



## UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

The Director

September 24, 2009

### **MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief Human Capital Officers**

FROM: John Berry, Director

Subject: Competency Model for Grants Management

In October 2008, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management initiated a Governmentwide study to identify critical competencies for grants management work. We have worked closely with the Chief Financial Officers Council Grants Policy Committee and the Office of Management and Budget on this initiative. Subject matter experts provided key insights, and employees and supervisors across the Government completed surveys to paint a comprehensive picture of grants management work. We are pleased to provide the attached Grants Management competency model to support your human resources initiatives.

The competencies identified may be used in such agency efforts as workforce planning, training and development, performance management, recruitment, and selection. When used for selection, the competencies must be used in conjunction with the appropriate qualification standard.

Thank you for your continued support of this important project. If you have any questions regarding the competency model, please contact Andrea Bright, Manager of the Standards, Competencies, and Assessment Development Group at (202) 606-3600, or email [competency@opm.gov](mailto:competency@opm.gov).

Attachment

cc: Human Resources Directors

## **Grants Management Competencies by Grade Level**

The following tables present the competencies that have been confirmed as appropriate for selection on a Governmentwide basis for grants management work at the grades indicated. Agencies are responsible for conducting job analyses for work responsibilities outside the grants management function. Similarly, agencies must determine the applicability of these competencies to positions which do not perform the full range of grants management work. Please refer to OPM's Delegated Examining Operations Handbook for more information on conducting a job analysis.

**General Competencies**

Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	Grade 12	Grade 13	Grade 14	Grade 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Information Management</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Creative Thinking</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Information Management</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Mathematical Reasoning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Organizational Awareness</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Conflict Management</li> <li>• Creative Thinking</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Influencing/Negotiating</li> <li>• Information Management</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Organizational Awareness</li> <li>• Partnering</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teaching Others</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Conflict Management</li> <li>• Creative Thinking</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Influencing/Negotiating</li> <li>• Information Management</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Mathematical Reasoning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Organizational Awareness</li> <li>• Partnering</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teaching Others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Conflict Management</li> <li>• Creative Thinking</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• External Awareness</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Influencing/Negotiating</li> <li>• Information Management</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Mathematical Reasoning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Organizational Awareness</li> <li>• Partnering</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Strategic Thinking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Arithmetic</li> <li>• Attention to Detail</li> <li>• Computer Skills</li> <li>• Conflict Management</li> <li>• Creative Thinking</li> <li>• Customer Service</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> <li>• External Awareness</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Influencing/Negotiating</li> <li>• Information Management</li> <li>• Integrity/Honesty</li> <li>• Interpersonal Skills</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Learning</li> <li>• Mathematical Reasoning</li> <li>• Memory</li> <li>• Oral Communication</li> <li>• Organizational Awareness</li> <li>• Partnering</li> <li>• Planning and Evaluating</li> <li>• Problem Solving</li> <li>• Project Management</li> <li>• Reading</li> <li>• Reasoning</li> <li>• Resilience</li> <li>• Self-Management</li> <li>• Strategic Thinking</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teaching Others</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress Tolerance</li> <li>• Teaching Others</li> <li>• Teamwork</li> <li>• Technical Competence</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Writing</li> </ul>
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Technical Competencies						
Grade 7	Grade 9	Grade 11	Grade 12	Grade 13	Grade 14	Grade 15
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Financial Assistance Mechanisms</li> <li>• Grants Management</li> <li>• Grants Management Laws, Regulations &amp; Guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Financial Analysis</li> <li>• Financial Assistance Mechanisms</li> <li>• Grants Management</li> <li>• Grants Management Laws, Regulations &amp; Guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Financial Analysis</li> <li>• Financial Assistance Mechanisms</li> <li>• Grants Management</li> <li>• Grants Management Laws, Regulations &amp; Guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Financial Analysis</li> <li>• Financial Assistance Mechanisms</li> <li>• Grants Management</li> <li>• Grants Management Laws, Regulations &amp; Guidelines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance</li> <li>• Financial Analysis</li> <li>• Financial Assistance Mechanisms</li> <li>• Grants Management</li> <li>• Grants Management Laws, Regulations &amp; Guidelines</li> </ul>

## Grants Management Competency Model Competency Importance Rankings

The table below presents the rank order of the competencies on current importance and future importance in three years based on supervisor and employee ratings.

Competencies	Current Importance	Future Importance
Integrity/Honesty	1	1
Attention to Detail	2	3
Customer Service	3	4
Accountability	4	2
Interpersonal Skills	5	5
Reading	6	7
Writing	7	10
Self-Management	8	6
Computer Skills	9	8
Oral Communication	10	12
Teamwork	11	9
Technical Competence	12	11
Compliance	13	14
Arithmetic	14	21
Problem Solving	15	13
Decision Making	16	15
Reasoning	17	20
Planning and Evaluating	18	17
Flexibility	19	16
Grants Management	20	22

<b>Grants Management Laws, Regulations, &amp; Guidelines</b>	21	19
<b>Learning</b>	22	23
<b>Information Management</b>	23	18
<b>Stress Tolerance</b>	24	24
<b>Resilience</b>	25	25
<b>Financial Assistance Mechanisms</b>	26	26
<b>Memory</b>	27	28
<b>Organizational Awareness</b>	28	27
<b>Project Management</b>	29	29
<b>Creative Thinking</b>	30	30
<b>Influencing/Negotiating</b>	31	33
<b>Partnering</b>	32	32
<b>Teaching Others</b>	33	34
<b>Conflict Management</b>	34	35
<b>Leadership</b>	35	31
<b>Financial Analysis</b>	36	36
<b>Mathematical Reasoning</b>	37	39
<b>Vision</b>	38	37
<b>External Awareness</b>	39	38
<b>Strategic Thinking</b>	40	40

### **Grants Management Competency Model Proficiency Level Guidance**

The following table presents the proficiency levels associated with each general and technical competency for each grade level. The definitions of these proficiency levels can be found on page six. Please note that general and technical competencies have different proficiency level definitions. These proficiency levels are based on Governmentwide data and are therefore

provided as guidance only for training and development. Required proficiency levels may vary based on an agency's specific needs and position requirements.

General Competencies	Grade Levels						
	7	9	11	12	13	14	15
	Proficiency Levels						
Accountability	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Arithmetic	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Attention to Detail	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Computer Skills	3	3	3	4	4	4	3
Conflict Management	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
Creative Thinking	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
Customer Service	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
Decision Making	2	2	3	4	4	4	4
External Awareness	2	2	2	3	3	3	4
Flexibility	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
Influencing/Negotiating	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
Information Management	2	3	3	3	4	4	4
Integrity/Honesty	4	4	4	4	4	4	4



<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Leadership</b>	2	2	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Learning</b>	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Mathematical Reasoning</b>	2	2	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Memory</b>	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Oral Communication</b>	2	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Organizational Awareness</b>	2	2	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Partnering</b>	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
<b>Planning and Evaluating</b>	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Problem Solving</b>	2	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Project Management</b>	2	2	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Reading</b>	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Reasoning</b>	2	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Resilience</b>	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Self-Management</b>	3	3	3	4	4	4	4

<b>Strategic Thinking</b>	2	2	2	3	3	3	4
<b>Stress Tolerance</b>	3	3	3	3	4	4	4
<b>Teaching Others</b>	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
<b>Teamwork</b>	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Technical Competence</b>	3	3	3	4	4	4	4
<b>Vision</b>	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
<b>Writing</b>	3	3	4	4	4	4	4

Technical Competencies	Grade Levels						
	7	9	11	12	13	14	15
	Proficiency Levels						
Compliance	2	3	3	4	4	4	4
Financial Analysis	2	2	3	3	3	4	4
Financial Assistance Mechanisms	2	3	3	4	4	4	4
Grants Management	2	3	3	4	4	4	4
Grants Management Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines	2	3	3	3	4	4	4

Note: Lighter shaded ratings indicate that the competency fell below the cutoff on importance and required at entry.

## Proficiency Level Scale Definitions

Proficiency Levels	General Competencies	Technical Competencies
5 = Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations.</li><li>• Serves as a key resource and advises others.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations.</li><li>• Serves as a key resource and advises others.</li><li>• Demonstrates comprehensive, expert understanding of concepts and processes.</li></ul>
4 = Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations.</li><li>• Generally requires little or no guidance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations.</li><li>• Generally requires little or no guidance.</li><li>• Demonstrates broad understanding of concepts and processes.</li></ul>
3 = Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in difficult situations.</li><li>• Requires occasional guidance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in difficult situations.</li><li>• Requires occasional guidance.</li><li>• Demonstrates understanding of concepts and processes.</li></ul>
2 = Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations.</li><li>• Requires frequent guidance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations.</li><li>• Requires frequent guidance.</li><li>• Demonstrates familiarity with concepts and processes.</li></ul>
1 = Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in the simplest situations.</li><li>• Requires close and extensive guidance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies the competency in the simplest situations.</li><li>• Requires close and extensive guidance.</li><li>• Demonstrates awareness of concepts and processes.</li></ul>

## **Grants Management Competency Model General Competencies**

**Accountability**– Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities. Can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget. Monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.

**Arithmetic**– Performs computations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division correctly using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percentages.

**Attention to Detail**– Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.

**Computer Skills**– Uses computers, software applications, databases, and automated systems to accomplish work.

**Conflict Management** – Manages and resolves conflicts, grievances, confrontations, or disagreements in a constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.

**Creative Thinking** – Uses imagination to develop new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to problems; designs new methods where established methods and procedures are inapplicable or are unavailable.

**Customer Service** – Works with clients and customers (that is, any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit produces, including the general public, individuals who work in the agency, other agencies, or organizations outside the Government) to assess their needs, provide information or assistance, resolve their problems, or satisfy their expectations; knows about available products and services; is committed to providing quality products and services.

**Decision Making** – Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.

**External Awareness** – Identifies and understands economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.

**Flexibility** – Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with ambiguity.

**Influencing/Negotiating** – Persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.

**Information Management** – Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.

**Integrity/Honesty** – Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.

**Interpersonal Skills** – Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.

**Leadership** – Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations.

**Learning** – Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development.

**Mathematical Reasoning** – Solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.

**Memory** – Recalls information that has been presented previously.

**Oral Communication**– Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.

**Organizational Awareness**– Knows the organization’s mission and functions, and how its social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.

**Partnering** – Develops networks and builds alliances; collaborates across boundaries to build strategic relationships and achieve common goals.

**Planning and Evaluating** – Organizes work, sets priorities, and determines resource requirements; determines short- or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; coordinates with other organizations or parts of the organization to accomplish goals; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.

**Problem Solving**– Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.

**Project Management** – Applies principles, methods, or tools for developing, scheduling, coordinating, monitoring, evaluating, and managing projects and resources, including technical performance.

**Reading** – Understands and interprets written material, including technical material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.

Reasoning – Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.

Resilience – Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks.

Self-Management – Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior.

Strategic Thinking – Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organization in a global economy; examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective; determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.

Stress Tolerance – Deals calmly and effectively with high stress situations (for example, tight deadlines, hostile individuals, emergency situations, dangerous situations).

Teaching Others – Helps others learn through formal or informal methods; identifies training needs; provides constructive feedback; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a mentor.

Teamwork – Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.

Technical Competence – Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.

Vision – Understands where the organization is headed and how to make a contribution; takes a long-term view and recognizes opportunities to help the organization accomplish its objectives or move toward the vision.

Writing – Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material that is appropriate for the intended audience.

### **Grants Management Competency Model Technical Competencies**

Compliance – Knowledge of procedures for assessing, evaluating, and monitoring programs or projects for compliance with Federal laws, regulations, and OMB circulars.

Financial Analysis– Knowledge of financial methods, procedures, and practices to assess the financial stability of those applying for or receiving Federal grants or agreements.

Financial Assistance Mechanisms – Knowledge of the differences between acquisition and financial assistance purposes and requirements; knowledge of Federal assistance instruments, techniques, and procedures for grants (for example, block, mandatory, discretionary) and agreements (for example, cooperative, interagency).

Grants Management – Knowledge of requirements, practices, and procedures for soliciting, receiving, reviewing, and processing proposals, and awarding and administering grants and agreements.

Grants Management Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines– Knowledge of principles, laws, regulations, policies, practices, and guidelines (for example, Executive Orders, Code of Federal Regulations, OMB circulars) of grant or agreement programs, including their order of precedence, the cutoff on importance and required at entry.