What is Competency Profiling in HR?

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Competency Profiling is a method utilized to identify the specific knowledge, skills, abilities and other qualities (KSAOs) that are needed to complete and achieve particular tasks and activities. Typically, these KSAOs are linked with specific behavioural indicators to achieve the ultimate aim of fulfilling the needs of external clients and customers. Competency profiling can be conducted through various job analysis methods such as critical incidents technique and behavioural event interviews.

With well designed competency profiling measures, an organization can ensure that its objectives are fulfilled by providing clearly defined standards and methods for the employees. The employees will also be provided with clear guidelines regarding what is expected of them and provide them with the opportunity to address any potential competency gaps so as to improve their individual performance. Having clearly defined competencies is critical for activities such as recruitment, succession planning and organizational restructuring as it provides a map to the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities and other qualities that are necessary for the organization to fulfil its goals.

The advantages of competency profiling is that it provides a clear guideline to all members of staff regarding the behavioural indicators that they will be assessed on, when staff are involved in the competency profiling process, they will gain insight and clarity regarding their role and responsibilities; it can also serve as motivation when employees track their development over their career; it allows for training needs and Return on Investment (ROI) to be readily assessed and measured and finally it provides managers with key information with which to make decisions on the selection or development of employees.