**Competencies for Early-Career HR Professionals**
**PPT—Session 2: Relationship Management**
**Instructor Notes**

### Slide 1

**Materials for This Session:**

- SHRM Competency Model.

- Situational judgment test handout.

### Slide 2

**Instructor Notes:**

- Review what is due today.

- Ask students if there are any questions about the content that was covered in Session 1.

### Slide 3

**Instructor Notes:**

- Review the learning objectives.

### Slide 4

**Instructor Notes:**

- Review the lessons that are covered in today's session.

### Slide 5

**Instructor Notes:**

- Begin by asking the students what they think of when they hear the words *relationship management*. Some typical responses may include:

    - Building trusting business relationships with key stakeholders.

    - Creating a reputation for yourself as being a solid business partner.

- Handling conflict in a constructive and respectful manner.

- Ensuring that all parties follow through with business commitments.

- Next ask the students to describe a person they have worked with who exemplifies effective relationship management (the person does not necessarily have to be an HR person). Have the students describe the specific things the person did to show his or her commitment to the relationship. How did the person relate to others during difficult situations? How did the person balance a focus on results while maintaining a collaborative atmosphere?

## Slide 6

**Instructor Notes:**

- Review the definition and description provided.

- Elaborate on this information if you sense doing so is required for understanding.

- Have the students look over the examples provided, and ask them if they can think of other examples of how Relationship Management manifests itself in the workplace. Do not spend a lot of time on the examples, since you are about to review the subcompetencies and the behaviors.

## Slide 7

**Instructor Notes:**

- Remind the students that a subcompetency is related to the general competency and may be subsumed by the general competency.

- Choose a few of the subcompetencies on the slide that you think are particularly important to successfully managing relationships, and provide your perspective on why these are so important. For example:

    - If you chose "credibility" you might talk about how difficult it is to repair your reputation within an organization if you do something that causes you to lose credibility.

    - If you chose "responsiveness," you can talk about the importance of being seen as "accessible," but this can be difficult to do in the era of excessive e-mails, instant messaging and many other communicating avenues that organizations use.

## Slide 8

**Instructor Notes:**

- Point out that although each subcompetency is distinct, there are commonalities in terms of their intent.

- There are essentially three main intents when it comes to these subcompetency areas. Some are intended to ensure you have a broad reach across the organization by establishing and maintaining your reputation. Others are focused on helping you become an integral and influential member of the organization's community. Others have to do with the support you offer to other people to help them remain engaged with the organization and to ensure they have the support they need to be successful.

## Slide 9

**Instructor Notes:**

- Discuss the relationship management behaviors with the students.

- See if they can pick out a few that they feel are critical to successfully implement the subcompetencies. For example:

  - For *building trust and respect* they might point out that "Treats all stakeholders with respect and dignity" and "Demonstrates approachability and openness" are two key behaviors that allow you to be successful.

- As an alternative (if time allows) you could also turn this into a quick, interactive game. Write on the whiteboard the three subcompetency focus areas (see below). Then divide the class into three groups. Assign each group one of the focus areas, and provide them with some sticky notes (**Hint:** it helps if each team has differently colored sticky notes to help them identify their own responses once the exercise is completed). Have each team determine which of the behaviors on this slide are most important for success in each team's assigned focus area. Have the teams copy the behavior onto the sticky note and place it under the correct heading on the whiteboard. This will help them see how certain behaviors cut across all types of subcompetencies, whereas others are more specific to certain groupings of subcompetencies.

  - Establishing effective business networks (Community).

  - Building trust and respect (Reputation).

  - Getting results through people (Performance).

## Slide 10

**Instructor Notes:**

- Have the students review the ideas for developing relationship management skills that are on the slide.

- Encourage them to provide additional ideas for how to develop skills to master this competency.

- Additional ideas for development are continued on the next slide.

## Slide 11

**Instructor Notes:**

- You may want to mention that another good way to increase your relationship management skills is by taking assessment instruments. Such assessments may increase your self-awareness and improve your understanding of where different perspectives and preferences come from.

- Some of the most common assessment instruments include Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (which assesses psychological types), Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (which measures conflict styles), and DiSC (which measures behaviors in different social and work-related settings).

## Slide 12

**Instructor Notes:**

- Explain to the students that in this lesson we will be examining the research on how effective relationship-building enhances performance within organizations.

- We will also describe a practice that HR professionals engage in.

- Finally, we will participate in a situational judgment test (SJT) activity where we will see these concepts put into practice.

## Slide 13

**Instructor Notes:**

- Review the research that illustrates how important relationships are to business success.

- Try to help students see that effective relationship management goes beyond a *feel-good* opportunity. In fact, effective relationship management can have positive consequences on numerous parts of the business (even beyond human capital).

## Slide 14

**Instructor Notes:**

- Explain to the students that in addition to Relationship Management as a competency, it is also a specific approach for integrating HR into daily business options.

- Whereas an HR department may be set up around the key service areas such as workforce planning, HR development, compensation/benefits and employee/labor relations, in a relationship manager model, HR generalists are deployed to specific business units (e.g., to the sales department) and get to know everything about their inner workings. They form close, working relationships with the business unit leaders and discuss their business needs.

- When HR needs arise, the relationship manager carefully diagnoses what is being requested and performs some sort of assessment to ensure that the requested service will indeed solve business problems. Then the relationship manager facilitates the process of getting the correct HR team of specialists in to work with the client, and provides important contextual information that the team needs to be successful.

- Note that students early in their HR program may not understand the term *matrix reporting relationship* mentioned on the slide. Explain this concept if necessary.

## Slide 15

**Instructor Notes:**

- Although the article is focused on the use of enterprise social networks for improving knowledge sharing and communication within organizations, in this discussion we want to focus on *how these networks can be used to help HR professionals effectively manage relationships*. We have provided several questions that you can use to guide the discussion, but feel free to omit any you think are not relevant to your students or to add any that you think will illustrate the key points.

## Slide 16

**Instructor Notes:**

- Mention to the students that to get a true flavor of how relationship management works in the world of business, we are going to use a situational judgment test to conduct a deeper discussion of the issues.

- Divide the class into small groups (about 3-4 people per group).

- Hand out the situational judgment tests (SJTs).

- Review the directions provided on the handout.

- Emphasize that there are no *right* answers, and encourage the students to think creatively.

- Give them about 10 minutes to read and respond to the scenarios individually.

- Give them about 15 minutes to discuss within their small groups and try to reach consensus.

- When done, go to the next slide to debrief the activity.

- Hint: Scenario A is typically the easiest scenario for the groups to gain consensus. If you have time to do two or more scenarios during class, then start with Scenario A (since it will give them a bit of confidence that consensus is possible). If you are pressed for time, we suggest you start with Scenario B since it usually generates a lot of discussion.

## Slide 17

**Instructor Notes:**

- Use the questions on the slide to lead a class activity.

- Make sure students are providing their rationale for the approach they selected.

- Probe a bit to see if the students changed their minds after consulting with their small groups, or are they still confident in the initial answer they chose after participating in the whole-class discussion?

## Slide 18

**Instructor Notes:**

- If time allows, spend a few minutes discussing the questions on the slides.

- It is usually best if you have the students initially form pairs and discuss the questions, and then lead a large-group discussion.

- For the final question ("What are some cross-cutting skills that are necessary to be successful in both of these competencies?"), one potential response (which we have received from students of this course in the past) could be to "be specific in rules and regulations and try to maintain neutral relations with higher management and with employees."

## Slide 19

**Instructor Notes:**

- Remind students of the assignments due next session for the session on Ethical Practice.

- Ask if there are any remaining questions from today's session.