be the participant's first line of assistance on which competency gaps are "strategic" for a given performance period.

Why should the individual development plan include not more than three competency gaps for action during an average performance period of one year? Experience shows that most persons are not able to successfully complete development plans for more than three competencies in a typical work year. In fact, some practitioners suggest that only one, or at most two competencies should be pursued during a one-year performance period. If additional competency gaps are included in the plan, then one can usually expect diminished results in closing the proposed gaps.

Step 6. List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan. Name the person(s) with whom the worker will confer to set up alliances for his or her growth and development. The worker will be responsible for enlisting the long-term support, not to exceed one year, that he or she will need to achieve his or her development objectives.

At the outset of this part of the *Toolkit*, we explained that our philosophy regarding the roles and responsibilities of those persons involved in completing an individual development plan placed the first level of development responsibility with the worker, rather than with the supervisor, facilitator, or higher-level manager. This philosophical stance heavily impacts who does what and for whom, beginning with this step in the development process. We assume that users agree that the first level of responsibility rests with the employee when completing the work of this step.

So what is the supervisor's or facilitator's responsibility for the worker's development? Here are some great ways to use these resources:

- They can give the employee honest and appropriate performance feedback.
- They can help an employee understand performance assessments.
- They can provide development techniques and suggestions that will encourage formation of a partnership between the supervisor or facilitator and the employee.
- They can encourage the employee by supporting his or her efforts, especially when they prove to be less than successful.
- They can create development opportunities for the employee that might not otherwise exist within the normal work context of the unit.
- They can advise the employee about higher management's perceptions or beliefs about the employee's performance in ways that will help the employee specifically address key development areas.
- They can be advocates for the employee with higher management and others who are impacted by the employee's performance (or lack thereof).
- They can advise the employee about ways to develop him or her not only for their present responsibilities, but for more complex ones at some future time.
- They can help the employee understand their preferred learning style and the best ways to use development opportunities consistent with those preferences.

Learning is obviously key to closing competency performance gaps. So, then, the question is: *How do people learn when on the job?* Research by Gerber (1995) provides help in answering this question by revealing that people learn on the job in at least six different ways:

1. *Self-managed observation and making mistakes along the way:* This occurs as a result of self-reflection and trial-and-error.
2. *Interactions with others:* Learning is an outgrowth of working with others in meaningful ways.
3. *Formal training:* Learning occurs as a result of active participation in formal, planned learning activities.
4. *Offering leadership:* Enhanced learning comes from teaching others what we know.
5. *Open lateral planning:* Learning occurs by using one's instincts, intuition, and imagination, and through networking. This is creative thinking.
6. *Quality assurance:* One learns by receiving and accepting feedback about his or her performance from others once an attempt to perform has been made.

A particularly intriguing approach to development planning is the "root skills" approach. This competency-based approach is worth reviewing as a useful conceptual approach for defining what must be developed in employees for improved performance (Individual development planning: Distinctly different, 1994).

We would be remiss if we did not also call the user's attention to the fact that many learning opportunities exist with community and religious organizations. They can often lead to learning that is readily transferrable to the daily job. Community agencies such as the YMCA/YWCA, community colleges, and not-for-profit organizations provide development opportunities that can be directly transferable to many organizations. The Project Manager should explore these offerings in-depth, add them to lists, and make the results of their research available to individuals and managers. Much information about these resources can be obtained by networking with community service groups and persons in the public library systems of most communities.

An abundance of suggestions for individual development can be found in Davis, et al. (1992) and Kravetz (1995). The Davis book is limited to management development suggestions, but those presented by Kravetz include development suggestions for both managers and individual contributors.

During action planning, the worker must be specific about what he or she will do and what he or she will accomplish during the development cycle. (See the Exhibit on page 4–24 below for an illustration of the development cycle.) Plans should be stated as performance objectives that indicate:

- The action to be taken or objective to be achieved
- The conditions under which the performance will occur
- The person(s) who will be involved
- Measurable indicators of successful performance

- A time frame for completing the performance
- A means of following up

If you do not include all these elements, your individual development plans are likely to be worthless. You must also discipline yourself and write out these performance objectives.

The worker and his or her supervisor or facilitator can rely on Geber's (1995) framework to identify existing or create new opportunities for development.

Step 7. Take action to implement the plan.

Nothing will be accomplished without taking *specific action* to implement the plan, and it will be easy to get off track. The worker should be first held accountable for implementing the learning plan; the supervisor or facilitator should make it clear what will happen if the worker doesn't fulfill his or her learning contract. The penalty should be assessed at the end of the performance period, in whatever way the organization has established for handling such matters (i.e., through its compensation system, its rewards or recognition programs, its performance-management processes).

Step 8. Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested.

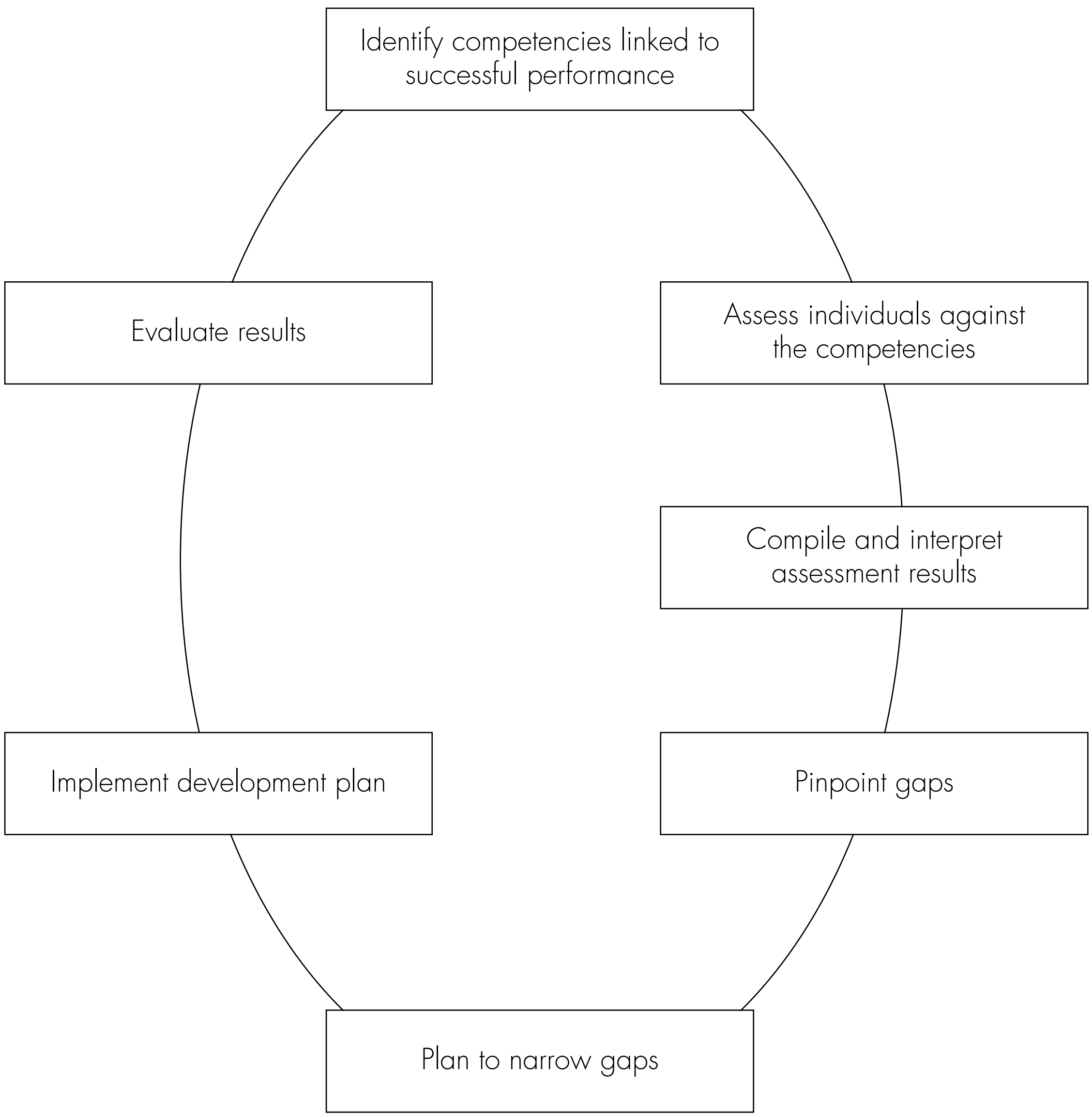
Expect the learning plan to change, based upon the worker's experiences and the suggestions received during development. The plan should be flexible; revise it as many times as is appropriate while the individual is engaged in the development process. The worker should always have a firm rationale and reason for revising the learning and development plan, and the worker's immediate supervisor or facilitator should be involved in the revision process.

Step 9. Evaluate the individual development results.

A very straightforward way to assess the outcomes of a worker's participation is to document how the competencies were acquired and applied to achieve the work results, either during the performance period or at some agreed-upon checkpoint or milestone. Multi-rater assessments can be administered by collecting evaluative data from the worker's facilitator, supervisor, peers, subordinates, or other appropriate assessment sources.

As you recall, development objectives include an assessment component that clearly specifies what will be accomplished and in what time frame. Supervisors and facilitators must honor those assessment agreements when it comes time to evaluate the quality of the worker's participation in the program. Not honoring their agreements will destroy the trust that is so essential to individual development.

Exhibit 2: Key Steps in the Individual Development Cycle



No matter what approach you take, be equitable and fair to those whose accomplishments are being assessed and developed. Workers who believe their work was evaluated fairly and consistently will continue to support the process.

III. Evaluating the Results of Part IV

How do you determine that you have achieved the desired results from Part IV? To answer that question, the Project Manager should consider whether the desired results were achieved before, during, and after using this part of the *Toolkit*. More specifically, the Project Manager should focus attention on desired outcomes or results. Before the Individual Development Planning System was established and implemented, did the Project Manager enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders? Use the results of competency assessment and a validated competency model as the basis for the system? Create a project plan and obtain endorsement from a project sponsor? Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system? During the time in which the IDP system was established and implemented, did the Project Manager help individual development system participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3 to 6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs? Link the needs of the work unit or the organization with the competency gaps? Prioritize the competency gaps in cooperation with the supervisor or a person designated by them? Identify up to three competency gaps for development in the forthcoming year? After the IDP system was implemented, did each worker in the targeted group possess a list of specific developmental actions that the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan? Was a list made of those with whom the individual will confer in order to set up alliances for growth and development? Were some means established by which to hold the worker and his or her immediate supervisor responsible for taking action on the developmental objectives and actions? Were IDPs successfully implemented?

Take a moment to rate the success of this part of the process. Complete the following Worksheet (see page 4–26). The Project Manager may complete the Worksheet on her or his own or else hand the evaluation form out to others such as stakeholders in the competency project for their candid assessments. It could also be used with project staff at key decision steps or points in the project.

IV. Outline to Brief Senior Managers and Supervisors on Individual Development Planning *[Display Overhead 1]*

A. Briefing Overview *[Display Overhead 2]*

1. Briefly explain that the purpose of this session is to describe how to close the developmental gap revealed by multi-rater assessment (or other methods) and

Exhibit: A Worksheet to Evaluate the Results of Part IV

Directions: Use this Worksheet to evaluate the results of Part IV. (This Worksheet is to be completed by the Project Manager.) For each question appearing in the left column below, check a box in the center column and write any appropriate notes in the right column.

Question	Answer			Notes
	Yes ☒	No ☒	Not Applicable ☒	
Before Implementation of the Individual Development Planning System:				
1. Did the Project Manager enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders?	❑	❑	❑	
2. Did the Project Manager use the results of competency assessment and a validated competency model as the basis for the system?	❑	❑	❑	
3. Did the Project Manager create a project plan and obtain endorsement from a project sponsor?	❑	❑	❑	
4. Were workers and their supervisors or facilitators given an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system?	❑	❑	❑	
During Implementation of the Individual Development Planning System:				
5. Did the Project Manager help individual development system participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs?	❑	❑	❑	

Exhibit: *(continued)*

Question	Answer			Notes
	Yes ☒	No ☒	Not Applicable ☒	
6. Did the Project Manager link the needs of the work unit or organization with the competency gaps?	❑	❑	❑	
7. Did the Project Manager prioritize the competency gaps in cooperation with the supervisor or a person designated by them?	❑	❑	❑	
8. Did the Project Manager identify up to three competency gaps for development in the forthcoming year?	❑	❑	❑	
After Implementation of the Individual Development Planning System:				
9. Did each worker in the targeted group possess a list of specific actions he or she will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan?	❑	❑	❑	
10. Were the names documented of the person(s) with whom the individual will confer, in order to set up alliances for growth and development?	❑	❑	❑	
11. Were some means established by which to hold the worker and his or her immediate supervisor responsible for taking action on the developmental objectives and actions?	❑	❑	❑	
12. Were IDPs successfully implemented?	❑	❑	❑	

13. What other comments do you have to make about the results of this part?

to plan executive and manager roles in effective Individual Development Contract Planning. *[Display Overhead 3]*

2. Share the following objectives for this Briefing: *[Display Overheads 4 and 5]*
   - To define Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)
   - To explain the benefits and costs associated with Individual Development Contract Planning
   - To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based individual development contract planning
   - To determine organizational commitment to Individual Development Contract Planning
   - To plan executive and manager roles in effective Individual Development Contract Planning

B. Defining individual development contract planning *[Display Overhead 6]*

1. Explain that a special vocabulary is required to discuss the concept of a competency-based Individual Development Planning system. *[Display Overhead 7]*
2. Present the following terms and ask participants to offer examples of each: *[Display Overhead 8]*
   - *Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)* is the process of filling developmental gaps by narrowing or eliminating the difference between individual strengths and areas for improvement—and the performance requirements revealed by a competency model.
   - An *Individual Development Contract or Plan* is a written document that pinpoints developmental gaps or individual development needs and describes how the gaps will be closed. It is an action plan to guide the development of an individual. *[Display Overhead 9]*
   - *Competency assessment* is the process of comparing one individual's competency level to another standard, such as a fully-validated competency model. *[Display Overhead 10]*
   - ❑ *Multi-rater assessment* is, quite literally, the process of assessing or rating an individual by more than one rater.
   - ❑ *Multi-rater feedback* refers to the process of gathering up the results of multi-rater assessment and feeding them back to the individual who was assessed. *[Display Overhead 11]*
   - ❑ *360-degree assessment* is a form of multi-rater assessment in which an individual is rated by those in the "circle" around him or her. This form of feedback takes its name from the number of degrees in a circle.

- ❑ *180-degree assessment* is a "half-circle" assessment.
- ❑ *Job competence* is an employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993).* *[Display Overhead 12]*
- ❑ A *job competency* is an underlying characteristic of an employee (a motive, skill, aspects of one's self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge) that results in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982). *[Display Overhead 13]*

C. Explaining the benefits and costs associated with individual development contract planning [Display Overhead 14]

1. Point out that competency assessment may be useful on an individual level in its own right, but its value is multiplied if deliberate steps are taken to plan for narrowing developmental gaps. *[Display Overhead 15]*
2. Emphasize that Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used: *[Display Overhead 16]*
   A. To help individuals narrow the competency gap between their current competencies and those that are necessary for exemplary or fully successful performance.
   B. To provide supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers and provide a climate to encourage workers to take charge of their own development in line with organizational requirements. *[Display Overhead 17]*
   C. To provide information to the organization that can be useful in implementing succession plans. *[Display Overhead 18]*
   D. To provide a targeted and focused way to develop individuals according to their individual needs, rather than by treating all employees the same.
3. Emphasize that Individual Development Planning benefits the organization by: *[Display Overhead 19]*
   A. Providing individualized, highly tailored, and specific plans for the development of people.
   B. Identifying organizational and individual development needs to be addressed *before* they create a problem.

* *Note:* Items in this briefing marked with a ❑ indicate that the topic was previously treated in earlier Parts of the *Competency Toolkit*. However, the topic is repeated here to remind executives why the organization is using a competency-based approach.

C. Providing data that helps justify individual development expenditures. *[Display Overhead 20]*

D. Providing valuable information that can be used in succession planning, such as an action plan to groom individuals or groups to meet future needs in critical areas or in critical positions (Rothwell, 1994).

4. Point out that employees benefit because Individual Development Contract Plans: *[Display Overhead 21]*

A. Can provide a management-authorized justification for the individual to develop himself or herself by acquiring and applying competencies.

B. Help individuals address their competency weaknesses and enhance their competency strengths.

C. Permit individuals to exercise creativity while trying to acquire competencies, thereby enriching the quality of their work lives. *[Display Overhead 22]*

D. Provide specific strategies to close competency gaps.

E. Improve individual self-awareness about personal development needs, and how to meet them inside or outside the organization.

5. Explain that managers benefit because Individual Development Contract Plans: *[Display Overhead 23]*

A. Provide a basis for determining the collective competency gaps of an entire department or work unit.

B. Provide information on how to close those gaps.

C. Uncover otherwise-unknown strategies for developing individuals.

6. Emphasize to participants that an effective individual development contract planning system should fit the following profile: *[Display Overhead 24]*

A. Senior management must support system implementation by setting up consequences of participation or nonparticipation.

B. The system should include valid and reliable competency models.

C. All parties to the system must have trust in the processes and be open to possibilities for learning. *[Display Overhead 25]*

D. Those who are participating in the process must be assured of confidentiality throughout the process.

E. Competency assessment ratings and other personal information must be kept private and confidential. *[Display Overhead 26]*

F. Participating employees should be informed in advance when their development plans, progress reports, or outcomes will be made available to others in the organization (for example, to other managers for succession planning purposes).

G. The job competencies must reflect the organization's business priorities and strategies. *[Display Overhead 27]*

H. Recipients of multi-rater assessment data must be trained in how to receive, acknowledge, accept, and use the information in order to take corrective action to close performance gaps.

I. Small organizations might find it difficult to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. Consequently, alternative assessment approaches might need to be considered. *[Display Overhead 28]*

J. Technical human resources and technology must be available to the organization, even if they have to be obtained externally.

7. Explain that there are costs as well as benefits associated with an individual development planning system. Among the costs are those associated with: *[Display Overhead 29]*

   A. Interpreting assessment results

   B. Planning for development

   C. Developmental efforts

   D. Tracking and evaluating developmental results

8. Note that the benefits outweigh the costs of Individual Development Planning, because development: *[Display Overhead 30]*

   A. Can increase the flexibility of individual performers.

   B. Can provide a pool of talent available to be tapped in the future.

   C. Ensures that individuals are equipped with the competencies they need to be fully productive, if not exemplary, performers.

D. Clarifying what the organization hopes to achieve by doing competency-based individual development contract planning [Display Overhead 31]

❑ 1. Ask participants to list the two or three major business needs affecting the organization at present. *[Display Overhead 32]*

❑ 2. Point out that no matter what the needs may be, anything that can help individuals and the entire organization perform better will help meet these needs.

❑ 3. Explain that this briefing is intended to show participants how a competency-based individual development contract planning system can help meet business needs and current business challenges. *[Display Overhead 33]*

❑ 4. Emphasize that a competency-based individual development contract planning system is a means of closing developmental gaps uncovered from multi-rater assessment.

5. Ask participants to break up into groups of 3–5 each and discuss what they believe the organization wants from an IDCP system. Ask a spokesperson for each group to report the group's consensus. Put each group's consensus ideas on a flipchart and feed them back to participants. Try to reach consensus with the large group about the organization's desired goals from the IDCP system. *[Display Overheads 34 and 35; Use Handout 1]*

E. Determining organizational commitment to individual development contract planning [Display Overhead 36]

1. Explain that there are several key requirements for any Individual Development Contract Planning System to be effective. Among them: *[Display Overhead 37]*
   A. Data must be reliable.
   B. Consistent assessment methods must be used.
   C. Data must be valid and reliable.
   D. The system must be easy to use.
   E. The assessment items and individual development plans must be focused on performance.
2. List the steps involved in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System: *[Display Overhead 38; Distribute Handout 2]*
   A. Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders.
   B. Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system.
   C. Help Individual Development System participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs. *[Display Overhead 39]*
   D. Link the needs of the work unit, or the organization's business needs, with the competency gaps. Prioritize the competency gaps in cooperation with the supervisor or a person designated by them. Identify up to three competency gaps for development in the forthcoming year. *[Display Overhead 40]*
   E. List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan. Name the person(s) with whom the individual will confer in order to set up alliances for growth

and development. The worker will be responsible for enlisting the long-term support, not to exceed one year, needed to achieve development objectives.

F. Take action to implement the plan.

G. Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested. *[Display Overhead 41]*

H. Evaluate the individual development results.

3. Note that the Individual Development Contract Planning process culminates in the completion of a form that is filled out by the individual. *[Use Handout 3*.]
4. Note that the IDCP is closely related to key steps in the Individual Development process. *[Display Overhead 42; Use Handout 4.]*
5. Ask participants what resources will be needed by the organization to implement a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system. Place their remarks on a flipchart or white board, or write them on a blank overhead transparency. *[Display Overhead 43]*
6. Review how each step, recorded in response to #2 above, can be carried out.
7. Check the willingness and commitment of participants to provide the resources necessary to carry out competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning in the organization. The project manager should prepare a recommended budget for the project, with the necessary resources included. Senior managers must then provide these resources, or the project will assume a "No-Go" status.

F. Executive and managerial roles in effective individual development contract planning [Display Overhead 44]

1. Ask participants to divide up into small groups of 3–5 people each and appoint a spokesperson for each group. *[Display Overhead 45]*
2. Ask each small group to indicate what their role(s) should be in effective individual development contract planning. *[Use Handout 5]* (Note: If flipcharts are available, suggest that the participants record their answers to the questions appearing on the Activity Sheet.)
3. Allow participants about 30 minutes to complete the Activity. At the end of that time, ask whether any groups need additional time. If they do, allow another 15 minutes.
4. Ask the spokesperson for each small group to report on the results of his or her small group's Activity. *[Display Overhead 46]*
5. Reach consensus or agreement with all members in the large group about what role the executive or manager should play in Individual Development Contract Planning.

6. Note that the Individual Development Contract Planning process should be supported by a Management Support Process (MSP). The Executive or Manager should complete a form indicating his or her support for the Individual Development Contract Plan. *[Use Handout 6*.]

G. Conclusion [Display Overhead 47]

1. Review the purpose and objectives of the session. *[Display Overheads 48 and 49]*
2. Restate the agreement made among members of the group about the role desired of executives and managers in the Individual Development Contract Planning process.

Thank participants for their attendance and adjourn.

V. Overhead Masters for Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing

(Part IV)

The Management Briefing: Using Individual Development Planning

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #1*

Briefing Notes:

Briefing Overview

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #2*

Briefing Notes:

Purpose of the Briefing

The purpose of this session is to describe how to close a developmental gap revealed by multi-rater assessment (or other methods) and to plan executive and manager roles in effective Individual Development Contract Planning.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #3*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To define Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)
- To explain the benefits and costs associated with IDCP
- To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based IDCP

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #4*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To determine organizational commitment to IDCP
- To plan executive and manager roles in effective IDCP

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #5*

Briefing Notes:

Defining Individual Development Contract Planning

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #6*

Briefing Notes:

Need for a Special Vocabulary

There is a need for a special vocabulary to discuss the concept of a competency-based Individual Development Planning system.

- **Definition:** *Competency assessment* is the process of comparing one's individual competency level to another standard, such as a fully validated competency model.
- **Definition:** *Multi-rater assessment* is, quite literally, the process of assessing or rating an individual by more than one rater.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #7*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- ***Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)*** is the process of filling developmental gaps by narrowing or eliminating the difference between individual strengths and weaknesses or areas for improvement, and the performance requirements revealed by a competency model.

Briefing Notes:

Definitions

- ***An Individual Development Contract*** or ***Plan*** is a written document that pinpoints developmental gaps or needs and describes how the gaps will be closed.

Briefing Notes:

Definitions

- ***Competency assessment*** is the process of comparing one's individual competency level to another standard, such as a fully validated competency model.
- ***Multi-rater assessment*** is, quite literally, the process of assessing or rating an individual by more than one rater.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #10*

Briefing Notes:

Definitions

- ***Multi-rater feedback*** refers to the process of gathering up the results of multi-rater assessment and feeding them back to the individual who was assessed.
- ***360-degree assessment*** is a form of assessment in which an individual is rated by those in the “circle” around him or her.
- ***180-degree assessment*** is a “half-circle” assessment.

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- ***Job competence:*** An employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993).

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #12*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- ***Job competency:*** An underlying characteristic of an employee that results in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982).

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #13*

Briefing Notes:

Explaining the benefits and costs associated with Individual Development Contract Planning

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #14*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits

- Competency assessment may be useful on an individual level in its own right, but its value is multiplied if deliberate steps are taken to plan for narrowing developmental gaps.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #15*

Briefing Notes:

Uses of Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs)

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to:

- Help individuals narrow the competency gap between their current competencies and those that are necessary for exemplary or fully successful performance.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #16*

Briefing Notes:

Uses of Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs)

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to:

- Provide supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers, and provide a climate to encourage workers to take charge of their own development in line with organizational requirements.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #17*

Briefing Notes:

Uses of Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs)

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to:

- Provide information to the organization that can be useful in implementing succession plans.
- Provide a targeted and focused way to develop individuals based on their individual needs, rather than treat all employees the same.

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to the Organization

Individual Development Planning benefits the organization by:

- Providing individualized, highly tailored, and specific plans for the development of people
- Identifying organizational and individual development needs to be addressed *before* they create a problem

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #19*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to the Organization

Individual Development Planning benefits the organization by:

- Providing data that can help justify individual development expenditures
- Providing valuable information that can be used in succession planning —such as an action plan to groom individuals or groups to meet future needs in critical areas or in critical positions

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #20*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to Employees

Employees benefit from Individual Development Planning because IDPs:

- Can provide a management-authorized justification for the individual to develop himself or herself by acquiring and applying competencies
- Help individuals address their competency weaknesses and enhance their competency strengths

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #21*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to Employees

Employees benefit from Individual Development Planning because IDPs:

- Permit individuals to exercise creativity while acquiring competencies, thereby enriching the quality of their work lives
- Provide specific strategies to close competency gaps
- Improve individual self-awareness about personal development needs

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #22*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to Managers

Managers benefit from Individual Development Planning because IDPs:

- Provide a basis for determining the collective competency gaps of an entire department or work unit
- Provide information on how to close those gaps
- Uncover otherwise-unknown strategies for developing individuals

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #23*

Briefing Notes:

The Profile of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System should fit the following profile:

- Senior management must support implementation and back it up with consequences for participation or nonparticipation.
- The system should include and make use of valid and reliable competency models.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #24*

Briefing Notes:

The Profile of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System should fit the following profile:

- All parties to the system must have trust in the process and be open to possibilities for learning.
- Those who are participating in the process must be assured of confidentiality.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #25*

Briefing Notes:

The Profile of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System should fit the following profile:

- There must be continued anonymity of competency assessment ratings and other personal information.
- Participating employees should be informed in advance when their development plans, progress reports, or outcomes are to be made available to others in the organization.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #26*

Briefing Notes:

The Profile of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System should fit the following profile:

- The job competencies must reflect the organization's business priorities and strategies for achieving them.
- Recipients of multi-rater assessment data must be trained in how to receive, acknowledge, accept, and use the information so they can take corrective action to close performance gaps.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #27*

Briefing Notes:

The Profile of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System should fit the following profile:

- Small organizations might find it difficult to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of assessment information.
- Technical human resources and technology must be available to the organization, even if they are obtained externally.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #28*

Briefing Notes:

The Costs of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System has costs as well as benefits. Among the costs are those associated with:

- Interpreting assessment results
- Planning for development
- Developmental efforts
- Tracking and evaluating developmental results

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #29*

Briefing Notes:

The Benefits of Individual Development Contract Planning Outweigh the Costs

The benefits of Individual Development Contract Planning outweigh the costs because development:

- Can increase the flexibility of individual performers
- Can provide a pool of available talent to be tapped in the future
- Ensures that individuals are equipped with the competencies they need to be fully productive, if not exemplary, performers

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #30*

Briefing Notes:

Clarifying what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #31*

Briefing Notes:

Business Needs

- List 2 or 3 major business needs affecting the organization at present.
- Anything that can help individuals and the entire organization perform better will help meet the needs.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #32*

Briefing Notes:

Point Worthy of Emphasis

- This briefing is intended to show participants how a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system can help meet business needs and current business challenges.
- A competency-based individual development contract planning system is a means of closing the developmental gap uncovered from multi-rater assessment.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #33*

Briefing Notes:

Activity

- Break up into groups of 3–5 people each and discuss what you believe the organization wants from an Individual Development Contract Planning system.
- Ask a spokesperson for each group to report the group's consensus when you are finished.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #34*

Briefing Notes:

Debrief of the Activity

- What was the consensus of each group?
- What are the common themes that can be found across all groups?

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #35*

Briefing Notes:

Determining Organizational Commitment to Individual Development Contract Planning

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #36*

Briefing Notes:

Key Requirements for a Competency-Based Individual Development Contract Planning System

Key requirements for any competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system:

- Data collected must be reliable.
- Assessment methods used must be consistent.
- Data collection must be valid and reliable throughout the process.
- The system must be easy to use.
- The assessment items and individual development plans must focus on performance.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #37*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders for an individual development system.
- Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system.

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Help participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #39*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Link the needs of the work unit or organization with the competency gaps.
- List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan.
- Take action to implement the plan.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #40*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

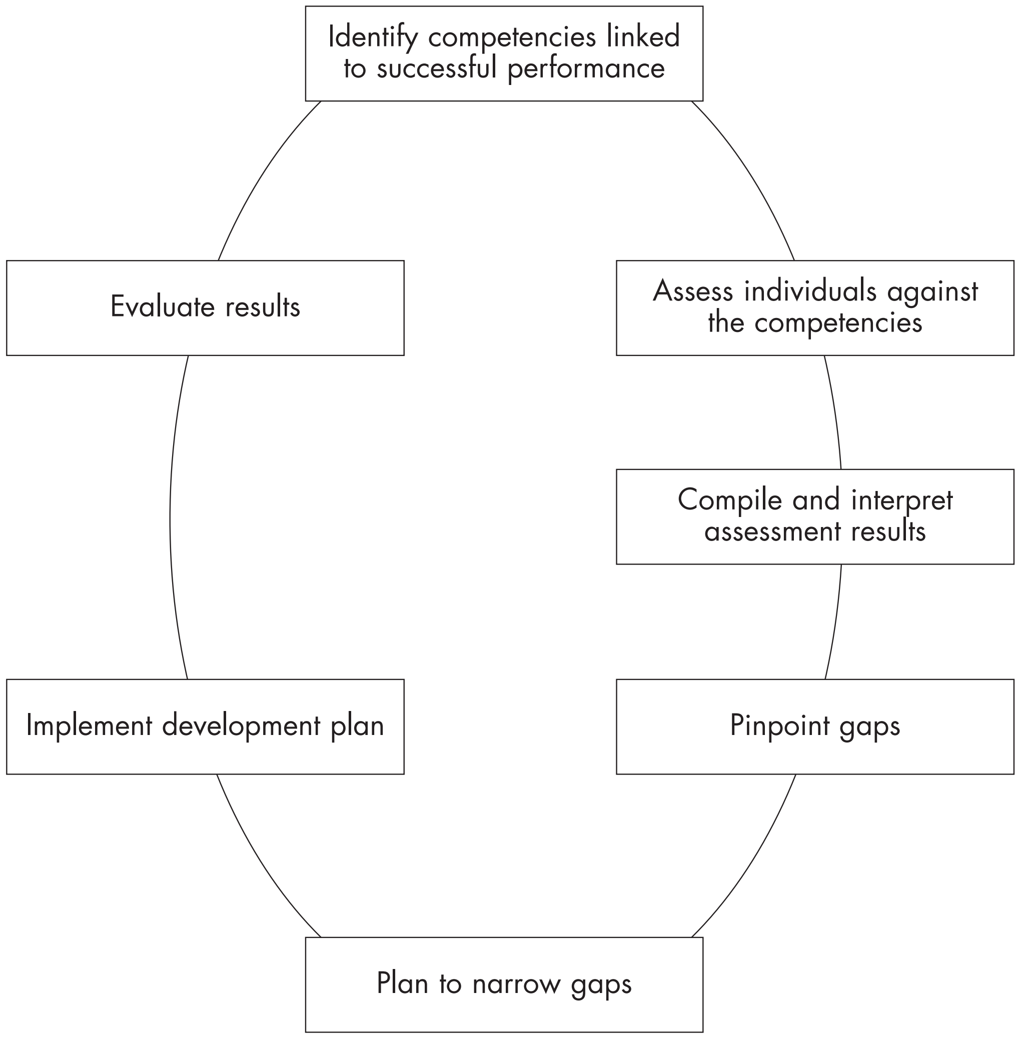
The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested.
- Evaluate the individual development results.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #41*

Briefing Notes:

Key Steps in the Individual Development Cycle



Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #42*

Briefing Notes:

An Important Question

- What resources will be needed by the organization to implement a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system?
- *Let's discuss . . .*
- How can each step of the implementation process be carried out?

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #43*

Briefing Notes:

The Roles of Executive and Manager in Effective Individual Development Contract Planning

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #44*

Briefing Notes:

Activity

- Divide up into small groups of 3–5 people each and appoint a spokesperson for each group.
- Complete the Activity (Handout 5).
- Devote about 30 minutes to this Activity.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #45*

Briefing Notes:

Debrief of the Activity

- How did the members of each small group respond to the Activity?

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #46*

Briefing Notes:

CONCLUSION

Purpose of the Briefing

The purpose of this session was to describe how to close the developmental gap revealed by the multi-rater assessment (or other method), and to plan the roles of executive and manager in effective Individual Development Contract Planning.

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

Note that the objectives of this briefing were:

- To define Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)
- To explain the benefits and costs associated with IDCP
- To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based IDCP

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #48*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To determine organizational commitment to IDCP
- To plan the roles of executive and manager in effective IDCP

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #49*

Briefing Notes:

VI. HANDOUT MASTERS FOR SENIOR MANAGER AND SUPERVISOR BRIEFING (Part IV)

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Handout I

An Activity on the Goals of an Individual Development Contract Planning System

Handout I An Activity on the Goals of an Individual Development Contract Planning System

Directions: Divide up into groups of 3–5 each and discuss what you believe to be the organization's appropriate goals for an Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP) system. Base your thinking on appropriate business needs. Appoint a spokesperson for your group and be prepared after about 30 minutes to report on the group's consensus.

List the goals for the IDCP system, as well as priorities and the reasons for them:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

Handout II Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

Step 1: Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders for an Individual Development System

Step 2: Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the Individual Development System

Step 3: Help Individual Development System participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies for development

Step 4: Link the needs of the work unit or organization with the competency gaps

Step 5: List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan

Step 6: Take action to implement the plan

Step 7: Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested

Step 8: Evaluate the individual development results

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Handout III

An Individual Development Contract Planning Form

Handout III An Individual Development Contract Planning Form

Employee's Name	Supervisor or Facilitator's Name	Performance Period (month/day/year to month/day/year)

Directions: The employee should prepare a draft of this form based on his or her multi-rater assessment or other information. Select three or more competencies on which to work. Complete each block of information for each competency that you have identified.

Developmental Issue 1

Question	Answer
1. What is the title of the competency that you have targeted for development?	
2. How is that competency defined?	
3. What behavioral indicators are associated with the competency that are highly specific to the organization and performance of the job?	
4. How is the competency gap manifested or shown on the job?	
5. What learning opportunities or developmental projects can be undertaken to help build the competency and thereby close the developmental gap, and how can evidence of appropriate competency application be demonstrated on the job?	

Developmental Issue 2

Question	Answer
1. What is the title of the competency that you have targeted for development?	
2. How is that competency defined?	
3. What behavioral indicators are associated with the competency that are highly specific to the organization and performance of the job?	
4. How is the competency gap manifested or shown on the job?	
5. What learning opportunities or developmental projects can be undertaken to help build the competency and thereby close the developmental gap, and how can evidence of appropriate competency application be demonstrated on the job?	

Developmental Issue 3

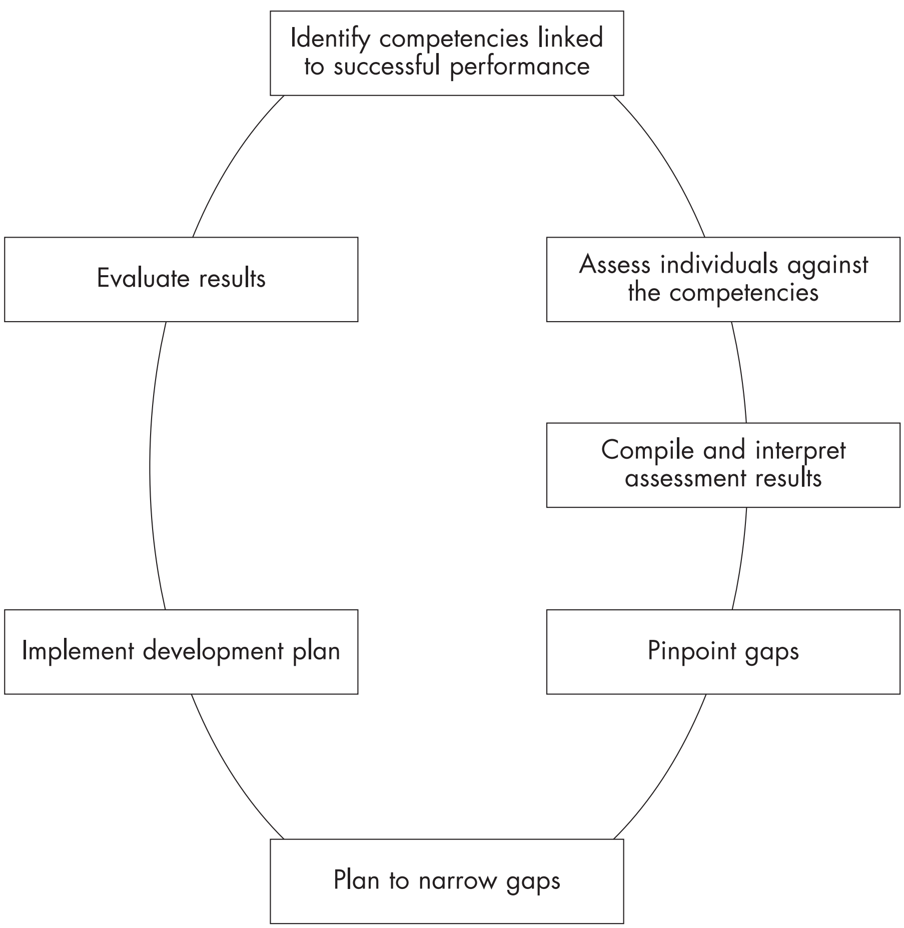
Question	Answer
1. What is the title of the competency that you have targeted for development?	
2. How is that competency defined?	
3. What behavioral indicators are associated with the competency that are highly specific to the organization and performance of the job?	
4. How is the competency gap manifested or shown on the job?	
5. What learning opportunities or developmental projects can be undertaken to help build the competency and thereby close the developmental gap, and how can evidence of appropriate competency application be demonstrated on the job?	

Signature of Employee	Signature of Supervisor/Facilitator
Date	Date
Comments by Employee	Comments by Supervisor

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Handout IV

Key Steps in the Individual Development Cycle

Handout IV Key Steps in the Individual Development Cycle



An Activity on the Manager's Role in Individual Development Planning

Handout V An Activity on the Manager's Role in Individual Development Planning

Directions: Divide up into small groups. Appoint a spokesperson for each group. Then, spending a few minutes, indicate what you believe to be the appropriate role of a Manager in effective individual development contract planning. Use the space below to record notes from the group.

Note:

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Handout VI

Vocabulary and Concepts

A *job output or result* is a product or service that an employee or group of employees (such as a team) delivers to others (that is, customers, clients, colleagues, or co-workers). For an executive secretary position, for instance, a typical job output might be a letter prepared for signature.

A *job task* is a unit of work that an employee performs that contributes to the achievement of one or more of the job outputs or results expected of the employee. For the executive secretary, the final step in the preparation of the letter for signature, using wordprocessing software, is a job task.

A *job activity* consists of a meaningful collection of job tasks or a subset of the job tasks whose completion results in the production of one or more of the job outputs or results. For the executive secretary, the retrieval of the draft letter from the writer's file and the copy editing, formatting, and preparation of the letter for signature represents a job activity.

Job competence is an employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993). Note that this definition is built upon an individual's production of the expected job outputs or results within expected levels of quality while successfully coping with and surmounting the challenges of the internal and the external environments of the organization. For the executive secretary, one job requirement might be the preparation of a letter from a file, in final form and ready for signature by the originator or writer. The quality standard is that the letter must be error-free and follow organization standards. The major obstacle in the *internal* environment is getting the writer to sign the letter in a timely manner. The major obstacle in the *external* environment is getting the letter dispatched to the receiver in a timely manner. Some of these items are under the control of the executive secretary, and others are not. Being *competent* means finding ways to meet the standards and surmount the potential obstacles.

A *job competency* is an underlying characteristic of an employee (that is, a motive, trait, or skill, aspect of one's self-image, a social role, or a body of knowledge) that results in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982). Note that a person's knowledge and skills are the traditional "competencies" that individuals bring with them to their jobs, or that they acquire while on the job. Most persons will give you a knowledge or skill as an example of a competency, but this is only part of an individual's compendium of job competencies. Motives or social role—when they directly contribute to the successful achievement of one or more job outputs or results—is a competency. Have you ever known an individual with a strong desire to achieve some output or result? This person most probably has what is referred to as high "achievement motivation." For the executive secretary, an important competency might well be *attention to detail*. Another competency might be: *anticipates delivery delays*.

In the context presented here, you should note that competencies are similar to, yet different from, job tasks by virtue of the fact that a job task is a unit of work, whereas a competency is a tool that one uses to perform one or more job tasks. The more obvious competencies that employees use to achieve many of their outputs or results expected of them are their knowledge and skills. Employees and employers tend to take for granted other competencies they might have and use to perform. For example, when the situation requires it, an employee's patience, perseverance, and a belief in the value of his or her performance results or output are examples of competencies. Competencies are the characteristics within the human psyche that "enable" performance.

Senior Manager and Supervisor Briefing Handout VII

A Manager's Development Support Contract

Handout VII A Manager's Development Support Contract

Employee's Name	Supervisor or Facilitator's Name	Performance Period (month/day/year to month/day/year)

Directions: The MDSC is a formal contract between a supervisor or facilitator and each of his or her team members. This form should correspond to the Individual Development Contract Plan. This form, however, spells out in clear terms the degree and level of support that an individual worker can expect to receive from the supervisor/facilitator during the developmental period. For each question posed in the left column below, provide an answer for this worker in the right column.

Question	Answer
1. How will the supervisor/facilitator provide a follow-up on each competency or developmental need that has been identified for the worker during the developmental period?	
2. How will the supervisor provide support for each competency identified on the individual's developmental plan? (*Provide specific details.*)	

Signature of Employee	Signature of Supervisor/Facilitator
Date	Date
Comments by Employee	Comments by Supervisor

VII. Outline to Brief Employees on Individual Development Contract Planning *[Display Overhead 1]*

A. Briefing Overview *[Display Overhead 2]*

1. Briefly explain that the purpose of this session is to describe how to close the developmental gap revealed by the multi-rater assessment (or other method), and to plan the employee's role in effective Individual Development Contract Planning. *[Display Overhead 3]*
2. Share the following objectives for this Briefing: *[Display Overheads 4 & 5]*
   - To define Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)
   - To explain the benefits and costs associated with Individual Development Contract Planning
   - To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning
   - To review—and emphasize—the individual's role in Individual Development Contract Planning, and emphasize why individuals should care about Individual Development Contract Planning

B. Defining Individual Development Contract Planning *[Display Overhead 6]*

1. Explain that a special vocabulary is required to discuss the concept of a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system. *[Display Overhead 7]*
2. Present the following terms and elicit examples from participants, in addition to those included below: *[Display Overhead 8]*
   - *Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)* is the process of filling developmental gaps by narrowing or eliminating the difference between individual strengths and areas for improvement and the performance requirements revealed by a competency model.
   - An *Individual Development Contract or Plan* is a written document that pinpoints developmental gaps or individual development needs and describes how they will be closed. It is an action plan to guide the development of an individual. *[Display Overhead 9]*
   - ❑ Competency assessment is the process of comparing one individual's competency level to another standard, such as a fully validated competency model. [Display Overhead 10]
   - ❑ *Multi-rater assessment* is, quite literally, the process of assessing or rating an individual by more than one rater.

- ❑ *Multi-rater feedback* refers to the process of gathering up the results of multi-rater assessment and feeding them back to the individual who was assessed. *[Display Overhead 11]*
- ❑ *360-degree assessment* is a form of multi-rater assessment in which an individual is rated by those in the "circle" around him or her. This form of feedback takes its name from the number of degrees in a circle.
- ❑ *180-degree assessment* is a "half-circle" assessment.
- ❑ *Job competence* is an employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993).* *[Display Overhead 12]*
- ❑ A *job competency* is an underlying characteristic of an employee (that is, a motive, skill, aspect of one's self-image, social role, or a body of knowledge) that results in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982). *[Display Overhead 13]*

C. Explaining the benefits and costs associated with Individual Development Contract Planning *[Display Overhead 14]*

1. Point out that competency assessment can be useful on an individual level in its own right, but its value is multiplied if deliberate steps are taken to plan for narrowing developmental gaps. *[Display Overhead 15]*
2. Emphasize that Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to: *[Display Overhead 16]*
   A. Help individuals narrow the competency gap between their current competencies and those that are necessary for exemplary or fully successful performance.

   B. Provide supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers, and provide a climate to encourage workers to take charge of their own development in line with organizational requirements. *[Display Overhead 17]*

   C. Provide information to the organization that can be useful in implementing succession plans. *[Display Overhead 18]*

   D. Provide a targeted and focused way to develop individuals in alignment with their individual needs, rather than treat all employees the same.

* *Note:* Items in this briefing marked with a ❑ indicate that the topic was previously covered in Part I of *The Competency Toolkit,* (*Gaining Organizational Support for Competency Identification*). However, the topic is repeated here to remind executives why the organization is using a competency-based approach.❑

3. Emphasize that Individual Development Contract Planning benefits the organization by: *[Display Overhead 19]*
   A. Providing individualized, highly tailored, and specific plans for the development of people.
   B. Identifying organizational and individual development needs that can be addressed *before* they create a problem.
   C. Providing data to justify individual development expenditures. *[Display Overhead 20]*
   D. Providing valuable information that can be used in succession planning, such as an action plan to groom individuals or groups to meet future needs in critical areas or in critical positions (Rothwell, 1994).
4. Point out that employees benefit because Individual Development Contract Plans: *[Display Overhead 21]*
   A. Can provide a management-authorized justification for the individual to develop himself or herself by acquiring and applying competencies.
   B. Help individuals address their competency weaknesses and enhance their competency strengths.
   C. Permit individuals to exercise creativity while acquiring competencies, thereby enriching the quality of their work lives. *[Display Overhead 22]*
   D. Provide specific strategies to close competency gaps.
   E. Improve individual self-awareness about personal development needs and how to meet them inside or outside the organization.
5. Explain that managers benefit because Individual Development Contract Plans: *[Display Overhead 23]*
   A. Provide a basis for determining the collective competency gaps of an entire department or work unit.
   B. Provide information on how to close those gaps, taking full advantage of knowledge about the relative strengths and weaknesses of individuals in the department or work unit.
   C. Uncover otherwise-unknown strategies for developing individuals in line with organizational, departmental, and unit needs and requirements.
6. Explain that there are costs as well as benefits associated with an Individual Development Contract Planning system. Among the costs are those associated with: *[Display Overhead 24]*
   A. Interpreting assessment results
   B. Planning for development

C. Developmental efforts

D. Tracking and evaluating developmental results

7. Note that the benefits outweigh the costs of Individual Development Contract Planning because development: *[Display Overhead 25]*

   A. Can increase the flexibility of individual performers.

   B. Can provide a pool of available talent to be tapped in the future.

   C. Ensures that individuals are equipped with the competencies they need to be fully productive, if not exemplary, performers.

D. Clarifying what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning *[Display Overhead 26]*

❑ 1. Ask participants to list the two or three major business needs affecting the organization at present. *[Display Overhead 27]*

❑ 2. Point out that no matter what the needs may be, anything that can help individuals and the entire organization perform better will help meet the needs.

❑ 3. Explain that this briefing is intended to show participants how a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system can help meet business needs and current business challenges. *[Display Overhead 28]*

❑ 4. Emphasize that a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system is a means to close the developmental gaps uncovered from multi-rater assessment.

E. Reviewing the individual's role in Individual Development Contract Planning and emphasizing why individuals should care about Individual Development Contract Planning *[Display Overhead 29]*

1. Explain that it is the individual's responsibility to initiate Individual Development Contract Planning because the individual benefits the most from it. *[Display Overhead 30]*

2. Review the key steps in individual development planning. *[Use Handout 1]*

3. List steps in the Individual Development Contract Planning system: *[Display Overhead 31; Distribute Handout 2]*

   A. Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders for an Individual Development Contract Planning System.

   B. Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the Individual Development Contract Planning System.

   C. Help individual development system participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs. *[Display Overhead 32]*

D. Link the needs of the work unit or organization with the competency gaps. Prioritize the competency gaps in cooperation with the supervisor or a person designated by them. Identify up to three competency gaps for development in the forthcoming year. *[Display Overhead 33]*

E. List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan. Name the person(s) with whom the individual will confer in order to set up alliances for growth and development. The worker will be responsible for enlisting the long-term support, not to exceed one year, needed to achieve development objectives.

F. Take action to implement the plan.

G. Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested. *[Display Overhead 34]*

H. Evaluate the individual development results.

4. Note that the Individual Development Contract Planning process culminates in the completion of a form that is filled out by the individual. *[Use Handout 3.]*
5. Ask participants what they believe are the key benefits of Individual Development Contract Planning from their perspective. Record their answers on a flipchart, white board, or blank transparency. *[Display Overhead 35]*
6. Ask participants what will be needed from individuals to implement a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system. Place their remarks on a flipchart or white board, or on write them on a blank overhead transparency. *[Display Overhead 36]*
7. Review how each step recorded in response to #3 above can be carried out and what individuals must do to perform each of those steps successfully.
8. Check the willingness and commitment of participants to participate in Individual Development Contract Planning in the organization. Note organizational barriers pinpointed by participants, and provide those as feedback to senior managers for action planning. *[Display Overhead 37]*

F. Conclusion *[Display Overhead 38]*

1. Review the purpose and objectives of the session. *[Display Overheads 39, 40, and 41]*
2. Review the steps to completing an Individual Development Contract Planning form.

Thank participants for their attendance and adjourn.

VIII. Overhead Masters for the Employee Briefing

(Part IV)

The Employee Briefing: Using Individual Development Contract Planning

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #1*

Briefing Notes:

Briefing Overview

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #2*

Briefing Notes:

Purpose of the Briefing

The purpose of this session is to describe how to close the developmental gap revealed by multi-rater assessment (or other methods), and to plan the employee's role in effective individual development contract planning.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #3*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To define Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)
- To explain the benefits and costs associated with IDCP
- To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based IDCP

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #4*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To review and emphasize the individual's role in Individual Development Contract Planning, and emphasize why individuals should care about Individual Development Contract Planning

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #5*

Briefing Notes:

Defining Individual Development Contract Planning

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #6*

Briefing Notes:

Need for a Special Vocabulary

There is a need for a special vocabulary to discuss the concept of a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system

- **Definition:** *Competency assessment* is the process of comparing one's individual competency level to another standard—such as a fully validated competency model.
- **Definition:** *Multi-rater assessment* is, quite literally, the process of assessing—that is, "rating"—an individual by more than one rater.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #7*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- *Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP)* is the process of filling developmental gaps by narrowing or eliminating the difference between individual strengths and areas for improvement and the performance requirements revealed by a competency model.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #8*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- *An Individual Development Contract* or *Plan* is a written document that pinpoints developmental gaps or individual development needs and describes how the gaps will be closed.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #9*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- *Competency assessment* is the process of comparing one's individual competency level to another standard —such as a fully validated competency model.
- *Multi-rater assessment* is, quite literally, the processing of assessing—that is, "rating"—an individual by more than one rater.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #10*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- *Multi-rater feedback* refers to the process of gathering up the results of multi-rater assessment and feeding it them back to the individual who was assessed.
- *360-degree assessment* is a form of assessment in which an individual is rated by those in the "circle" around him or her.
- *180-degree assessment* is a "half-circle" assessment.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #11*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- *Job competence:* An employee's capacity to meet (or exceed) a job's requirements by producing the job outputs [or results] at an expected level of quality within the constraints of the organization's internal and external environments (Dubois, 1993).

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #12*

Briefing Notes:

Definition

- **Job competency:** An underlying characteristic of an employee that results in effective and/or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982).

Briefing Notes:

Explaining the benefits and costs associated with Individual Development Contract Planning

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #14*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits

- Competency assessment may be useful on an individual level in its own right, but its value is multiplied if deliberate steps are taken to plan for narrowing developmental gaps.

Briefing Notes:

Uses of Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs)

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to:

- Help individuals narrow the competency gap between their current competencies and those that are necessary for exemplary or fully successful performance.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #16*

Briefing Notes:

Uses of Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs)

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to:

- Provide supervisors and managers with another tool to help them manage the performance of their workers, and provide a climate to encourage workers to take charge of their own development in line with organizational requirements.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #17*

Briefing Notes:

Uses of Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs)

Individual Development Contract Plans (IDCPs) are used to:

- Provide information to the organization that can be useful in implementing succession plans
- Provide a targeted and focused way to develop individuals based on their individual needs, rather than treat all employees the same

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #18*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to the Organization

Individual Development Planning benefits the organization by:

- Providing individualized, highly tailored, and specific plans for the development of people
- Identifying organizational and individual development needs to be addressed *before* they create a problem

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #19*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to the Organization

Individual Development Planning benefits the organization by:

- Providing data that can help to justify individual development expenditures
- Providing valuable information that can be used in succession planning—such as an action plan to groom individuals or groups to meet future needs in critical areas or in critical positions

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to Employees

Employees benefit from Individual Development Planning because IDPs:

- Can provide a management-authorized justification for the individual to develop himself or herself by acquiring and applying competencies
- Can help individuals address their competency weaknesses and enhance their competency strengths

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #21*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to Employees

Employees benefit from Individual Development Planning because IDPs:

- Permit individuals to exercise creativity while acquiring competencies, thereby enriching the quality of their work lives
- Provide specific strategies to close competency gaps
- Improve individual self-awareness about personal development needs

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #22*

Briefing Notes:

Benefits of Individual Development Contract Plans to Managers

Managers benefit from Individual Development Planning because IDPs:

- Provide a basis for determining the collective competency gaps of an entire department or work unit
- Provide information on how to close those gaps
- Uncover otherwise-unknown strategies for developing individuals

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #23*

Briefing Notes:

The Costs of an Effective Individual Development Contract Planning System

An effective Individual Development Contract Planning System has costs as well as benefits. Among the costs are those associated with:

- Interpreting assessment results
- Planning for development
- Developmental efforts
- Tracking and evaluating developmental results

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #24*

Briefing Notes:

The Benefits of Individual Development Contract Planning Outweigh the Costs

The benefits of Individual Development Contract Planning outweigh the costs because development:

- Can increase the flexibility of individual performers
- Can provide a pool of available talent to be tapped in the future
- Ensures that individuals are equipped with the competencies they need to be fully productive, if not exemplary, performers

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #25*

Briefing Notes:

Clarifying what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #26*

Briefing Notes:

Business Needs

- List 2 or 3 major business needs affecting the organization at present.
- Anything that can help individuals and the entire organization perform better will help meet the needs.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #27*

Briefing Notes:

Points Worthy of Emphasis

- This briefing is intended to show participants how a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system can help meet business needs and current business challenges.
- A competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system is a means of closing the developmental gap uncovered from multi-rater assessment.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #28*

Briefing Notes:

Reviewing the individual's role in Individual Development Contract Planning and emphasizing why individuals should care about Individual Development Contract Planning

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #29*

Briefing Notes:

Whose Responsibility Is Competency-Based Individual Development Contract Planning?

- Who bears primary responsibility to initiate Individual Development Contract Planning? (*Hint: Who benefits most from the process?*)

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #30*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders for an individual development system.
- Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information Briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the individual development system.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #31*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Help participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies that will, when appropriately applied, contribute to their improved or enhanced job performance relative to the organization's business needs

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #32*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Link the needs of the work unit, or the organization's business needs, with the competency gaps.
- List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan.
- Take action to implement the plan.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #33*

Briefing Notes:

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

The steps in establishing and implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning system include all of the following:

- Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested.
- Evaluate the individual development results.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #34*

Briefing Notes:

An Important Question

- What do *you* believe to be the key benefits of Individual Development Contract Planning?

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #35*

Briefing Notes:

Another Important Question

- What will be needed from individuals to implement a competency-based Individual Development Contract Planning system?

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #36*

Briefing Notes:

A Third Important Question

- What organizational barriers stand in the way of Individual Development Contract Planning, in your opinion?

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #37*

Briefing Notes:

Conclusion

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #38*

Briefing Notes:

Purposes of the Briefing

The purpose of this session was to describe how to close the developmental gap revealed by multi-rater assessment (or other methods), and to plan the employee's role in effective Individual Development Contract Planning.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #39*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

Note that the objectives of this briefing were:

- To define Individual Development Contract Planning (IDCP).
- To explain the benefits and costs associated with IDCP.
- To clarify what results are sought by the organization from doing competency-based IDCP.

Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #40*

Briefing Notes:

Objectives of the Briefing

- To review and emphasize the individual's role in Individual Development Contract Planning, and emphasize why individuals should care about Individual Development Contract Planning.

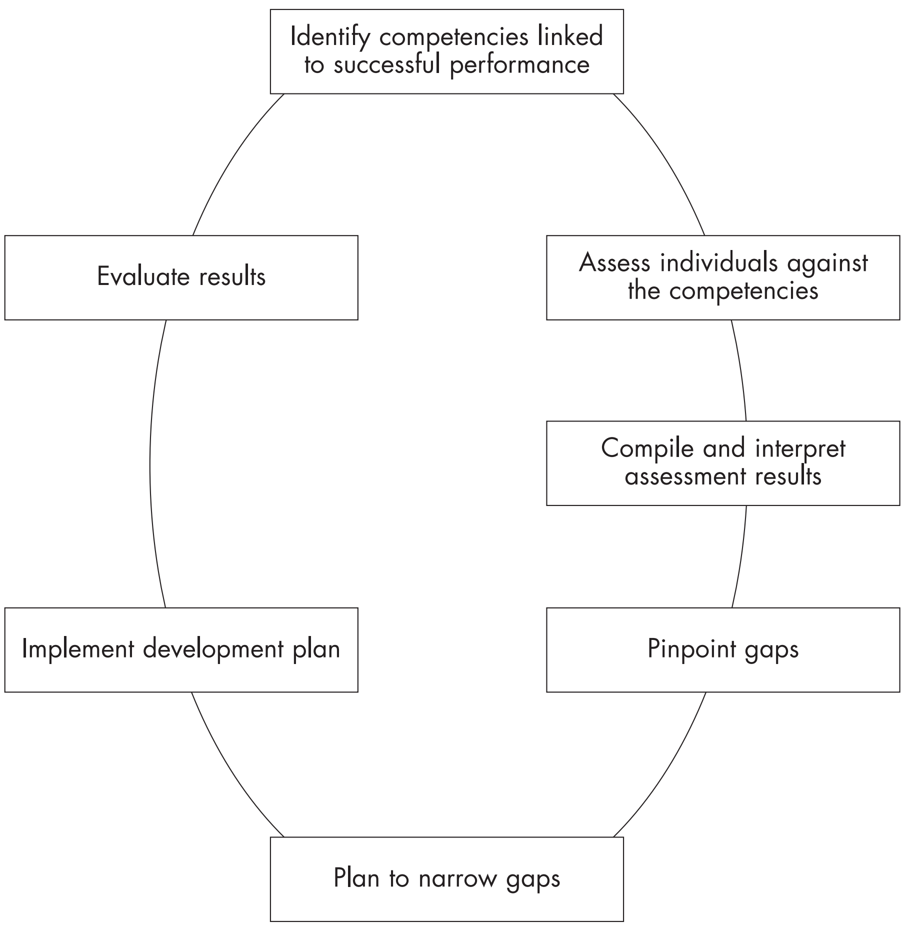
Employee Briefing Overhead *Part IV: #41*

Briefing Notes:

IX. EMPLOYEE BRIEFING HANDOUT MASTERS (Part IV)

Key Steps in the Individual Development Cycle

Handout I Key Steps in the Individual Development Cycle



Employee Briefing Handout II

Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

Handout II Steps in Establishing and Implementing an Individual Development Contract Planning System

Step 1: Enlist the support of the organization's senior managers or leaders for an Individual Development System

Step 2: Provide workers and their supervisors or facilitators with an information briefing on the purposes and steps for participation in the Individual Development System

Step 3: Help Individual Development System participants use their competency-based multi-rater assessment results to identify 3–6 potential competencies for development

Step 4: Link the needs of the work unit or organization with the competency gaps

Step 5: List specific actions the worker will take to successfully develop and appropriately apply each competency in the development plan

Step 6: Take action to implement the plan

Step 7: Revise the plan, if necessary, to reflect the recommendations that others have suggested

Step 8: Evaluate the individual development results

Employee Briefing Handout III

An Individual Development Contract Planning Form

Handout III An Individual Development Contract Planning Form

Employee's Name	Supervisor or Facilitator's Name	Performance Period (month/day/year to month/day/year)

Directions: The employee should prepare a draft of this form based on his or her multi-rater assessment or other information. Select three or more competencies on which to work. Complete each block of information for each competency that you have identified.

Developmental Issue 1

Question	Answer
1. What is the title of the competency that you have targeted for development?	
2. How is that competency defined?	
3. What behavioral indicators are associated with the competency that are highly specific to the organization and performance of the job?	
4. How is the competency gap manifested or shown on the job?	
5. What learning opportunities or developmental projects can be undertaken to help build the competency and thereby close the developmental gap, and how can evidence of appropriate competency application be demonstrated on the job?	

Developmental Issue 2

Question	Answer
1. What is the title of the competency that you have targeted for development?	
2. How is that competency defined?	
3. What behavioral indicators are associated with the competency that are highly specific to the organization and performance of the job?	
4. How is the competency gap manifested or shown on the job?	
5. What learning opportunities or developmental projects can be undertaken to help build the competency and thereby close the developmental gap, and how can evidence of appropriate competency application be demonstrated on the job?	

Developmental Issue 3

Question	Answer
1. What is the title of the competency that you have targeted for development?	
2. How is that competency defined?	
3. What behavioral indicators are associated with the competency that are highly specific to the organization and performance of the job?	
4. How is the competency gap manifested or shown on the job?	
5. What learning opportunities or developmental projects can be undertaken to help build the competency and thereby close the developmental gap, and how can evidence of appropriate competency application be demonstrated on the job?	

Signature of Employee	Signature of Supervisor/Facilitator
Date	Date
Comments by Employee	Comments by Supervisor

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Selected Web Sources for Multi-Rater Assessments

Consult the following web sites for multi-rater assessment products or related products:

Acumen International at http://www.acumen.com

Assessing Strategic Competencies at http://www.concepsys.com

Benchmarks at http://www.col.org/products/benchmarks

MBD Inc. at http://www.mbdinc.com/small/mbdhome2.html

Mind Solve Technologies at http://www.mindsolve.com

Paradigm Software Development at http://www.workwise.com

Personnel Decisions, Inc. at http://www.netscape.com/comprod/at_work/customer_profiles/pdi.html

Profiles Checkpoint at http://www.ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/gately/chkpoint.html

The Survey Company at http://www.survey.company.com/profiles.html

Teams Inc. at http://www.teamsinc.com

Wm. Steinberg Consultants, Inc. at http://www.cam.org/~steinbg

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