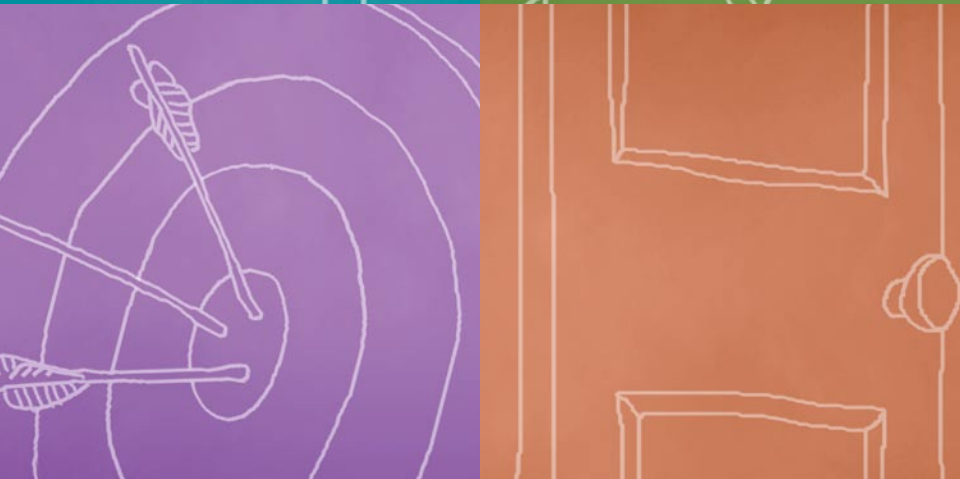


# HR Career Journal

Recording My Progress



Success through **HR Professionals**

  
**NOVA SCOTIA**



Nurturing  
**growth** through  
leadership.

*Isabel Hache, HR Director*

Success through **HR Professionals**

Remember, your career  
is your responsibility.  
It belongs to you.

## **First Thing's First**

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Ask yourself when was the last time you thought about your own career?

**Well, start thinking. This booklet is all about you.**

This practical resource will help you as an HR professional in government actively plan and manage your career.

The key feature of this resource is being able to record and monitor your progress on an ongoing basis.

## **Government of Nova Scotia's HR Community**

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As HR professionals in government you have the potential to develop in ways that enable you to make significant contributions to the effective management of the public service's human resources. You can best achieve both organization and personal development goals by working collaboratively with and learning from your HR colleagues; this means together we:

**appreciate and respect each other;**

**ensure our performance is linked to achieving government's strategic objectives;**

**strive to meet our clients' needs;**

**encourage each other to fully perform in our roles;**

**provide inspiration to meet our career goals;**

**create a continuous learning environment; and**

**develop a culture of talent management.**

Working together as a community, we can achieve  
**Success Through HR Professionals.**

## **HR Career Opportunities in Government**

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The Government of Nova Scotia values its HR professionals and believes you are key to helping achieve Success Through People.

Government is a large employer with a need for a wide variety of HR professionals. Positions range from entry level for new HR graduates, to senior level roles that focus on strategic leadership. There are positions that require a broad range of knowledge and skills and those that require deep subject matter expertise. As an HR professional in government, you may choose to focus on and develop your technical expertise or work in a role that requires you to manage people.

**What do you really want to do?**

**What interests you?**

**What motivates you?**

Is it working in the HR role you are in now and further developing your expertise or is it something completely different? What about a few years from now?

For more information on career opportunities in HR in government, go to the HR Professionals section of the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission website. This site includes the HR Career Pathways and Opportunities Model, an excellent resource to explore potential career options and pathways.

**[www.gov.ns.ca/psc/HRProfessionals](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/HRProfessionals)**

## Your Development Plan

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**Planning and managing your career is an ongoing process.  
It is not something that happens once a year!**

You already have the most important career planning and development tool to achieve success in HR in government – your Development Plan.

Your Development Plan captures what you are doing now, your professional or development goals and what you will need to do to help achieve these goals.

You need to think about your career and update your Development Plan on a regular basis. Use the recording sheets in this booklet to track your success as it happens. Remember – to transfer any key development information captured in this booklet to your performance and development plans.

If you have not completed your Development Plan there is help available to you. Please see the My Resources section of this booklet.

## **Competencies – the Key to Your Success**

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No matter what your career plans are - even if this means staying in your current role - competencies will be critical to achieving your goals.

### **What are Competencies?**

A competency is any observable and/or measurable knowledge, skill, ability, or behaviour that contributes to successful performance.

This resource booklet focuses on behavioural competencies that reflect “how” you apply your knowledge and skills to achieve results. Behavioural competencies are key to achieving professional excellence and long term success.

### **Which Competencies Apply to Me?**

There are three competencies that are critical to your success as an HR professional in the Government of Nova Scotia.

**Client Orientation**

**Change Leadership**

**Effective Interactive Communication**

## Leadership at All Levels

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In addition to the three HR competencies, there are the Government of Nova Scotia leadership competencies. This booklet focuses on the HR competencies but the leadership competencies are also key to your success. Please see page 30 in this booklet for more information.

### Focusing Your Efforts

Focus on one or two competencies that are important to your current role and future career. These are the competencies for which you should have competency development activities identified in your Development Plan.

### Levels of Proficiency

Not everyone is expected to demonstrate the competencies to the same degree. Expected levels of proficiency have been identified for all HR roles in government.

If you are at the expected level and want to develop a particular competency that is important to a role you aspire to in the future, look to the competency requirements of that role.

**Tip:** Be sure you have mastered your current level before attempting higher levels of proficiency. It is important not to try to move too quickly or you will lose out on important competency development.

## **Tell Somebody – Having Career Conversations that Matter**

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In addition to developing a Development Plan and tracking your progress, you need to let others know your career aspirations and how you plan to proceed. Think of it like selling a house, no one will know it is for sale, let alone buy it, unless you put a sign on the front lawn.

### **Talk to Your Manager**

You are responsible for actively managing your career but your manager also plays a role by facilitating the career development process. Your manager is your best advocate and is responsible for representing you at the annual HR Community talent review. Being open and forthcoming with your manager ensures he/she is in the best position to support you.

### **Connect with Your Colleagues**

Ask them what they are working on. Who knows there may be an opportunity for you to work on a special assignment or team and develop in ways you have not even considered.

### **Be creative, be proactive and be open.**

Opportunities that are not HR related, may give you the experience you need to achieve your career goals.

### **Consider Finding a Mentor**

You will still need to take responsibility for your own career but a mentor will be able to provide you with guidance. A mentor is also another person you can add to your list of people you share your career goals with; do not keep your aspirations a secret spread the word.

### **Attend Government HR Events and Meetings**

Take advantage of these opportunities to learn more about what is happening in HR across government. It is also an excellent opportunity to introduce yourself to others and let them know what you are interested in and like to do.

A man in a dark pinstriped suit, green shirt, and red striped tie stands next to a door drawn with white chalk on a brown wall. He is smiling and gesturing towards the door with his right hand, while his left hand rests on his hip. The background is a solid brown color.

Opening doors  
through leadership  
and personal  
development.

*Paul Cole, Human Resources Development Consultant*

# My Progress Career Recording Sheets

**My HR Competencies**

**My Leadership Competencies**

**My Career Conversations**

**My Career Related Courses  
and Workshops**

**My Resources**

















## My Resources

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Information resources that will help me plan and manage my career.

### **Career Development Plan Guide**

Step by step information to guide you through the process of developing your CDP.

### **Career Development Plan Template**

A self-directed tool to record your career goals and development activities.

### **Career Explorer**

This interactive tool will help you identify your current interests, values and skills.

### **HR Competency Framework**

This framework includes all the competencies and levels that apply to HR professionals in government.

### **Competency Development Guide**

A comprehensive list of HR and Leadership competency development activities.

### **Mentoring Guide**

A guide to assist you benefit from a mentoring relationship. It includes successful mentoring practices and working tools for mentors and mentees.

### **For Managers: Manager's Guide to Developing People**

Information, tips and tools to help you through the development process with your team.





Taking HR  
in a bold new  
direction.

*Darren Ruck, HR Consultant*

# Competencies

## **HR Competencies**

Client Orientation

Change Leadership

Effective Interactive Communication

## **Leadership Competencies**

## HR Competency - Client Orientation

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Client Orientation involves developing and maintaining strong relationships with clients. Focuses one's efforts on discovering and meeting the client's needs, while balancing against the government's key business and strategic priorities. Clients may be broadly defined, including internal "customers" or "clients" as well as the public.

### A. Maintains Clear Communication

Follows through, when asked, on client inquiries, requests and/or complaints in a friendly, cheerful manner.

Keeps client informed about progress of projects.

Provides clients with timely, effective information/products and services.

Asks questions of clients to maintain clear communication regarding mutual and realistic expectations, desires, or needs for improvement and monitors client satisfaction.

### B. Takes Personal Responsibility for Correcting Problems

Takes personal responsibility for correcting client service problems promptly; responds to a client's concern and ensures that the client is aware of what actions are being taken.

Explains the rationale for decisions/outcomes to the client.

Works co-operatively with other departments/agencies to meet client needs.

### **C. Acts to Make Things Better for the Client**

States candidly what can be done to meet client needs, offering innovative/creative solutions to problems, explains rationale for decisions/outcomes.

Meets and strives to exceed client expectations.

Makes self fully available, especially when client is going through a critical period (e.g., spends extra time and effort with client when the client needs it).

### **D. Addresses Underlying Client Needs**

Understands the client's business issues and/or seeks information about the real underlying needs of the client, beyond those expressed initially.

Adds value by taking action beyond normal expectations. Demonstrates a "client first" orientation by working to remove barriers and identifying new/creative approaches to providing top-notch client service.

May commit to doing (or having others do) additional work/research in order to solve a client's problem or meet their need(s).

### **E. Uses a Long-Term Perspective/Acts as a Trusted Advisor**

Becomes involved in client's decision-making process, while remaining objective and impartial and upholding the ethical principles of the government.

Builds an independent opinion on client needs, problems, or opportunities and possibilities for implementation and may act on this opinion (e.g., recommends approaches which are new and different from those requested by the client).

## **HR Competency - Change Leadership**

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Change Leadership is the ability to energize and alert groups to the need for specific changes in the way things are done. People with this competency willingly embrace and champion change. They take advantage of every opportunity to explain their vision of the future to others and gain their buy-in.

### **A. Fosters Understanding of Change**

Effectively manages own personal resistance or reaction to change.

Shares own understanding of change with others.

### **B. Fosters Acceptance of and Commitment to Change**

Involves others in planning for and implementing change, and in so doing gains buy-in for change.

Helps others deal with their resistance to change.

Communicates to colleagues, staff and/or clients why change is needed, the benefits of change, what is at stake, and how the change will impact employees and clients.

### **C. Manages Change**

Translates organizational change strategies into specific and practical goals, processes, and time frames.

Develops and implements strategies to transition from the current to future situation.

Develops contingency plans for major resistance and/or unforeseen issues in implementing change.

## **D. Leads Change**

Communicates a clear, compelling vision of what the change will accomplish.

Ensures ongoing communication strategies are in place to facilitate understanding and commitment to change.

Generates momentum and genuine enthusiasm for change.

Spearheads the development and implementation of change strategies, developing or adjusting organizational systems to facilitate the change and employee or client transition.

Reinforces the change message with own actions and attitudes.

Publicly recognizes individuals who are demonstrating behaviours consistent with the “new organization”.

## **HR Competency - Effective Interactive Communication**

Effective Interactive Communication implies the ability to transmit and receive information clearly and communicate effectively to others by considering their points of view in order to respond appropriately. It includes using tact and diplomacy in all communications as well as the ability to convey ideas and information, both orally and in writing, in a way that brings understanding to the target audience.

### **A. Pays Attention to the Communication of Others**

Pays attention to the communication of others (individuals or groups).

Actively listens to people and asks probing questions to gain a broader understanding of the issue or question at hand.

Listens attentively to others and encourages others to express their own views.

### **B. Checks Understanding and Clarifying**

Seeks to ensure that factual messages are clearly understood, useful and timely.

Correctly interprets non-verbal clues.

Is receptive and responds in ways that communicate clear understanding.

Clearly presents information or provides explanations so that it is easily understood.

Careful to remain factual in providing information to various sources to avoid negative repercussions (e.g. when taking on a representational role or when dealing with the media).

### **C. Adapts Language to the Audience**

Clarifies complex concepts/proposals in terms that are appropriate for the audience.

Adapts style, mode and tone based on the audience/client reactions and the issues being addressed.

Understands the sensitivities surrounding different individuals and adapts language, tone, style and content of communications appropriately.

Responds appropriately to on-the-spot questions even when specific responses have not been crafted beforehand.

### **D. Communicates for Maximum Results**

Understands the underlying needs, interests, issues and motivations of others.

Interprets complex and possibly contradictory or competing signals/messages.

Optimizes communications to achieve desired results (e.g., through the use of mediation, counselling, group facilitation, and/or media relations).

Considers the purpose of communications (e.g., to build rapport, move a situation along, put people at ease) as well as other key factors (e.g., the needs and feelings of the target audience, the impact of the message on the audience, confidentiality) in deciding what to communicate and how to deliver the message.

## Leadership Competencies

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**Strategic Orientation** is the ability to link long-range visions and concepts to daily work. It implies the ability to think conceptually and to “see the big picture”.

**Decisiveness** is the ability to make decisions based on analysis of the information presented in the face of ambiguous or conflicting situations, or when there is an associated risk.

**Development of People** involves working to develop people’s contribution and potential. It involves a genuine intent to foster the long-term learning or development of others.

**Team Leadership** is the intention to take a role as leader in a team or other group. Leadership involves communicating a compelling vision and embodying the values of the Nova Scotia Public Service.

**Achievement Orientation** involves working to achieve results and improve individual and organizational contribution. It is a concern for working well or for surpassing a standard of excellence.

**Self-Confidence/Courage of Convictions** is a belief in one's own capability as expressed in increasingly challenging circumstances and confidence in one decisions or opinions, within the framework of public service ethics and values and organizational integrity.

**Relationship Building** involves the ability to develop contacts and relationships internal and external to the organization to facilitate work efforts or gain support/cooperation.

**Impact and Influence** implies an intention to persuade, convince, influence or impress others (individuals or groups) in order to get them to go along with or to support the organization's direction.

Setting goals so we  
can give everyone  
their best **shot**.



*Kim Ashizawa, Pay and Benefits Consultant*

## Notes









For the  
year of:

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[www.gov.ns.ca/psc/HRProfessionals](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/HRProfessionals)