

**CORVUS
PEOPLE**



BESPOKE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

**A GUIDE FOR HIRING MANAGERS ON HOW TO CREATE AND
USE BESPOKE COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS**





INTRODUCTION

Recruitment processes need to have the rigour and depth. This is particularly true in Executive Search, where the risks associated with making a bad hire are significantly higher.

For critical roles, you need a selection process which is fit for purpose and ideally not generic, but created specifically for your role. This is where creating a bespoke Framework becomes key to success.

These frameworks are used to define and assess the key skills, experience, behaviours, and abilities required for success in a particular role or profession. They are designed to provide a clear and consistent understanding of what makes someone effective and competent in a specific job or area.

A competency framework will typically include a set of competencies or skills, which are broken down into specific components or behaviours. These competencies are often organised into categories or clusters, reflecting different aspects of the role or job requirements.

You may already have a competency framework in place, but these are often tied to company values, and although useful in terms of overall behaviours, they are normally more general.

For any Executive positions, it is important to establish:

- a deep knowledge of the role;
- exactly what this person will do in post;
- the behaviours they will exhibit (internally and externally);
- the abilities they possess that will be advantageous to the organisation and their own personal success; and
- any potential gaps, signposting where the successful candidate may need support on joining.

Not only does this approach increase the accuracy of your hiring, but it also improves the candidate experience.

It is important to note that, at a senior level, the risk sits as much with candidates as it does with your business. Candidates are typically successful, respected, and valued in their current role - they need to know that this potential move is right for them. Creating a clear and defined set of requirements gives candidates the ability to self-select if they feel that the role is a bad fit.



CREATING YOUR FRAMEWORK

Normally, an Executive hiring process will have several key stakeholders, each with input on the final decision. You will need to work with these stakeholders to effectively create, prioritise and agree on the framework.

The best way to do this is to speak to each of them individually, walking through a set of questions to find commonality in terms of expectations for this role. If the role is Executive Director level, you need to speak to the Executive Team, CEO, and Board members where possible to compile this. The session can be as short as 30 minutes, but it needs to capture their specific opinion.

Typically, there will be reoccurring themes within the stakeholder group, and these will form the core elements of your framework and questioning. You will then rank these by importance and use the top 4 or 5 to create your competency-based questions.

These meetings will capture a more detailed overview of the challenges, strategy, and what success looks like for the role in the short, medium, and long term. Here are some of the key areas to consider:

Internal Stakeholders

Consider how this role fits into the organisation from an internal perspective. Which teams will they be working with? Who are they reporting to? What does their team look like? What is expected of them from their management? What are the people challenges that this person will face?

External Stakeholders

At a senior level, there are typically external stakeholders to consider, including media, Governmental Departments, Political stakeholders, senior clients, Investors or Regulatory bodies. What are their interactions, objectives, and core accountabilities?

Change

A new Executive hire typically is there to effect change. It is important to address this change when creating the framework. Typically, you are looking for the core elements of change, both specific to the role but also strategically across the organisation. Although this role may lead a specific Transformation Programme, it will contribute to an overall organisational strategic objective.

Leadership

Consider what this role will bring to the business specifically, from an operational perspective as well as within the wider organisational strategy. Is this role freeing up CEO time? Will they drive culture change and challenge embedded thinking? Maybe they will streamline decision-making, leading to faster, more accurate responses. What will they bring or strengthen in terms of leadership?



Strategy

Think about the overall company strategy, how does this role help shape this? What elements are they responsible for executing within the strategy?

Challenges

Look at the challenges that your business is facing and consider which of these challenges this role will address. You should also review the risk landscape and assess how this role can add value. Typically, these are the challenges that are discussed at Board level.

Skills, behaviours, and experience

Establish which skills are necessary for this role. What do they need to be successful? What behaviours will they require to be effective in their position? Where does the balance lie between experience and ability?

NOTE: high-performing teams are naturally diverse, with different views and opinions. By building a team with trust and shared goals, you enable them to have diverse opinions, communicate these openly, and come to the right solution. Typically, they are very different people, but all with a strong sense of personal and company accountability.



CREATING COMPETENCY QUESTIONS

Once you have established your priority requirements for the role, you then need to create your competency-based questions. These should be designed to assess whether a candidate possesses the required competencies for a particular role.

You should also create a subset of probing questions to support each of your questions. This will ensure you are effectively extracting the desired information from candidates. You should also include an 'Evidence' section, which outlines exactly what you are seeking from the candidate. This ensures consistency across all interviews.

KEY COMPETENCY: STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING	
Competency Based Question: Walk me through the last major strategic decision you made where you had limited data. What were the steps and the considerations?	
Probing questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where did you get the necessary information to feed into this process?• How did you monitor this decision and ensure that it was the right one?	Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gathered information from internal and external sources.• Constantly monitoring and reviewing the decision.• Personal thought process and comfort in making Strategic Decisions.

Your competency questions also need to provide a clear, systematic, and robust scoring matrix which is easy to understand and specific to the role.

To continue with our previous example, we have included a scoring matrix for this question below. We have allocated 1 point for Level 1, rising to 4 points for Level 4. The scoring looks at each of the key evidence points and provides a detailed justification for each level. This example is generic, but it should give you an idea of how the scoring matrix is constructed. For more technical roles, both the question and scoring framework should be more specific.

KEY COMPETENCY: STRATEGIC DECISION MAKING			
Walk me through the last major strategic decision you made where you had limited data. What were the steps and the considerations?			
Evidence:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathered information from internal and external sources. • Constantly monitoring and reviewing the decision. • Personal thought process and comfort in making Strategic Decisions. 			
Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Looked to Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and historical data within their team only.	Looked to multiple SMEs across different departments, the wider business, and their own team.	Looked to various SMEs across the business as well as external SMEs to build a wider view of the issue.	Created a wide internal & external church of SMEs to build the best reference data possible.
Once the decision was made, didn't actively monitor, or review the decision.	References the review of decision, but more touch point reviews with team as opposed to actively monitoring decision.	Actively reviews the decision (more than just monitoring) to ensure that, if there is a change in terms of the data or feedback, there is the ability to pivot or amend the decision.	References that decisions are frequently made with limited data. References internal and external SME data sources, to create wide church. Engaged in active monitoring, to enable pivot if necessary.
Quite linear decision making. Makes decisions based only on the information in front of them. Doesn't reference nuance or that fact information can be scarce at a strategic level.	Does analyse data and recognises that decisions will have limited data points. Comfortable with making strategic decisions. Confident in the fact decisions are made and monitored routinely.	Clearly has made multiple strategic decisions. Understands data is limited and monitoring is critical. References this is part of job at this level, and very comfortable with changing decision as more data available. Exhibits deep understanding and comfort.	Very comfortable with strategic decision making. References the lack of data points and importance of monitoring and having the ability to pivot. Mentions other corporate time drains. Articulates that there are times where making no decision is worse than making the wrong one. Exhibits comfort, experience, and ability to take strategic decisions in uncertain situations.



HOW WE CAN HELP

At Corvus People, we believe that your people are your greatest asset. Our mission is to help your business create an engaged and empowered workforce aligned with your culture, ensuring you are ready for the next big step in your growth journey.

Our services cover the entire employee life cycle, making us the right choice as your people strategy partners. From finding you the perfect candidate, to fulfilling your team's development goals – we strive for success and will make your project our priority.

CORVUS PEOPLE SUPPORT

As experts in Recruitment and HR, we understand the challenges businesses face when trying to create more effective hiring processes. Here are a few of the ways our team could support you:

Executive Search: We can create a bespoke, successful, end-to-end search and selection process for your most important hires.

Competency frameworks: Our experts can work with you to design competency frameworks aligned with your business culture and objectives. These will act as a strong foundation for creating your interview questions.

Create or Review Job Descriptions: We can work with you to ensure job descriptions are clear, inclusive, aligned with your company's desired behaviours, and focused on the essential qualifications and skills needed for the role.

Interview Training: Our Senior HR Consultant can conduct bias-awareness training for interviewers to avoid unconscious biases that might influence their decisions. We can also provide training for hiring managers on conducting fair interviews and selecting the best candidates based on merit.

Interview Process Design: We can assist you with designing structured interview processes, including predetermined questions and evaluation criteria to ensure consistency and fairness for all candidates.

Skill-based Assessments: We can help you to incorporate skill-based assessments and tasks that directly relate to the job requirements, ensuring a fair evaluation of candidates' abilities.

Legal Compliance: Ensuring that the interview process adheres to all relevant employment laws and regulations.

Supporting Inclusive Onboarding: Assisting in the development of onboarding programs that promote inclusivity and help new hires feel welcome and supported.

Evaluation of Hiring Metrics: We can analyse your hiring metrics and processes to identify potential disparities or patterns that may suggest bias in the selection process.

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GET IN TOUCH TODAY

We hope this you have found this resource useful. For more information on Corvus People, or for a consultation with one of our advisors, please contact us at hello@corvuspeople.com.



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