

Handout

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# HR Competencies

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A template framework



*CourageousHR works with HR leaders and Communities to identify their distinctive contribution and then make it, both culturally and operationally, an organisational reality.*

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## HR Competency Framework

Human Resources can add significant business value. The HR Business Alignment (also known as the HR Business Partner) structure or organisation, when implemented well, is a systematic means of delivering business 'value'.

At CourageousHR, we recognise that there is little definition about what the HR Business Alignment organisation model actually is, what it means for the organisation and what it means for HR, HR roles and HR responsibilities. We believe that this lack of clarity results in a lot of Human Resources functions over-promising and under-delivering to the business.

In order to successfully implement a Human Resources Business Alignment (what CourageousHR calls an "HR Partner") organisation, CourageousHR believe it is critical to start with the basics. This involves understanding the potential 'value' that HR can deliver and the key HR building blocks which include capabilities (competencies) and role family.

This summary document outlines the core and key competencies required by HR Partner function.



## Core and Key Competencies

At CourageousHR we believe that HR roles which focus on the 'business value adding' competencies rather than the broader and all encompassing HR competency dictionary will be more successful in delivering real value to the business.

We have reviewed all the key research on HR competencies and combined it with our own practitioner experience and that of our clients' to design a compact competency framework template to help organisations create their own bespoke model. Outlined below is a summary of

CourageousHR's competency framework for HR functions. This model is in turn supported by a range of individual competencies which are available from CourageousHR.

## Tier 0 - HR Community Core Competency

CourageousHR believe that there is one competency that 'is the difference that makes the difference'. This competency is Courageous Leadership.

Applicable to all support functions, HR has however the opportunity to demonstrate, through this competency, what true partnership can look and feel like in an organisation.

### *Courageous Leadership*

#### Definition

You have a clear sense of what you stand for. You have a passion for what you can contribute and a willingness to consistently live this out. You actively and publicly demonstrate personal leadership and embrace uncertainty.

#### **High Performing Partners will ....**

- Be selfless and recognise that personal achievement and recognition is secondary to the needs of the HR Community and the organisation.
- Actively and publicly demonstrate personal as well as HR leadership by challenging others, taking decisions (even at personal risk) and by empowering colleagues.
- Recognise that today's challenges facing HR cannot be addressed by applying old remedies or static thinking and is therefore willing to suggest and / or consider new ideas, encourage experimentation and be open to innovative ways of working.

## Tier 1 - HR Community Key Competencies

These competencies refer to what the HR Community needs to demonstrate. The mapping of these competencies needs to be undertaken across each of the HR functions and each HR role to ensure the HR Community has the right level and balance so that it can effectively deliver strategic business value.

- Business acumen
- Customer focus
- HR Professionalism
- Innovator
- Results driven
- Building relationships

### *Business Acumen*

#### Definition

You apply commercial skill and judgment to assist your organisation to achieve outstanding business results through an understanding of how business in general, and your organisation in particular, works and what it means for its people.

### High Performing HR Partners will ....

- Have a very good understanding of their organisation's products and services, revenue streams, key business drivers, customers and market position
- Adopt a variety of techniques to monitor changes in the marketplace and are able to identify the actual/potential people implications
- Actively stay close to and influence their organisational leaders, ensuring that the People and HR plans and strategies remain aligned to and support the organisational strategy

## Customer Focus

### Definition

You recognise that HR is a service provider. You constantly interact with your customers (other members of your organisation), seeking out information about them and from them so that you are able to continuously deliver a high quality- customer led integrated HR service.

### High Performing HR Partners will ....

- Recognise and demonstrate that delivering great customer service is essential for their own success and the success of the HR Community.
- Appreciate that to their customers they are HR; customers have confidence in them having a very good understanding of what their needs are, what they expect from HR and how best they can support them.
- Keep the 'service promise' and so demonstrate to their customers that they do what they say they will do.
- 'Under promise and over deliver!'

## HR Professionalism

Your HR knowledge, skill and expertise are appropriate for your role's professional and technical requirements. You are able to use this expertise to insightfully determine and recommend the most appropriate HR solutions as well as provide relevant advice and guidance on people and HR matters.

### High Performing HR Partners will ....

- Adjust HR strategies to respond to changing needs; Identify critical HR metrics; Respond to new business strategies; Identify talent issues before they affect the business; Prioritise across HR needs; Redesign structures around strategic activities; Understand the talent needs of the business

## Building relationships

### Definition

You build and sustain effective relationships across your organisation and with your HR colleagues. You achieve this by collaborating, partnering, influencing, communicating and sharing knowledge and / or information which results in productive decision making and action taking.

### High Performing HR Partners will ....

- Have developed a profile and level of credibility which enables them to influence, guide and constructively challenge the people they work with, in order to implement HR strategies and solutions which delivers organisation and people value.
- Combine an ability to build and sustain effective relationships across the organisation with a practical application of turning talk into productive decision making and action taking.

- Seek out opportunities to collaborate, build partnerships, to share knowledge and / or information for the overall benefit of the organisation.

## *Results driven*

### Definition

You recognise that it is people that provide the competitive advantage for your organisation and are motivated to work with the business to ensure your HR strategies and solutions are about maximising organisational results. You provide HR solutions which are led by the business need and informed by 'best-practice' HR.

### **High Performing HR Partners will ....**

- Demonstrate awareness of the main organisational drivers by actively shaping and adapting their HR offering in response to changing organisational conditions.
- Work closely with their leadership team in order to constantly understand the immediate and emerging needs and the resultant people and HR impact.
- Provide a committed and transparent service, which clearly demonstrates business linkages and values.

## *Innovator*

### Definition

You recognise that organisations are constantly evolving and changing. You are open and responsive to these changes. You have the willingness and creativity to adapt existing HR solutions as well as create innovative and new practical solutions to strategic and operational people issues which impact your organisation.

### **High Performing HR Partners will ....**

- Champion change within HR and across the organisation. They are aware of the organisation's main change drivers and actively seek ways to influence appropriate HR strategy and / or specific HR solution changes.
- Provide pro-active and 'future-focused' HR advice and solutions.
- Seek out and challenge organisational obstacles to change.

## **Summary**

HR can add value to organisations. In order to do so, HR needs to first understand where it can add value and then ensure that it has the knowledge and capabilities to do so. The CourageousHR competency framework is a template for HR functions who are seeking to understand what capabilities the team needs in order to bring unique value to their organisation. There is a cascade of levels from Tier 0 to Tier 2. The key competency, Courageous Leadership, when displayed will help HR to demonstrate the true power of partnerships within organisations.

### **About CourageousHR**

*At CourageousHR we work with HR Professionals like you to help you create innovative people solutions and courageously apply them. We help you to bridge the gap between academic vision and consulting rhetoric to guide and inspire you and your HR Community to move from being 'followers' to leaders.*

*Our passion and thinking comes from our experiences, research and a belief that 'tomorrow doesn't have to be the same as today'. Our reach is global and we happily work with clients throughout the world and across a wide range of industries*