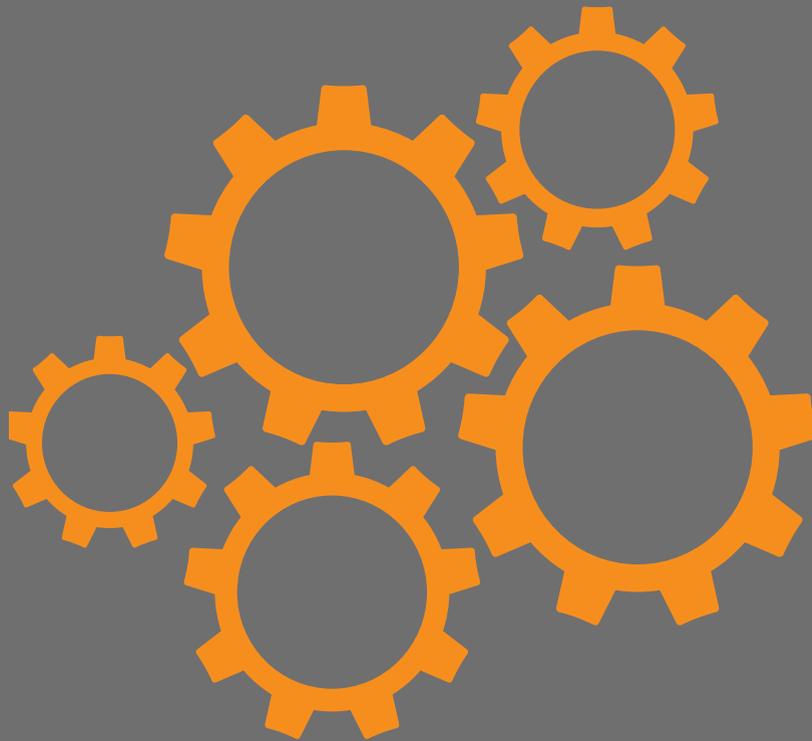


# Content Validation Study

— OF THE —

# SHRM COMPETENCY MODEL





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# Executive Summary

In keeping with SHRM's mission of serving and advancing the human resource (HR) profession, SHRM developed the SHRM Competency Model. This model comprises nine competencies that describe the attributes needed for successful performance as an HR professional. The model is intended to be applicable to all HR professionals regardless of personal characteristics such as job function or career level and regardless of organizational characteristics such as organization size, work sector and location. These features make the SHRM Competency Model applicable as a guide for the entire HR profession.

## Development Steps for the SHRM Competency Model

An extensive review of the professional and academic literature was undertaken to identify existing models and best practices.

More than 100 focus groups were conducted with HR professionals around the world to gather input about the content of the model.

A content validity survey of more than 32,000 HR professionals was completed to confirm the content of the model. Respondents rated the importance of each competency and its requirement upon entry into an HR job, and demographic and organizational characteristics were collected to investigate subgroup differences in ratings.

## Results of the Content Validation Survey

All the competencies were rated as important or critical to the success of HR professionals, and all the competencies were rated as required upon entry into an HR job by a majority of respondents. A summary of these findings can be found in the Appendix.

The model's key behaviors were all rated as important or critical for job success.

Although the competencies were rated as important or critical to job success regardless of career level, they are especially important for more senior-level HR professionals. A similar pattern of results was also found for the required-upon-entry ratings, indicating that more senior-level HR professionals are expected to be well developed in each of these competencies. This finding likely reflects the increase in responsibility at more senior career levels, including the expansion of managerial responsibilities and a move from more transactional to more strategic job responsibilities. These career level differences provide a clear developmental path for early-career HR professionals who wish to advance their careers.

Only minimal differences in ratings were found across organizational sizes and work sectors. These relatively invariant results speak to the universal nature of the model.

## Summary

These findings provide strong evidence for the applicability of the competency model to the HR profession.

Early-career and mid-level HR professionals need to develop their competencies to be successful at more senior levels of the organization.

Data from more than 32,000 HR professionals provide strong support for the content validity of the SHRM Competency Model and its applicability to the entire HR profession.

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# Introduction

As a global leader in service to the human resource (HR) profession, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is committed to empowering HR professionals with the proper tools and resources needed to succeed. With more than 275,000 members in over 160 countries, SHRM recognizes that successful HR professionals use both expertise and experience to carry out organizational strategy and to achieve organizational goals. To accomplish these duties, HR professionals must develop and use their technical and behavioral competencies.

In keeping with SHRM's mission of serving and advancing the HR profession, and in response to member feedback requesting a resource that addresses the work of HR professionals across all career levels, SHRM set out to identify the competencies needed to succeed as an HR professional. Through extensive research across the globe, SHRM created a comprehensive competency model, the SHRM Competency Model. This model encompasses nine competencies, one technical and eight behavioral, and proficiency in these competencies provides the basis for effective performance as an HR professional.

This report describes the content validity evidence for the SHRM Competency Model. In the following sections, this report first provides an overview of competencies and the SHRM Competency Model, as well as an overview of the HR career levels built into this model. Second, this report describes the methodology used to investigate the content validity of the model, including an overview of the survey approach, participants and content (i.e., survey materials). Third, the results of the content validation survey are described and summarized for each competency. Results are also provided for key behaviors and for each competency by career level, organization size and work sector. Last, these findings are summarized.

## What Are Competencies?

A competency refers to a cluster of knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) needed for effective job performance. A set of competencies that define the requirements for effective performance in a specific job, profession or organization are collectively referred to as a competency model (Campion, Fink, Ruggeberg, Carr, Phillips, & Odman, 2011; Shippmann et al., 2000).

Competencies can be either technical or behavioral. Technical competencies primarily reflect the knowledge-based requirements of a specific job category (e.g., HR professionals). In the SHRM Competency Model, the technical competency is *Human Resource Expertise (HR Knowledge)*. The other eight competencies in the SHRM competency model are behavioral, reflecting the application of knowledge from the *Human Resource Expertise* competency. Behavioral competencies are more general and at surface level can apply across multiple job categories. Behavioral competencies describe the specific and observable behavior associated with effective job performance and reflect the ways in which knowledge is applied. Although the general concepts associated with the behavioral competencies are not specific to HR (e.g., *Communication*), the content of those competencies is specific to the HR profession, especially when paired with the HR-specific technical competency *Human Resource Expertise*.

## SHRM Competency Model

The SHRM Competency Model comprises nine competencies that HR professionals need for success across four HR career levels. For each competency, the model provides a definition of the competency, related subcompetencies, key behaviors and proficiency standards. The SHRM Competency Model is graphically depicted in Figure 1, below.

*Subcompetencies* are small clusters of KSAOs embedded within each of the nine competencies. Subcompetencies are not distinct from the core competency. Rather, they are more specific manifestations of the general competency they are a part of. In aggregate, the subcompetencies form each competency.

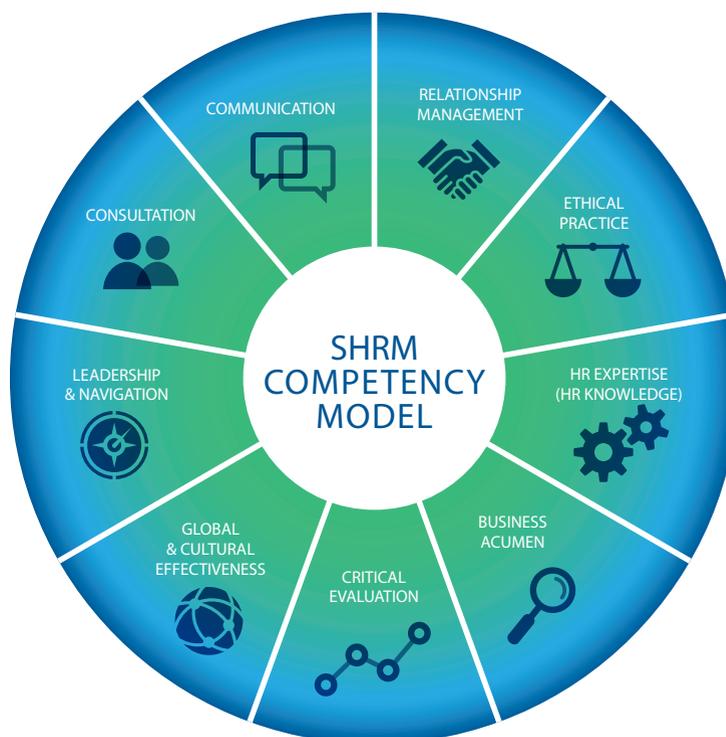
*Key behaviors* are the behaviors associated with each competency that the most competent HR professionals engage in while performing their jobs. These behaviors contribute to an expanded, broad operational definition of each competency. They are narrower and more specific than subcompetencies.

*Proficiency standards* are specific, job-relevant behaviors associated with performance on each competency at each of the four career levels. As proficiency standards are specific to each career level, a unique set of proficiency standards exists for each career level for each competency.

### Development of SHRM's Competency Model

To develop the competencies and the overall model, SHRM followed best practices, as delineated by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP) taskforce on competency modeling, as well as by relevant academic and professional literature about competency modeling (e.g., Campion et al., 2011; Shippmann et al., 2000). Based on a review and synthesis of relevant research and professional literature, SHRM first developed a working model to describe the competencies needed by HR professionals. This review focused primarily on existing HR competency models as well as on literature that describes the work responsibilities of HR professionals. To refine the model, SHRM staff trained in industrial-organizational (I/O) psychology and then conducted 111 focus groups in 29 cities across the globe. This process captured input from over 1,200 HR professionals. During these focus groups, participants edited, revised and enhanced the working model to ensure that it accurately reflected the attributes of successful HR professionals.

**Figure 1.1.** SHRM Competency Model



### **HR Career Levels**

SHRM has identified four career levels for HR professionals: early career, mid, senior and executive. Table 1.1 provides a general description of the four career levels. These career levels reflect the varying types of responsibilities for which HR professionals are accountable. Specifically, earlier career levels (i.e., early career and mid level) reflect responsibilities that are more transactional in nature, whereas more senior career levels (i.e., senior and executive levels) reflect responsibilities that are more strategic in nature. These career levels were created to reflect the fact that the job of HR professionals differs qualitatively across career levels, a concept incorporated into and reflected in the SHRM Competency Model.

**Table 1.1. HR Professional Career Levels and Descriptions**

<b>Career Level</b>	<b>Typical Characteristics</b>
Early	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a specialist in a specific support function, or is a generalist with limited experience.</li> <li>• Holds a formal title such as HR assistant, junior recruiter or benefits clerk.</li> </ul>
Mid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a generalist or a senior specialist.</li> <li>• Manages projects or programs.</li> <li>• Holds a formal title such as HR manager, generalist or senior specialist.</li> </ul>
Senior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a very experienced generalist or specialist.</li> <li>• Holds a formal title such as senior manager, director or principal.</li> </ul>
Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Typically is one of the most senior leaders in HR.</li> <li>• Holds the top HR job in the organization or a VP role.</li> </ul>

### **Content Validation Study**

The purpose of the content validation study was to empirically investigate the accuracy and relevance of the content of the SHRM Competency Model for describing the attributes needed by successful HR professionals. Content validation is a necessary, but not sufficient, step to ensure that the model accurately reflects the requirements of the HR profession. Although the model was developed through an extensive review of the literature and based on the input of subject matter experts (SMEs), this content validation study provided additional quantitative data about the content of the model from a large sample of HR professionals.

Content validity evidence can be collected by asking SMEs to provide ratings (e.g., importance, relevance) of the model's content (Campion et al., 2011). The advantage of a large-scale, quantitative approach is that the data can identify information in the model that is inaccurate, irrelevant or not important. Additionally, the extensive data collected through a large-scale survey allow for differences across demographic and organizational characteristics to be evaluated.

### **Procedure**

On February 8, 2012, SHRM launched the Content Validation Survey. The survey was open through February 24, 2012. To complete the survey, participants were first asked to identify the HR career level that most closely described their own career level. Throughout the remainder of this report, this self-identified career level is referred to as "identified career level." Survey participants then provided importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each competency and aspirational behavior—these ratings are detailed in the "Measures" section of this report. Importantly, survey respondents were asked to rate competencies or behaviors only for their career level—for example, mid-level HR professionals provided ratings only with regard to the model for mid-level HR professionals. Last, participants completed personal and organizational demographic information.

## Participants

The survey was sent to the majority of SHRM's professional membership. SHRM members who were not HR professionals, such as members employed primarily in academia, were excluded from the study. In total, roughly 210,000 survey invitations were sent, and 32,314 members responded to the survey, representing approximately a 15% response rate.

Participant demographics are presented in Table 1.2. A majority of respondents (73.4%) were either mid- or senior-level HR professionals with between 11 and 25 years of experience as an HR professional (51.5%). Respondents worked across a variety of organization sizes (as measured in number of full-time equivalents, or FTEs), and worked primarily in for-profit organizations (70.5%). Although some demographic categories contained only a small percentage of respondents, the large sample size of this survey still allows for confidence in the results for these subgroups. For example, although only 4.1% of respondents identified themselves as early-career professionals, the total sample size for this subgroup is still quite large, representing approximately 1,325 HR professionals.

**Table 1.2. Participant Demographics**

Category	% of Participants
<b>Career Level</b>	
Early	4.1
Mid	32.6
Senior	40.8
Executive	22.5
<b>Years as an HR Professional</b>	
<1 year	.8
1-5 years	10.9
6-10 years	21.6
11-25 years	51.5
>25+	15.2
<b>Organization Size in Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)</b>	
1-99	26.9
100-499	38.3
500-2,499	21.6
2,500-24,999	11.1
25,000+	1.9
<b>Organization's Work Sector</b>	
Publicly owned for-profit	24.7
Privately owned for-profit	45.8
Nonprofit	17.5
Government	8.3
Other	3.6

**Note:** Due to rounding, totals may not add up to 100%.

Between model development and model content validation, the resulting model reflects input from HR professionals from 33 nationalities. The list of nationalities represented in the model development and content validation process is presented in Figure 1.2.

**Figure 1.2. Nations Represented in Model Development and Content Validation**



## Measures

Each participant rated both competencies and key behaviors. These ratings are detailed in this section. Rating scales are provided in Table 1.3 and Table 1.4, and are described below.

### Importance Ratings: Competencies and Key Behaviors

Participants rated the importance of each competency for an HR professional to successfully perform his or her job at the identified career level. This rating was made for all nine competencies. Participants also rated the importance of key behaviors for an HR professional to successfully perform his or her job at the identified career level. Participants provided these ratings for every aspirational behavior for each competency.

**Table 1.3. Competency and Competency Behavior Importance Rating Scale**

Importance Ratings	
How important is this competency or aspirational behavior to effective job performance for HR jobs at the <identified career level> level?	
Rating	Response Scale Anchors
0	<p><b>Not Important</b></p> <p>The competency behavior/competency is <i>not required</i> to perform HR jobs effectively, and it <i>could not</i> result in any consequences on overall effectiveness.</p>
1	<p><b>Minor Importance</b></p> <p>The competency behavior/competency has <i>minor</i> impact on effective HR job performance. Without this competency behavior/competency, HR professionals could <i>generally still perform</i> these jobs effectively, and it could result in <i>relatively minor impact</i> on overall effectiveness.</p>
2	<p><b>Important</b></p> <p>The competency behavior/competency has an <i>important</i> impact on effective HR job performance. Without this competency behavior/competency, HR professionals <i>would have difficulty performing</i> these jobs effectively, and it could result in consequences on overall effectiveness.</p>
3	<p><b>Critical</b></p> <p>The competency behavior/competency has <i>critical</i> impact on effective HR job performance. Without this competency behavior/competency, HR professionals <i>could not perform</i> these jobs at even a minimally acceptable level, and it could result in <i>major</i> consequences on overall effectiveness.</p>

### Required-upon-Entry Ratings: Competencies

Participants rated if proficiency in each competency was required upon entry into an HR job at the identified career level. Participants provided this rating for all nine competencies.

**Table 1.4. Required-upon-Entry Rating Scale**

Required-upon-Entry Rating Anchors	
Is this competency required when entering an HR job at the <identified career level> level?	
Rating	Response Scale Anchor
0	<p><b>Not Required upon Entry/Time of Hire</b></p> <p>An individual is not expected to enter the HR profession at the &lt;identified career level&gt; level with this competency. Experience on the job, or training, is the primary method for becoming proficient in this area.</p> <p><b>An individual would be considered qualified to enter the HR profession even if the individual did NOT have this competency at the time of hire.</b></p>
1	<p><b>Required upon Entry/Time of Hire</b></p> <p>An individual is expected to enter the HR profession at the &lt;identified career level&gt; level with this competency. Significant job training and time on the job are <i>not</i> provided to the individual to help him/her acquire and become proficient in this area, or job training or experience would not significantly increase one's proficiency in this area.</p> <p><b>An individual would be considered qualified to enter the HR profession only if the individual had this competency at the time of hire.</b></p>

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# Results of the Content Validation Survey

This section presents the results of the Content Validation Survey sent to SHRM members. For each competency the overall results are presented, followed by results for the key behaviors, and then results for subgroups (i.e., career level, FTEs and work sector). As shown in Table 1.3 in previous section, importance ratings were made on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0 to 3. Mean importance ratings greater than or equal to 1.5, but less than 2.49, are considered “important,” and mean importance ratings scored greater than or equal to 2.50 are considered “critical.” Importance ratings are accompanied by standard deviation (SD)<sup>1</sup> values in parentheses. For example, “(M = 2.2, SD = .67)” indicates that the item was rated as important (2.2 on a 0-3 scale) and that the SD of these ratings is .67. A percentage (%) is reported to indicate the proportion of respondents who indicated that the competency is required upon entry into an HR job (see Table 1.4). A summary of these findings can be found in the Appendix of this document.

## Human Resource Expertise (HR Knowledge)

HR professionals directly affect organizational success by developing, maintaining and executing sound human resource management (HRM) policies, practices and procedures (Pfeffer, 1998) that support organizational mission and goals. Effective HRM practices can have numerous benefits for organizations, for example, reduced turnover, increased productivity and financial performance, and sustained competitive advantage (e.g., Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Huselid, 1995). To implement successful initiatives, HR professionals must have a well-developed knowledge base about HRM practices. This knowledge is reflected in the *Human Resource Expertise* competency.

Through its specificity to the HR profession, *Human Resource Expertise* describes the knowledge needed by HR professionals to design, enact, evaluate and maintain sound HRM practices. This knowledge base includes the policies, practices, laws/regulations and principles that underlie effective HRM practices. As a technical competency, *Human Resource Expertise* serves as the driver of other behavioral competencies, such as *Business Acumen*, *Critical Evaluation* and *Consultation*. For example, an HR professional might convey his or her knowledge about effective HRM practices through a behavioral competency such as *Communication* or *Consultation*.

*Human Resource Expertise is defined as the knowledge of principles, practices and functions of effective human resource management.*

<sup>1</sup>Standard deviation (SD) is the average extent to which ratings deviate from the mean. An SD value closer to zero indicates less deviation from the mean, whereas a larger SD value indicates more deviation from the mean. In other words, a smaller SD indicates that participants' ratings were more similar to one another's whereas a larger SD indicates that participants' ratings were less similar to one another's.

## Competency Ratings

Overall results for the *Human Resource Expertise* competency are presented in Table 2.1. These results indicate that this competency was rated as critical to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.5$ ,  $SD = .58$ ). Further, 90% of respondents stated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job.

**Table 2.1.** Human Resource Expertise: Competency Summary

Rating	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.5 (.58)
Required upon entry	90%

## Key Behaviors

Table 2.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Human Resource Expertise*. These behaviors reflect the need of an HR professional to maintain appropriate knowledge of a variety of relevant topics (e.g., “Remains current on relevant laws, legal rulings and regulations”) and to apply this knowledge to create sound organizational practices and policies (e.g., “Develops and utilizes best practices”). All behaviors were rated as important or critical to HR success, with the lowest rating being 2.2 and the highest a 2.6. These high ratings indicate that these behaviors, associated with *Human Resource Expertise*, are necessary for success as an HR professional.

**Table 2.2.** Key Behaviors of Human Resource Expertise

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Remains current on relevant laws, legal rulings and regulations.	2.6 (.57)
Maintains up-to-date knowledge of general HR practices, strategy and technology.	2.5 (.56)
Demonstrates a working knowledge of critical human resource functions, including strategy; workforce management; learning and development; total rewards; risk management; employment law; HR technology; and global and international HR.	2.5 (.59)
Prioritizes work duties for maximum efficiency.	2.4 (.59)
Develops and utilizes best practices.	2.3 (.56)
Delivers customized human resource solutions for organizational challenges.	2.3 (.64)
Seeks professional HR development.	2.2 (.61)
Seeks process improvement through numerous resources.	2.2 (.59)
Utilizes core business and HR-specific technologies to solve business challenges.	2.2 (.62)

## Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Human Resource Expertise* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

### Career Level

Table 2.3 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Human Resource Expertise* at each of the four HR career levels. HR professionals at all career levels rated this competency as important or critical to job success, although this competency is viewed as most important at more senior career levels (i.e., senior and executive levels) than at junior career levels (i.e., early-career level and mid level). Additionally, more HR professionals indicated that this competency is important upon entering an executive-level job (94%) than an early-career job (44%).

A large increase in both importance and required-upon-entry ratings is seen between the early-career and mid-level ratings. Presumably, this occurs as the result of an increase in responsibility, the expansion of managerial responsibilities and a move from transactional to more strategic job responsibilities. It is also possible that early-career-level professionals are expected to develop this competency through on-the-job training or more formalized training and educational opportunities (e.g., conferences, workshops). These career level differences suggest that the *Human Resource Expertise* competency is important across all career levels and becomes more important, and a requisite qualification, at more senior career levels.

**Table 2.3.** Results by Career Level

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	1.8 (.74)	44
Mid	2.2 (.55)	86
Senior	2.7 (.50)	95
Executive	2.8 (.43)	94

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 2.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Human Resource Expertise* for organizations of varying staff sizes. These results show that this competency was rated as critical to HR performance and is required upon entry in most organizations. Additionally, the minimal variance in ratings across different numbers of FTEs indicates that *Human Resource Expertise* is critical to HR professionals' job success and is needed upon entry in the vast majority of organizations regardless of size.

**Table 2.4.** Results by Full-Time Equivalents

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.5 (.60)	88
100-499	2.5 (.57)	91
500-2,499	2.6 (.56)	92
2,500-24,999	2.6 (.54)	92
≥25,000	2.6 (.56)	89

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Sector

Table 2.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Human Resource Expertise* for organizations in different sectors. Across all work sectors this competency was rated as critical and required upon entry in most organizations. Additionally, these ratings show almost no variance across work sectors, which indicates that *Human Resource Expertise* is critical to HR professionals' job success and is required upon entry in nearly all organizations regardless of sector.

**Table 2.5.** Results by Work Sector

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.5 (.58)	90
For-profit public	2.5 (.56)	91
Government	2.5 (.57)	90
Nonprofit	2.5 (.57)	90
Other	2.5 (.58)	88

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Relationship Management

HR professionals regularly interact with clients and stakeholders; therefore, job success for an HR professional is largely a function of his or her ability to maintain productive interpersonal relationships and of his or her ability to help others do the same, or to display competency at *Relationship Management*.

Research has documented positive outcomes associated with productive and healthy interpersonal relationships in the work environment (Reich & Hershcovis, 2011). Positive, formal relationships (e.g., an employee’s relationship with his or her supervisor) are associated with beneficial outcomes for employees, such as improved feelings of belonging and inclusion in the workplace (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2003), increased salary, increased promotions, greater career mobility and other rewards (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lima, & Lentz, 2004). Positive, informal relationships at work are associated with greater job satisfaction, involvement, performance, team cohesion, organizational commitment, positive work atmosphere and lessened turnover intentions (Berman, West, & Richter, 2002). Employees who have better interpersonal relationships with their co-workers and supervisors may also perceive the organization as more supportive (Wallace, Edwards, Arnold, Frazier, & Finch, 2009), may be more committed to their organization and may experience increased perceptions of fit within their organizations (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). In sum, healthy interpersonal relationships among employees at an organization contribute positively to an employee’s and organization’s success.

*Relationship Management is defined as the ability to manage interactions to provide service and to support the organization.*

### Competency Ratings

Overall results for the *Relationship Management* competency are presented in Table 3.1. Results indicate that this competency was rated as critical to the performance of HR professionals (M = 2.5, SD = .55), and 91% of respondents rated proficiency in this competency as required upon entry into an HR job. These findings reflect the large extent to which HR professionals must interact with others and the HR professionals’ position in influencing interpersonal relationships throughout an organization.

**Table 3.1.** Relationship Management: Competency Summary

Ratings	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.5 (.55)
Required upon entry	91%

### Key Behaviors

Table 3.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Relationship Management*. These behaviors reflect the need of HR professionals to manage their own relationships (e.g., “Treats all stakeholders with respect and dignity”) and facilitate others’ relationships (e.g., “Fosters effective teambuilding among stakeholders”). All behaviors were rated between 2.2 and 2.8, indicating that these behaviors are important or critical for success as an HR professional.

**Table 3.2.** Key Behaviors of Relationship Management

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Establishes credibility in all interactions.	2.8 (.44)
Treats all stakeholders with respect and dignity.	2.7 (.45)
Builds engaging relationships with all organizational stakeholders through trust, teamwork and direct communication.	2.6 (.52)
Demonstrates approachability and openness.	2.6 (.53)
Ensures alignment within HR when delivering services and information to the organization.	2.5 (.55)
Provides customer service to organizational stakeholders.	2.5 (.58)
Promotes successful relationships with stakeholders.	2.5 (.57)
Manages internal and external relationships in ways that promote the best interests of all parties.	2.4 (.56)
Champions the view that organizational effectiveness benefits all stakeholders.	2.3 (.62)
Serves as an advocate when appropriate.	2.3 (.59)
Fosters effective teambuilding among stakeholders.	2.3 (.61)
Demonstrates ability to effectively build a network of contacts at all levels within the HR function and in the community, both internally and externally.	2.2 (.63)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Relationship Management* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

Table 3.3 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels. HR professionals at all career levels rated *Relationship Management* as important or critical to job success for HR professionals. However, the importance ratings of this competency steadily increase with career level, and this competency is rated as more important at senior levels (i.e., senior and executive) than at junior levels (i.e., early and mid). Additionally, more HR professionals indicated that this competency is required upon entering an executive-level job (96%) than an early-career job (73%). The largest increase in required-upon-entry ratings is seen between the early-career and mid-level ratings. This finding may indicate that early-career HR professionals are expected to develop and refine this competency as they begin their careers.

**Table 3.3.** Results by Career Level

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	2.1 (.65)	73
Mid	2.3 (.57)	86
Senior	2.6 (.52)	94
Executive	2.7 (.47)	96

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 3.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Relationship Management* for organizations of varying staff sizes. Across all organization sizes this competency was rated as both critical and required upon entry. These results also show almost no variance across number of FTEs for importance ratings and only minor differences for required-upon-entry ratings. This outcome suggests that, regardless of the number of FTEs, *Relationship Management* is not only critical to HR professionals' job success but is also required upon entry in nearly all organizations.

**Table 3.4. Results by Full-Time Equivalents**

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.5 (.57)	90
100-499	2.5 (.55)	92
500-2,499	2.5 (.55)	92
2,500-24,999	2.6 (.53)	92
≥25,000	2.5 (.54)	91

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Sector

Table 3.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Relationship Management* for organizations in different sectors. These ratings show no differences across work sectors for importance ratings, with all mean ratings indicating that *Relationship Management* is critical, and only minor differences for required-upon-entry ratings. Together these findings indicate that, regardless of sector, *Relationship Management* is important to HR professionals' job success and is required upon entry in nearly all organizations.

**Table 3.5. Results by Work Sector**

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.5 (.56)	91
For-profit public	2.5 (.55)	92
Government	2.5 (.56)	91
Nonprofit	2.5 (.55)	92
Other	2.5 (.54)	92

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Consultation

Within their own organizations, HR professionals often take on the role of an internal consultant or expert on human capital issues. In this role, HR professionals can help business units address challenges related to human capital, such as staffing needs, training and development needs, employee performance issues, and employee relations issues (Combs, Liu, Hall, & Ketchen, 2006). To be a successful human capital expert, HR professionals must not only possess requisite knowledge about HRM practices but also be able to provide guidance to internal stakeholders. The most effective HR professionals possess a specific set of attributes that enables them to translate complicated information about HRM practices (i.e., *Human Resource Expertise*) into actionable recommendations for end users (e.g., hiring managers). HR professionals must be able to analyze business challenges, generate creative solutions, and provide accurate and timely guidance to internal stakeholders based on best practices and research that account for the distinct internal and external environment of the organization.

*Consultation is defined as the ability to provide guidance to organizational stakeholders.*

### Competency Ratings

Overall results for the *Consultation* competency are presented in Table 4.1. This competency was rated as important to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.3$ ,  $SD = .66$ ), and 80% of respondents indicated that proficiency in *Consultation* is required upon entry into an HR job. However, these overall results mask the fact that ratings for this competency are strongly influenced by career level (discussed below). Career level differences likely explain the lower ratings, compared to other competencies, in the other breakouts for this competency (i.e., FTEs and work sector). Regardless, these overall ratings still confirm the importance of this competency and its necessity upon entry into HR positions in light of HR's role as organizational experts in human capital issues.

**Table 4.1.** Consultation: Competency Summary

Ratings	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.3 (.66)
Required upon entry	80%

### Key Behaviors

Table 4.2 displays the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Consultation*—these ratings ranged from 1.8 to 2.4. These behaviors represent HR professionals' ability to apply HR and human capital knowledge to address organizational needs (e.g., "Analyzes specific business challenges involving workforce and offers solutions based upon best practices or research"). All of these behaviors were rated as important to successful HR job performance.

**Table 4.2.** Key Behaviors of Consultation

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Applies creative problem-solving to address business needs and issues.	2.4 (.60)
Serves as an in-house workforce and people management expert.	2.3 (.66)
Analyzes specific business challenges involving the workforce and offers solutions based on best practices or research.	2.3 (.65)
Generates specific organizational interventions (e.g., culture change, change management, restructuring, training) to support organizational objectives.	2.3 (.69)
Develops consultative and coaching skills.	2.3 (.64)
Guides employees regarding specific career situations.	1.8 (.66)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Consultation* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

Table 4.3 shows the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels. HR professionals at all career levels indicated that *Consultation* is important or critical to job success. However, the importance ratings of this competency increase substantially from early-career level to the executive level (a rating of 1.5 for early-career level and a rating of 2.6 for executive level). A similar pattern of results is also found for required-upon-entry ratings; specifically, more HR professionals indicated that this competency is required upon entering an executive-level job (91%) than an early-career-level job (34%).

An increase in both importance and required-upon-entry ratings is seen between early and mid levels and between mid and senior levels. These large increases might be explained by the nature of HR jobs at these levels. Early-career HR professionals will likely have fewer consultative responsibilities; they may instead be expected to begin developing these skills as they support more experienced HR professionals. Further, given the moderate required-upon-entry and importance ratings for mid-level HR professionals, it is likely that *Consultation* becomes a larger part of the job for mid-level professionals. In sum, *Consultation* may not necessarily be expected upon entry into early or mid-level jobs, but it is expected for senior- and executive-level jobs. Despite these career level differences, these results support the importance of *Consultation* to HR job success and position it as a critical area for development in early and mid-level HR professionals who wish to advance their careers.

**Table 4.3.** Results by Career Level

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	1.5 (.85)	34
Mid	2.1 (.66)	67
Senior	2.4 (.56)	89
Executive	2.6 (.53)	91

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

#### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 4.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Consultation* in organizations of varying staff sizes. Importance ratings show little variance according to the number of FTEs, with all ratings indicating that *Consultation* is important to job performance for HR professionals and required upon entry in most organizations. Minor differences are seen with regard to the required-upon-entry ratings, especially when comparing small organizations (1-99 FTEs) with larger organizations. However, these differences are relatively minor (maximum difference of 6%) and do not change the overall conclusion that *Consultation* is important to HR professionals' job success and is required upon entry in most organizations regardless of the number of FTEs.

**Table 4.4.** Results by Full-Time Equivalents

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.3 (.67)	78
100-499	2.4 (.60)	82
500-2,499	2.3 (.65)	81
2,500-24,999	2.4 (.62)	84
≥25,000	2.4 (.64)	82

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Sector

Table 4.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Consultation* for organizations in different sectors. These ratings indicate that this competency is important and required upon entry in most organizations across all work sectors. Additionally, there were almost no differences in ratings across work sectors, indicating that sector has little impact on the importance and necessity of *Consultation* for HR professionals.

**Table 4.5.** Results by Work Sector

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.3 (.66)	80
For-profit public	2.4 (.64)	82
Government	2.4 (.64)	81
Nonprofit	2.3 (.65)	81
Other	2.3 (.66)	79

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Leadership and Navigation

Effective leaders are associated with numerous positive outcomes (Barling, Christie, & Hopton, 2010), for example, positive employee work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), decreased turnover and increased employee job performance (Barling et al., 2011). HR professionals at each career level can demonstrate *Leadership and Navigation*. For example, early-career HR professionals can demonstrate proficiency in this competency by behaving in ways consistent with organizational culture and by fostering collaboration with co-workers. Mid- and senior-level HR professionals may develop strategies to implement HR initiatives, and serve as a supporter of the initiatives of others. Executive-level leaders not only establish a vision for HR initiatives but also work to obtain the buy-in of relevant stakeholders, serve as transformational leaders to implement change and lead the organization in the face of adversity. In summary, *Leadership and Navigation* recognizes this vital role for HR professionals by describing the attributes needed by HR professionals to lead organizational initiatives and obtain buy-in from stakeholders.

*Leadership and Navigation is defined as the ability to direct and contribute to initiatives and processes within the organization.*

### Competency Ratings

Overall results for *Leadership and Navigation* are presented in Table 5.1. These results indicate that this competency was rated as important to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.2$ ,  $SD = .73$ ). Further, 67% of respondents indicated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job. Similar to the results for *Consultation*, the overall rating is somewhat misleading because ratings are largely influenced by career level (discussed further below). As well as influencing the overall ratings, these career level differences likely explain the lower ratings for other breakout (i.e., FTEs and work sector) compared with other competencies. Regardless, these results still reflect the strong organizational visibility of HR programs and activities, the impact HR can have on other organizational stakeholders, and the overall importance of *Leadership and Navigation* to the performance of HR professionals.

**Table 5.1. Leadership and Navigation: Competency Summary**

Ratings	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.2 (.73)
Required upon entry	67%

### Key Behaviors

Table 5.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Leadership and Navigation*. These behaviors represent the need for HR professionals to develop and implement strategy that aligns with the organization’s mission (e.g., “Exhibits behaviors consistent with and conforming to organizational culture”), for HR professionals to establish and foster a productive organizational environment (e.g., “Fosters collaboration”), and for HR professionals to demonstrate the ability to accomplish goals even during challenging times (e.g., “Develops solutions to overcome potential obstacles to successful implementation of initiatives”). All the ratings for these behaviors fell between 2.2 and 2.5, indicating that they are all important or critical to the success of HR professionals.

**Table 5.2. Key Behaviors of Leadership and Navigation**

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Exhibits behaviors consistent with and conforming to organizational culture.	2.5 (.58)
Fosters collaboration.	2.4 (.58)
Understands the most effective and efficient way to accomplish tasks within the parameters of organizational hierarchy, processes, systems and policies.	2.4 (.58)
Develops solutions to overcome potential obstacles to successful implementation of initiatives.	2.4 (.59)
Demonstrates agility and expertise when leading organizational initiatives or when supporting the initiatives of others.	2.3 (.59)
Sets the vision for HR initiatives and builds buy-in from internal and external stakeholders.	2.3 (.76)
Leads the organization through adversity with resilience and tenacity.	2.3 (.71)
Promotes consensus among organizational stakeholders (e.g., employees, business unit leaders, informal leaders) when proposing new initiatives.	2.3 (.63)
Serves as a transformational leader for the organization by leading change.	2.2 (.73)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Leadership and Navigation* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

Table 5.3 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels. Early-career respondents indicated that this competency is not important (mean rating of 1.3) to HR performance. However, other career levels rated *Leadership and Navigation* as important (mid and senior levels) or critical (executive level) to performance as an HR professional at these respective career levels. Similarly, early and mid-level professionals rated *Leadership and Navigation* as a competency that is not necessarily required upon entry, whereas senior- and executive-level professionals were much more likely to indicate that this competency is required upon entry into an HR job at those career levels.

These large differences in ratings might be explained by the changing nature of HR jobs across career levels. It is less likely that early-career-level professionals will have leadership responsibilities; instead, HR professionals at more junior career levels are often engaged in transactional work. At the mid level, HR professionals might begin to take on leadership responsibilities, but even at this level, HR professionals are likely to be continuing to develop their leadership competence on the job or through formal training programs. It is not until the senior level that HR professionals are expected to have fine-tuned their leadership capabilities, and at the executive level, leadership is important to the job and required for entry. Overall, these results indicate that the *Leadership and Navigation* competency contributes to HR job performance, albeit differently across career levels, and provides a clear area of development for early and mid-level HR professionals who wish to advance their careers and move into more senior positions.

**Table 5.3. Results by Career Level**

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	1.3 (.87)	24
Mid	1.7 (.70)	41
Senior	2.3 (.58)	78
Executive	2.6 (.51)	90

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 5.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Leadership and Navigation* for organizations of varying staff sizes. Ratings across all organization sizes indicate that this competency is important for HR professionals and is required in a majority of organizations. Additionally, these results show little variance according to the number of FTEs for both importance and required-upon-entry ratings, although HR professionals in smaller organizations (1-99 FTEs) were less likely to indicate that this competency is required upon entry as their counterparts in larger organizations (e.g., 2,500-24,999 FTEs). Regardless, this difference is relatively minor (maximum difference of 8%), and these findings indicate that *Leadership and Navigation* is important to HR professionals' job success and is required upon entry in most organizations regardless of the number of FTEs.

**Table 5.4. Results by Full-Time Equivalents**

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.1 (.75)	65
100-499	2.2 (.73)	66
500-2,499	2.2 (.73)	68
2,500-24,999	2.3 (.68)	73
≥25,000	2.3 (.70)	69

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Sector

Table 5.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Leadership and Navigation* for organizations in different sectors. Across all sectors this competency was rated as important to HR performance, and the majority of respondents indicated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job. Additionally, these ratings show only minor differences across sectors.

**Table 5.5. Results by Work Sector**

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.1 (.74)	66
For-profit public	2.2 (.71)	68
Government	2.2 (.73)	67
Nonprofit	2.2 (.73)	67
Other	2.2 (.74)	66

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Communication

Effective communication is one of the building blocks of personal and career success (Showry & Manasa, 2012). This is particularly true for HR professionals. At more junior career levels, HR professionals may need to field employee grievances, conduct investigations and intervene to resolve employee interpersonal challenges. More senior-level HR professionals are often required to interact with a variety of stakeholders to develop, interpret and distribute policy and initiative information to employees and to collaborate with other organizational units to address business challenges from a human capital perspective. Especially at senior and executive career levels, effective communication is essential for sharing the leader's vision and the organization's mission, describing new initiatives, setting goals and communicating progress. When HR information is communicated well, employees better understand the purpose and value of policies and practices. For example, when managers adeptly communicate HR practices and policies to their employees, employees perceive the organization's HRM to be more effective, and in turn employee satisfaction and business unit performance are positively affected (Den Hartog, Boon, Verburg, & Croon, 2013).

*Communication is defined as the ability to effectively exchange information with stakeholders.*

To competently fulfill duties at each career level, HR professionals must ensure that the messages they distribute are clear, concise and readily understood. In summary, proficiency in *Communication* is mandatory for the success of HR professionals.

### Competency Ratings

Results for the *Communication* competency are presented in Table 6.1. This competency was rated as critical to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.5$ ,  $SD = .58$ ), and 90% of respondents indicated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job. These findings reflect HR professionals' integral role as receivers and distributors of a large amount of information, requiring high levels of interpersonal interaction.

**Table 6.1. Communication: Competency Summary**

Rating	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.5 (.58)
Required upon entry	90%

### Key Behaviors

Table 6.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Communication*. These behaviors reflect the need for HR professionals to disseminate information to stakeholders (e.g., "Provides clear, concise information to others in verbal, written, electronic and other communication formats for public and organizational consumption"). These behaviors also reflect the need for HR professionals to engage in productive conversations with stakeholders seeking HR's services (e.g., "Provides constructive feedback effectively" and "Demonstrates an understanding of the audience's perspective") and to help ensure quality communication among organizational stakeholders (e.g., "Helps others consider new perspectives"). The relatively high ratings for these behaviors, with mean ratings ranging from 2.1 to 2.6, indicate that these behaviors are important or critical to effective job performance for HR professionals.

**Table 6.2. Key Behaviors of Communication**

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Provides clear, concise information to others in verbal, written, electronic and other communication formats for public and organizational consumption.	2.6 (.53)
Listens actively and empathetically to the views of others.	2.6 (.52)
Delivers critical information to all stakeholders.	2.5 (.64)
Seeks further information to clarify ambiguity.	2.5 (.55)
Provides constructive feedback effectively.	2.4 (.56)
Ensures effective communication throughout the organization.	2.4 (.62)
Provides thoughtful feedback in appropriate situations.	2.4 (.56)
Provides proactive communications.	2.4 (.55)
Demonstrates an understanding of the audience's perspective.	2.4 (.55)
Treats constructive feedback as a developmental opportunity.	2.4 (.57)
Welcomes the opportunity to discuss competing points of view.	2.3 (.60)
Helps others consider new perspectives.	2.2 (.59)
Leads effective and efficient meetings.	2.2 (.62)
Helps managers communicate not just on HR issues.	2.1 (.64)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Communication* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

The importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels are presented in Table 6.3. HR professionals at all career levels indicated that *Communication* is important or critical to job success. The importance ratings increase slightly with career level, such that ratings are higher for more senior career levels than for junior career levels. Additionally, more HR professionals indicated that this competency is important when entering an executive-level job (95%) than an early-career job (77%). Although *Communication* is required upon entry at all career levels, the moderate difference in required-upon-entry ratings across career levels suggests that HR professionals are expected to develop this competency throughout their careers.

**Table 6.3. Results by Career Level**

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	2.1 (.72)	77
Mid	2.3 (.61)	85
Senior	2.5 (.54)	93
Executive	2.6 (.50)	95

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Full-Time Equivalents

Table 6.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Communication* in organizations of varying staff sizes. These results show essentially no difference according to number of FTEs, and ratings indicate that this competency is both critical to job success and required upon entry in nearly all organizations.

**Table 6.4.** Results by Full-Time Equivalents

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.5 (.59)	90
100-499	2.5 (.57)	90
500-2,499	2.5 (.58)	91
2,500-24,999	2.5 (.56)	91
≥25,000	2.5 (.57)	91

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Sector

Table 6.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Communication* for organizations in different sectors. Similar to the results for FTEs, there are basically no differences in ratings across sectors. This competency was rated as critical to the success of HR professionals and was rated as required upon entry in nearly all organizations regardless of sector.

**Table 6.5.** Results by Work Sector

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.5 (.59)	90
For-profit public	2.5 (.57)	91
Government	2.5 (.56)	91
Nonprofit	2.5 (.57)	91
Other	2.5 (.57)	91

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Global and Cultural Effectiveness

Diversity within a team or organization can facilitate success by fostering creativity, promoting healthy working relationships and equipping organizations with an opportunity to connect with a wider audience (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004). Because many organizations are proactively attempting to increase the diversity of their workforces, and because of today's increasingly global workforce, HR professionals must be able to effectively and respectfully interact with colleagues, customers and clients of varying backgrounds and cultures.

HR professionals are at the forefront of these changes. For example, an increasing number of organizations choose to invest in diversity initiatives, such as diversity training, to facilitate successful interpersonal interactions among members of varying cultures (Kulik & Roberson, 2008). In fact, 67% of U.S. organizations and 74% of *Fortune* 500 companies use diversity training programs (Kimley, 1997). HR professionals are often tasked with developing, delivering and evaluating these diversity-related initiatives. Additionally, various laws and regulations also require organizations to employ inclusive hiring practices. Again, HR professionals are often primarily responsible for complying with these laws and regulations given their pivotal role in employee hiring. Because of the role of HR professionals in promoting and maintaining a diverse workforce, it is easy to see the importance of *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* for HR professionals.

*Global and Cultural Effectiveness* is defined as the ability to value and consider the perspectives and backgrounds of all parties.

### Competency Ratings

Overall results for *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* are presented in Table 7.1. These results indicate that this competency was rated as important to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 1.9$ ,  $SD = .72$ ), although the relatively large standard deviation suggests a significant amount of disagreement among respondents with regard to these ratings. Additionally, only 57% of respondents indicated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job. It seems likely that disagreement about the importance of this competency for HR performance is also reflected in disagreement about the importance of this competency upon entry. Overall, these results indicate that *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* is a bit less important than other competencies for HR job success, although there is a fair amount of disagreement among respondents about this, and it may not be a principal competency for entry into an HR position.

**Table 7.1.** Global and Cultural Effectiveness: Competency Summary

Rating	Mean (SD)
Importance	1.9 (.72)
Required upon entry	57%

### Key Behaviors

Table 7.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors for *Global and Cultural Effectiveness*. These behaviors reflect HR professionals' need to maintain an open mind when interacting with individuals who have perspectives different from their own (e.g., "Maintains openness to others' ideas and makes decisions based on experience, data, facts and reasoned judgment"). These behaviors also reflect the need for HR professionals to respect cross-cultural differences and value the cultural identity of employees (e.g., "Appreciates the commonalities, values and individual uniqueness of all human beings"). With regard to the importance ratings of these behaviors, the mean ratings ranged from 1.9 to 2.6, which indicate that these behaviors are important or critical for successful HR professionals.

**Table 7.2.** Key Behaviors of Global and Cultural Effectiveness

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Has a strong set of core values while operating with adaptability to particular conditions, situations and people.	2.6 (.56)
Maintains openness to others' ideas and makes decisions based on experience, data, facts and reasoned judgment.	2.5 (.54)
Demonstrates nonjudgmental respect for other perspectives.	2.5 (.58)
Works effectively with diverse cultures and populations.	2.4 (.58)
Conducts business with an understanding and respect for the differences in rules, customs, laws, regulations and business operations between own culture and all cultures.	2.4 (.62)
Appreciates the commonalities, values and individual uniqueness of all human beings.	2.4 (.61)
Possesses self-awareness and humility to learn from others.	2.4 (.60)
Embraces inclusion.	2.3 (.62)
Adapts perspective and behavior to meet the cultural context.	2.2 (.60)
Navigates the differences between commonly accepted practice and law when conducting business in other nations.	2.2 (.76)
Operates with a global, open mindset while being sensitive to local cultural issues and needs.	2.2 (.65)
Operates with a fundamental trust in other human beings.	2.2 (.66)
Takes the responsibility to teach others about the differences and benefits that multiple cultures bring to the organization to ensure inclusion.	2.0 (.68)
Incorporates global business and economic trends into business decisions.	1.9 (.74)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

Table 7.3 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels. HR professionals at all career levels indicated that *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* is important to job success. However, the importance ratings increase to some degree with career level, such that this competency is rated as more important for more senior career levels than for more junior career levels. Additionally, more HR professionals indicated that this competency is needed upon entering an executive-level job (66%) than an early-career-level job (41%). Together, these results suggest that although *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* is important to HR professionals regardless of career level, this competency is more important at advanced HR career levels (e.g., senior and executive levels) than at junior career levels.

**Table 7.3. Results by Career Level**

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	1.5 (.87)	41
Mid	1.7 (.75)	47
Senior	2.0 (.65)	60
Executive	2.1 (.63)	66

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 7.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* for organizations of varying staff sizes. Across all categories of FTEs there are only minimal differences in importance ratings. All groups rated this competency as important, and a majority of respondents indicated that this competency is required upon entry.

**Table 7.4. Results by Full-Time Equivalents**

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	1.9 (.74)	55
100-499	1.9 (.71)	57
500-2,499	1.9 (.69)	57
2,500-24,999	2.0 (.67)	60
≥25,000	2.0 (.69)	56

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Sector

Table 7.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Global and Cultural Effectiveness* for organizations in different sectors. Similar to the results for FTEs, these results show little to no differences across sectors. Across all sectors this competency was rated as important to HR professionals' job performance, and a majority of respondents rated this competency as required upon entry.

**Table 7.5. Results by Work Sector**

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	1.9 (.71)	56
For-profit public	1.9 (.68)	57
Government	1.9 (.73)	58
Nonprofit	2.0 (.73)	60
Other	2.0 (.70)	60

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Ethical Practice

As with all other employees, it is crucial that HR professionals be ethical. HR professionals should consider the core values of their organizations and act with integrity. But beyond adhering to rigorous ethical standards themselves, HR professionals are often tasked with creating ethical HR systems or reinforcing an organization's ethical climate. These efforts serve several purposes, but most notably, implementing a strong ethical climate can help protect an organization from adverse employee behavior. And implementing ethical systems is essential to organizations because ethical HR systems are associated with higher levels of organizational performance (Lado & Wilson, 1994).

HR professionals at all career levels should not only adhere to their organization's ethical climate but help drive it as well. One such way that HR professionals can influence their organization's ethical climate is by responding to ethical issues (Bartels, Harrick, Martell, & Strickland, 1998). For example, early-career and mid-level HR professionals might be responsible for conducting thorough and confidential investigations into reports of unethical behavior and for recommending further action (e.g., suspension or termination of an employee). At more senior levels of experience, HR professionals might be responsible for ensuring that HR systems reinforce appropriate employee behaviors, values and norms that contribute to the organization's ethical climate. For example, senior-level HR professionals might develop effective policies and procedures for employees to report unethical behavior, or ensure that the requirements for determining promotions and pay raises are consistent throughout the organization and transparent for employees. In summary, successful HR professionals both adhere to ethical guidelines with regard to their own behavior and serve as drivers of an ethical climate in their organizations. To do this, HR employees must have thoroughly developed competence in *Ethical Practice*.

*Ethical Practice is defined as the ability to integrate core values, integrity and accountability throughout all organizational and business practices.*

## Competency Ratings

Results for *Ethical Practice* are presented in Table 8.1. These results indicate that this competency was rated as critical to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.7$ ,  $SD = .47$ ), and 97% of respondents indicated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job. These findings reflect HR's central role in maintaining an organization's ethical climate.

**Table 8.1.** Ethical Practice: Competency Summary

Rating	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.7 (.47)
Required upon entry	97%

## Key Behaviors

Table 8.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Ethical Practice*. These behaviors reflect the need for HR professionals to act ethically (e.g., "Maintains confidentiality"), to hold employees to the organizational code of ethics (e.g., "Responds immediately to all reports of unethical behavior or conflicts of interest"), and to establish and promote ethical practices across the organization (e.g., "Drives the corporate ethical environment"). Mean importance ratings on the behaviors associated with *Ethical Practice* ranged from 2.2 to 2.9, indicating that these behaviors are important or critical to the effective job performance of HR professionals.

**Table 8.2.** Key Behaviors of Ethical Practice

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Maintains confidentiality.	2.9 (.27)
Acts with personal, professional and behavioral integrity.	2.9 (.35)
Responds immediately to all reports of unethical behavior or conflicts of interest.	2.8 (.47)
Empowers all employees to report unethical behavior or conflicts of interest without fear of reprisal.	2.7 (.51)
Shows consistency between espoused and enacted values.	2.6 (.54)
Acknowledges mistakes.	2.4 (.56)
Drives the corporate ethical environment.	2.4 (.66)
Applies power or authority appropriately.	2.4 (.60)
Recognizes personal bias and others' tendency toward bias, and takes measures to mitigate the influence of bias in business decisions.	2.4 (.57)
Maintains appropriate levels of transparency in organizational practices.	2.3 (.57)
Ensures that all stakeholder voices are heard.	2.2 (.60)
Manages political and social pressures when making decisions.	2.2 (.61)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Ethical Practice* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

Table 8.3 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels. HR professionals at all career levels indicated that *Ethical Practice* is critical to job success, and these ratings increased slightly with career level. Additionally, only slightly more HR professionals indicated that this competency is required upon entering a job at the executive level (98%) than at the early-career level (90%). Together, these results suggest that *Ethical Practice* is critical to job success and required upon entry for HR professionals at all career levels.

**Table 8.3.** Results by Career Level

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	2.5 (.62)	90
Mid	2.6 (.52)	95
Senior	2.8 (.44)	97
Executive	2.9 (.35)	98

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

#### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 8.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Ethical Practice* for organizations of varying staff sizes. Across all organization sizes this competency was rated as critical for success and required upon entry into HR jobs. Additionally, these results show basically no difference according to number of FTEs, which indicates the importance of *Ethical Practice* regardless of organization size.

**Table 8.4.** Results by Full-Time Equivalents

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.7 (.48)	96
100-499	2.8 (.47)	96
500-2,499	2.8 (.45)	97
2,500-24,999	2.8 (.44)	98
≥25,000	2.8 (.44)	97

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Sector

Table 8.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Ethical Practice* for organizations in different sectors. Similar to the results for number of FTEs, there are no differences in ratings across sectors, and HR professionals in all sectors rated this competency as critical to performance and required upon entry in nearly all organizations.

**Table 8.5.** Results by Work Sector

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.7 (.47)	97
For-profit public	2.8 (.45)	97
Government	2.8 (.46)	96
Nonprofit	2.8 (.45)	97
Other	2.8 (.44)	96

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Critical Evaluation

HR can enhance the effectiveness and usefulness of human capital programs by informing their development and monitoring their success, with appropriate data. One such source of data is human capital metrics—for example, metrics that describe the time to fill a position and the cost per hire. Not only do human capital metrics add value to the role of HR in organizations, but HR functions that collect and properly apply HR metrics to inform HR activity are seen as more reliable strategic partners (Lawler, Levenson, & Bourdreau, 2004). The rise of data-based HRM practices is evident—one such example of this trend is “big data” and its increasingly frequent use by HR departments. HR professionals are currently being asked to inform their decisions with data, and this trend is likely to continue and increase in the coming years.

Because of these trends in the HR profession, it is beneficial for HR professionals to have the proficiency necessary to collect, analyze and interpret data and research to inform evidence-based HRM practices. To do this, HR professionals need to understand what data are useful (e.g., HR metrics) and how they should be collected (e.g., surveys, archival records), as well as be able to effectively analyze and interpret those data. In short, HR professionals must be able to translate raw data and research into conclusions relevant to their organizations, and then create actionable recommendations that inform HRM practices. To accomplish these tasks, *Critical Evaluation* is a core competency for HR professionals that is expected to increase in relevance in the coming years.

*Critical Evaluation* is defined as the ability to interpret information with which to make business decisions and recommendations.

### Competency Ratings

Results for *Critical Evaluation* are presented in Table 9.1. This competency was rated as important to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.1$ ,  $SD = .65$ ), and 70% of respondents indicated that proficiency in this competency is required upon entry into an HR job. These findings speak to the value of the ability to analyze and interpret data when creating human capital solutions.

**Table 9.1. Critical Evaluation: Competency Summary**

Rating	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.1 (.65)
Required upon entry	70%

### Key Behaviors

Table 9.2 provides the mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Critical Evaluation*. These behaviors reflect the need for HR professionals to gather data (e.g., “Gathers critical information”) and analyze and interpret data (e.g., “Analyzes large information to identify evidence-based best practices”). The mean importance scores on the behaviors for *Critical Evaluation* ranged from 1.8 to 2.7, indicating that they are important or critical for successful HR performance.

**Table 9.2.** Key Behaviors of Critical Evaluation

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Makes sound decisions based on evaluation of available information.	2.7 (.52)
Assesses the impact of changes to law on organizational human resource management functions.	2.5 (.64)
Transfers knowledge and best practices from one situation to the next.	2.4 (.57)
Applies critical thinking to information received from organizational stakeholders and evaluates what can be used for organizational success.	2.4 (.64)
Gathers critical information.	2.3 (.63)
Analyzes data with a keen sense for what is useful.	2.2 (.59)
Delineates a clear set of best practices based on experience, evidence from industry literature, published peer-reviewed research, publicly available web-based sources of information and other sources.	2.2 (.65)
Analyzes information to identify evidence-based best practices.	2.1 (.60)
Identifies leading indicators of outcomes.	2.1 (.62)
Analyzes large quantities of information from research and practice.	1.8 (.68)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Critical Evaluation* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

Table 9.3 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels. HR professionals at all career levels indicated that *Critical Evaluation* is important to job success. However, the importance ratings of this competency increase with career level, such that this competency is rated as more important for more senior career levels than for junior career levels. Additionally, more HR professionals indicated that this competency is required upon entering an executive-level job (86%) than an early-career-level job (37%).

These results are consistent with the findings for several other competencies. A large jump in required-upon-entry ratings is seen between the early-career and mid levels, and between the mid and senior levels. This outcome indicates that HR professionals at the early-career and mid levels are expected to develop *Critical Evaluation* through on-the-job experience and formal training opportunities to advance their careers.

**Table 9.3.** Results by Career Level

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	1.5 (.82)	37
Mid	1.8 (.65)	54
Senior	2.2 (.56)	77
Executive	2.4 (.55)	86

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Full-Time Equivalents

Table 9.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Critical Evaluation* for organizations of varying staff sizes. Although there are minor differences across numbers of FTEs (e.g., between organizations with 1-99 FTEs and organizations with 2,500-24,999 FTEs), these results are generally consistent across organization size. Additionally, ratings suggest that *Critical Evaluation* is important to HR professionals' job success and is required upon entry in most organizations regardless of the number of FTEs.

**Table 9.4. Results by Full-Time Equivalents**

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.1 (.68)	67
100-499	2.2 (.65)	73
500-2,499	2.1 (.65)	70
2,500-24,999	2.2 (.62)	75
≥25,000	2.2 (.62)	73

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

### Sector

Table 9.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Critical Evaluation* for organizations in different sectors. Mean ratings indicate that this competency is important to HR performance and is required upon entry in most organizations. The consistency of these ratings across work sectors indicates that *Critical Evaluation* is important to HR professionals regardless of sector.

**Table 9.5. Results by Work Sector**

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.1 (.66)	69
For-profit public	2.1 (.63)	70
Government	2.2 (.66)	72
Nonprofit	2.2 (.65)	72
Other	2.2 (.65)	71

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Business Acumen

HR professionals often serve in a consultative role for other organizational members and business units. This consultative role may include developing and carrying out HRM practices that support, and are aligned with, business strategies and goals. In other words, successful HR professionals develop HR systems that positively contribute to organizational success (Becker & Huselid, 1998).

To do this successfully, HR professionals need to be well developed in terms of their *Business Acumen*. This competency includes understanding business operations and functions, understanding how HRM practices contribute to core business functions, and understanding the organization's external environment. Moreover, HR professionals should also recognize how internal and external factors—for example, the external competitive environment and internal personnel resources—interact to influence organizational performance. Last, HR professionals need to be able to make the case for HR management to other business professionals; this includes marketing HR within the organization and showing how HR can have a direct impact on firm performance.

*Business Acumen is defined as the ability to understand and apply information with which to contribute to the organization's strategic plan.*

### Competency Ratings

Results for *Business Acumen* are presented in Table 10.1. Overall, this competency was rated as important to the performance of HR professionals ( $M = 2.2$ ,  $SD = .64$ ), although only 67% of respondents indicated that it is required upon entry. These results are at first somewhat surprising given the influence of well-developed HR systems on organizational performance and the magnitude of the external competitive market on HR-related needs. However, similar to other competencies (e.g., *Consultation*), there are large differences across career levels that limit the utility of making conclusions based on these overall results (discussed further below).

**Table 10.1.** Business Acumen: Competency Summary

Rating	Mean (SD)
Importance	2.2 (.64)
Required upon entry	67%

### Key Behaviors

The mean importance ratings of behaviors associated with *Business Acumen* are presented in Table 10.2. These behaviors describe HR professionals' need to understand how the organization operates (e.g., "Demonstrates a capacity for understanding the business operations and functions within the organization"), how external factors influence organizational operations (e.g., "Understands the industry and business/competitive environment within which the organization operates"), and how these factors relate to an organization's HR needs (e.g., "Demonstrates an understanding of the strategic relationship between effective human resource management and core business functions"). The mean importance scores on these behaviors reflect important or critical ratings, with mean ratings between 2.0 and 2.5.

**Table 10.2.** Key Behaviors of Business Acumen

Key Behaviors	Mean (SD)
Demonstrates an understanding of the strategic relationship between effective human resource management and core business function.	2.5 (.58)
Demonstrates a capacity for understanding the business operations and functions within the organization.	2.5 (.57)
Understands the industry and business/competitive environment within which the organization operates.	2.3 (.62)
Makes the business case for HR management (e.g., ROI) as it relates to efficient and effective organizational functioning.	2.3 (.67)
Uses organizational resources to learn the business and operational functions.	2.3 (.57)
Understands organizational metrics and their correlation to business success.	2.3 (.62)
Uses organizational metrics to make decisions.	2.1 (.63)
Markets HR both internally (e.g., return on investment/ROI of HR initiatives) and externally (e.g., employment branding).	2.1 (.67)
Leverages technology to solve business problems.	2.0 (.61)

### Competency Ratings by Subgroups

Because the importance and necessity of the *Business Acumen* competency may differ across demographic and organizational characteristics, more specific analyses of importance and required-upon-entry ratings are presented below.

#### Career Level

The importance and required-upon-entry ratings for each of the four HR career levels are presented in Table 10.3. Although HR professionals at all career levels indicated that *Business Acumen* is important or critical to job success, the importance ratings of this competency show important differences across career levels. Specifically, *Business Acumen* was rated as more important for HR professionals at the senior career levels than at the junior career levels. Additionally, there were also marked differences in required-upon-entry ratings across career levels, such that more HR professionals indicated that *Business Acumen* is important upon entering an executive-level job (83%) than an early-career-level job (37%).

Possibly, the job requirements of more junior-career-level employees do not require them to understand the integration of HR with business operations, which would limit the utility of *Business Acumen*. Additionally, employees at junior career levels may be expected to develop this competency through on-the-job training, workshops and other professional development opportunities. On the other hand, HR professionals at the senior and executive levels, who are presumably operating at a more strategic level, need a thorough understanding of the business context to align business goals with HR operations. Despite these career level differences, the data show that this competency is needed both for effective performance as an HR professional and for career advancement.

**Table 10.3.** Results by Career Level

Career Level	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
Early	1.6 (.75)	37
Mid	1.9 (.63)	51
Senior	2.2 (.56)	73
Executive	2.5 (.54)	83

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Full-Time Equivalents

Table 10.4 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Business Acumen* for organizations of varying staff sizes. Across FTE size there were only minimal differences in ratings. These ratings indicate that this competency is important and is required upon entry in a majority of organizations.

**Table 10.4.** Results by Full-Time Equivalents

Full-Time Equivalents	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
1-99	2.1 (.66)	66
100-499	2.3 (.61)	71
500-2,499	2.1 (.64)	67
2,500-24,999	2.3 (.61)	70
≥25,000	2.2 (.63)	68

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

## Sector

Table 10.5 presents the importance and required-upon-entry ratings for *Business Acumen* for organizations in different sectors. As with the number of FTEs, these results show only minimal differences across work sectors. Again, these results indicate that *Business Acumen* is important to HR professionals' job success and is generally required upon entry in all organizations regardless of sector.

**Table 10.5.** Results by Work Sector

Work Sector	Importance	Required upon Entry
	Mean (SD)	% Yes
For-profit private	2.2 (.66)	67
For-profit public	2.2 (.62)	66
Government	2.1 (.63)	64
Nonprofit	2.2 (.64)	67
Other	2.2 (.65)	70

**Note:** Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).

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# Summary

Based on an extensive review of the academic and professional literature, as well as over 100 focus groups with HR professionals around the world, SHRM developed the SHRM Competency Model. This model comprises nine competencies—one technical and eight behavioral—that describe the requisite personal characteristics (i.e., competencies) of successful HR professionals. A particular benefit of SHRM’s model is that it is not organization-specific, but is instead intended for the entire HR profession regardless of job specialty, career level and other personal or organizational differences.

Although the SHRM Competency Model was built based on the input of thousands of HR professionals, the purpose of this study was to confirm the content of the model. SHRM deployed a large-scale survey of more than 32,000 HR professionals for this purpose. Respondents to this survey rated the importance of each competency and its need upon entry into an HR job. Additionally, information about the respondents’ demographic and organizational characteristics was collected to investigate subgroup differences in ratings.

Results of this survey indicate that the competencies and key behaviors included in the SHRM Competency Model are not only important for job success as an HR professional but are often a prerequisite for entry into an HR job. An analysis of these findings across career levels indicates that whereas all of these competencies are important regardless of career level, they are especially important for more senior-level HR professionals. A similar pattern of results was also found for the required-upon-entry ratings, indicating that more senior-level HR professionals are expected to be well developed in each of these competencies. Taken together, these findings demonstrate the value of these competencies to the HR profession. Additionally, these findings, specifically the differences across career levels, provide a clear developmental path for early-career HR professionals who wish to advance their careers. Lastly, only minimal differences in ratings were found across organizational size and work sector. These relatively invariant results speak to the universal nature of the model.

In summary, the findings presented here regarding the importance and requirement upon entry of these competencies for HR professionals provide strong evidence of the applicability of the competency model to the HR profession. Additionally, the high importance ratings assigned to the key behaviors associated with each competency confirm the importance of these behaviors to their respective competencies. Taken together, these findings provide strong support for the content validity of the SHRM Competency Model and its applicability to the entire HR profession.

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# Appendix: Summary of Competency Importance and Required-upon-Entry Ratings by Career Level

Competency	Early		Mid		Senior		Executive	
	IMP (SD)	RUE (%)						
<b>Ethical Practice</b> The ability to integrate core values, integrity and accountability throughout all organizational and business practices	2.5 (.62)	90	2.6 (.52)	95	2.8 (.44)	97	2.9 (.35)	98
<b>Relationship Management</b> The ability to manage interactions to provide service and to support the organization	2.1 (.65)	73	2.3 (.57)	86	2.6 (.52)	94	2.7 (.47)	96
<b>Human Resource Expertise (HR Knowledge)</b> The knowledge of principles, practices, and functions of effective human resource management	1.8 (.74)	44	2.2 (.55)	86	2.7 (.50)	95	2.8 (.43)	94

continued on next page

Competency	Early		Mid		Senior		Executive	
	IMP (SD)	RUE (%)						
<b>Communication</b> The ability to effectively exchange information with stakeholders	2.1 (.72)	77	2.3 (.61)	85	2.5 (.54)	93	2.6 (.50)	95
<b>Consultation</b> The ability to provide guidance to organizational stakeholders	1.5 (.85)	34	2.1 (.66)	67	2.4 (.56)	89	2.6 (.53)	91
<b>Leadership and Navigation</b> The ability to direct and contribute to initiatives and processes within the organization	1.3 (.87)	24	1.7 (.70)	41	2.3 (.58)	78	2.6 (.51)	90
<b>Business Acumen</b> The ability to understand and apply information with which to contribute to the organization's strategic plan	1.6 (.75)	37	1.9 (.63)	51	2.2 (.56)	73	2.5 (.54)	83
<b>Critical Evaluation</b> The ability to interpret information with which to make business decisions and recommendations	1.5 (.82)	37	1.8 (.65)	54	2.2 (.56)	77	2.4 (.55)	86
<b>Global and Cultural Effectiveness</b> The ability to value and consider the perspectives and backgrounds of all parties	1.5 (.87)	41	1.7 (.75)	47	2.0 (.65)	60	2.1 (.63)	66

**Note:** IMP = mean importance rating; SD = standard deviation; RUE = required-upon-entry rating. Importance was measured with a 4-point scale ranging from 0 (unimportant) to 3 (critical).