



VA LEARNING UNIVERSITY

# VA Competency Model

## What are Competencies?

Competencies are the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to build a highly competent organization capable of meeting current and future challenges. Competencies define, in a common language how our behavior contributes to the Department's success. Competencies form the foundation of our development efforts and help each employee understand what is necessary to grow and advance in their career.

### Competencies...

- Set a common standard for successful performance for all employees
- Provide a direct link to training and development options
- Help employees understand the path for career growth
- Help employees better meet the needs of our Veterans and their families

At VA, we have identified three types of competencies that serve as the backbone of our employee development efforts.

### All Employee Competencies

All Employee competencies are needed by all VA employees to be successful. They apply to all job levels and career stages. These are the core capabilities of our workforce.

### Technical Competencies

Technical competencies are specific to particular jobs or occupations. These are the competencies that make our nurses different from our benefits processors and our benefits processors different from our cemetery directors.

### Leadership Competencies

Leadership competencies describe the knowledge and skills critical for being a successful leader at VA.

## Anatomy of a Competency

At VA, we have defined six broad All Employee competency categories and six Leadership competency categories. Each category is further defined by more specific competencies. Recall that the technical competencies will be unique for each job or occupational group. As described above, the All Employee, Technical and Leadership competencies comprise our VA Competency Model. Our model is Department-wide, which means that it applies to all our employees.

We know that everyone is in a unique position, so how one employee may need to demonstrate his/her competencies in order to be successful may be different from another employee. With that in mind, we have defined the competencies at five levels, ranging from novice to expert. Because these levels show the relative strength of a competency required for successful performance, they will help you understand the types of behaviors expected at different stages in your career.





## Competencies in Action

The VA competencies are incorporated in the VA Talent Management System (TMS). You can use the TMS to bring competencies to the forefront of your development. For example, you can:

- get a comprehensive assessment of your current competency proficiency (skill level)
- create a customized development plan
- identify training and other development opportunities to build your professional capabilities

The competencies also serve as guideposts for planning your growth in the future. By building the knowledge and skills necessary to progress in your own career, you are also building the capabilities of our Department as a whole and enhancing our capacity to provide unparalleled service to our Veterans.

### **VA LEARNING UNIVERSITY: YOUR PARTNER FOR CHANGE**

Powered by ADVANCE, VALU works with VA employees and leaders like you to put effective change management in the forefront of our operations. As VA begins implementing steps to transform into a 21<sup>st</sup> century organization that is people-centric, results-driven, and forward-looking, engaging change leaders is critical.

VALU is your partner in driving this historic transformation and motivating your team to be unifying, innovative change agents that make a difference in the lives of our Veterans.

VALU your potential. VALU our Veterans. Be a positive force for change.

*For additional information about the VA Learning University's Leadership and Change Programs, please write to us at [VALU.Training@va.gov](mailto:VALU.Training@va.gov).*