

COMPETENCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CMS)

Competencies overrated or not?

I would say not. Speaking from personal experience competencies literally saved my bacon! I joined a medium sized transport company that had very little HR infrastructure. Coming from a large corporate where state of the art HR systems and cutting edge HR existed I was momentarily stumped. So where did I start? With a competency!

I had the privilege of being able to test my own theories and institute a competence framework built upon the business strategy within which a competence management system and a performance management system coexist.

My definition of competence is the combination of awareness, knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitude that enables performance to the required standard in the job, i.e. the required standard being what is expected in the work environment.

This definition might appear somewhat simplistic but it is quite specific in what must be assessed. It means looking at what people produce in the course of performing their work, the quality of the output itself (not what they put into it) and assessing it against a defined standard of competence (competency management system). Implying that a formal, objective process of assessing an individual's performance (performance management system) is established, and the process is clear about what is being assessed and how it is assessed.

The focal points about the definition, is the emphasis on performing quality work to the required standard causing the assessment to be objective.

Knowledge and understanding are the foundation on which competent performance is built. Competent behaviour means selecting the right knowledge from a wider base and applying it to suit the situation at hand. No matter how much knowledge an individual has, if they cannot **apply** it appropriately at work, they cannot be considered "**competent**".

In order for a business to be successful, attention needs to be given to the performance of its employees. For senior management to have reasonable assurance of meeting their business strategic objectives, they need to be assured that the mid-managers, supervisors, team leaders and indeed all employees are competent to perform their jobs in a responsible and effective manner. For the individual, tools are required to assist him to attain skills, to enhance personal development and career progression, and to take personal responsibility to drive his/her own career in order to compete for job opportunities within the organisation and indeed within the larger job market.

