

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS

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Talent Development Competencies and Related Soft Skills

Talent Development (TD) has 8 professional competencies at this time: Administrative Skills; Communication; Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI); Customer Service; Supervision/Management; Team Building; Leadership; Work/Life Wellness.

The original research and interviews with JMU key stakeholders done in 2009-2013 resulted in 7 specific competencies with extensive detail in an effort to define three levels of behavior (fundamental, intermediate, advanced).

In 2017-18, the Director of TD and the Professional Development Specialist (PDS) did extensive industry research to affirm the existing 7 competencies as valid and then synthesized the existing details to create concise, meaningful behavioral descriptions for each of the competencies. These were republished to the TD website. Distinction of “level”(fundamental, intermediate, advanced) was removed and replaced by “ordering” the skills alpha-numerically which removed repetition.

In 2020-21, the Professional Development Specialist (PDS) and the Director of TD identified the need to emphasize the importance of Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI) as a standalone competency. Up until this point, it was seen as a component within the other competencies. Research and language for DEI descriptions was reviewed by key Diversity personnel at JMU.

Two models reflect the Talent Development competencies.

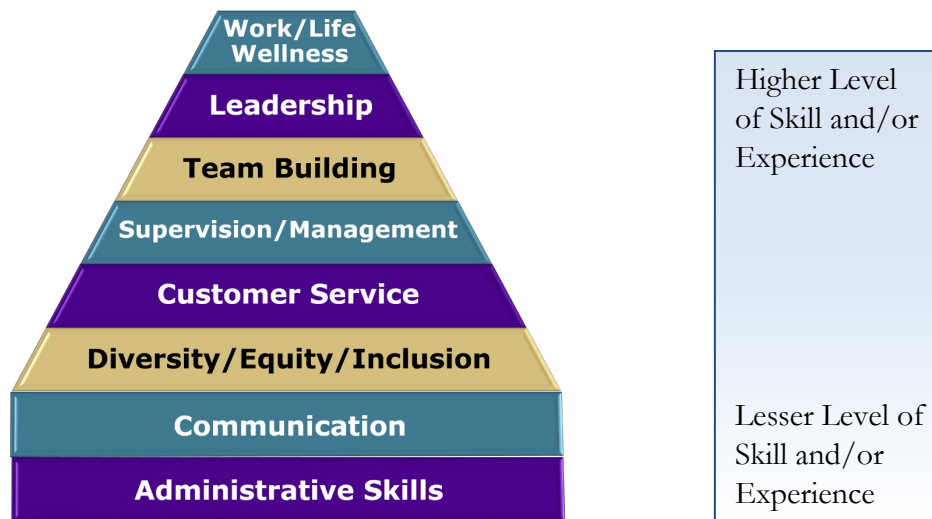
On the website, the competencies are shown as circles with Diversity/Equity/Inclusion in the center to emphasize its importance and connection to the other competencies. Talent Development has 8 core competencies that represent skills and behaviors needed for success in work at JMU. All of the competencies are independent yet interrelated.



In the second model, consistent with professional development theory, foundational skills are at the base and as those skills and behaviors are practiced, other core competencies are available for mastery. At the peak of performance, an individual is a leader regardless of hierarchical position and manages their work and their life to achieve success in both. While hierarchical, skills may be acquired and used at any point; none are pre-requisite to another.

Talent Development Pyramid of Professional Competency

July 9, 2021



The professional development content curated by Talent Development at JMU follows the basic pattern shown in the structure. Most of the offerings are in foundational skills, with offerings in the higher competencies reflective of current needs. (Work/Life Wellness at JMU is part of the Human Resources department's Balanced Dukes program, although Talent Development offers some content in this competency through partners and books.)

The structure of the hierarchical model also relates to the professional level of participants. At the base are newer employees with less expertise in an office setting. At the height of the shape are employees who have developed to a highly professional level (regardless of length of experience).

The model is not meant to convey importance or progression. People are at different stages of professional development and will work on the specific competencies meaningful to them and their work. Skills in one area may be highly developed even if lower level skills are missing.

Documentation for behaviors associated with each Talent Development professional competency are available to all staff on the [TD Competency Model webpage](#) with links to additional details. A copy of the descriptions appears as Addendum A to this plan.

Talent Development Competencies Correlated to Industry Soft and Professional Skills*

The table that follows aligns each skill to one Talent Development Competency, with the understanding that there may be overlap to others. Correlation is made for soft skills, professional skills and descriptors in the competency model if not already shown.

Fundamentally it shows **what** skills a person should demonstrate at work. The soft skills are ones that a person should have when they begin working, while the professional skills are often developed while working.

TABLE: Talent Development Competencies Correlated to Industry Soft and Professional Skills

Competency	Soft Skills	Professional Skills
Administrative Skills	adaptability	departmental knowledge ^c
	attentive to details	presence ^c
	clear organizational skills	professionalism ^c
	critical thinker	
	dependability	
	flexibility	
	problem solving	
	time efficient	
Communication	clear communicator	address difficult situations ^c
	conflict resolution	address team dynamics ^c
	empathy	demonstrate tact ^c
	listening skills	facilitate to engage participants ^c
		invite participation ^c
		know your content ^c
		professional writing*
		public speaking*
	research techniques*	
Diversity/ Equity/Inclusion	acceptance of difference	compliance awareness ^c
	fair and equitable treatment of others	diversity terminology/concepts ^c
	inclusive behavior	managing differences*
		multicultural competencies*
Customer Service	empathy	attitude of service ^c
	self-assurance	continuous improvement ^c
		overcoming obstacles ^c
		who and how you serve ^c
Supervision/ Management	delegation	crisis management*
	initiates action	decision making*
	responsibility	emotional intelligence ^c
	sets and meets standards for quality	financial/budget management*

Competency	Soft Skills	Professional Skills
	uses judgement	going the extra mile ^c
		goal setting*
		media relations*
		performance evaluation*
		policy development*
		positive communications ^c
		progressive discipline*
Team Building	collaboration	building employee fulfillment*
	interpersonal skills	team building*
	team orientation	
Leadership	creativity	change management*
	leading self and others	committed to self-development ^c
		developing vision*
		knowledgeable about leadership ^c
		makes sure work gets done ^c
		managing ambiguity*
		networking ^c
		process design*
		serve as a role model ^c
	strategic planning*	
Work/Life Wellness	able to receive and apply feedback	apply wellness theory ^c
	confidence	responding well to change ^c
	interested in learning	wellness awareness ^c
	perseverance	
	productive work ethic	
	self-controlled	
	self-motivation	
	stress less	

^c indicates competency descriptor from TD model not found in other descriptors

* indicates a professional skill not specifically cited in the TD model)

Level of skill is typically defined as fundamental, intermediate, and advanced⁸ though some private sector entities add an expert level.