

How to apply the framework

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The Capability Framework provides a common foundation and a systematic, integrated approach for the full range of workforce management and development activities.

The success of the Capability Framework relies on agency ownership and the degree to which capabilities are integrated and embedded across workforce management and development practices.

The Capability Framework facilitates:

- consistent role descriptions across the sector by providing a common basis for describing capability requirements
- best practice recruitment outcomes as managers and selection panels have a clear picture of the type and level of capability required and can apply targeted assessment methodologies
- managing performance development by assisting managers and staff to have a clear, shared understanding of role expectations and providing a starting point for capability assessment and development planning
- sector mobility based on consistent articulation of capabilities required in roles across the sector
- targeted learning and development activities (formal and informal) to specific capability levels and underpinning talent management programs
- individual career planning, enabling employees to identify career and development pathways based on the capabilities required for progression to chosen roles
- systematic workforce planning, as the capabilities are used to identify current and future workforce capability needs and gaps.

Applying the framework to the employee lifecycle

Role design and description



Role descriptions provide a summary of the organisational context, what work is to be performed and how.

Role descriptions typically include information on the following:

- organisational context
- reporting relationships
- key accountabilities
- capabilities required for effective performance of the role
- technical and other professional requirements.
- Role design involves a consideration of what work is to be performed, and how. The Capability Framework provides a tool to identify the component capability requirements of a role, the 'how' that will enable successful delivery of the role's accountabilities. A role description provides a link to the overall organisational structure by defining how a role contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives.

The Capability Framework provides a consistent basis for describing capability needs and encouraging the development of generic role descriptions for families of jobs that are common in the sector. Consistent description of roles and their capability requirements facilitates greater mobility across the sector.

The Public Service Commission has developed a Role Description template that demonstrates how capabilities are described.

Recruitment and assessment

Recruitment is about attracting and selecting the right person to the role, based on the capabilities required to perform the role effectively.

The capabilities identified in the role description, as well as the accountabilities and technical or qualification requirements, should inform all stages of the recruitment cycle, including advertising, selection and assessment.

For more information, please read our [Recruitment & Selection Guide](#).

Performance and development

A key imperative for the Public Service Commission is to build a high performing culture in the NSW Public Sector where workforce capability and performance align and focus on achieving organisational objectives. The NSW [Performance Development Framework](#) and the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework have been created to deliver this alignment.

Capabilities are central to establishing a clear shared understanding of the behaviours expected of each employee and to managing their performance accordingly.

The Performance Development Framework focuses not only on 'what' is achieved but uses the Capability Framework to establish the expectation on 'how' things are done by describing observable behaviours. Managers and employees should use the behavioural indicators as benchmarks for assessing performance in the role during the review period, and for determining the current and ongoing development needs of individual employees.

The outcome of performance discussions is recorded in a performance review document and informs the development of plans in areas where improvement is needed. This assessment also forms the basis for regular, ongoing feedback and discussion outside of the formal review process.

Learning and development

Achievement of organisational objectives is contingent on the workforce possessing the right capabilities at the right level.

Capabilities should form the basis of learning and development plans and activities.

The Capability Framework provides a common language to describe learning and development needs and supports a systematic approach to learning and development as an integral part of workforce planning.

Learning and development, when approached from the basis of identified capability needs, enables development to be targeted to build the capabilities needed in an employee's current role and for intended future progression and talent development. The Capability Framework is a useful tool for career planning.

Learning and development need not be limited to classroom based training or formal education programs. Professional development should use a 70:20:10 blend – 70% from on-the-job experiences, tasks and problem solving; 20% from peer-based learning or examples; and 10% from formal courses and reading.

Career planning

The Capability Framework can be used as an individual career planning tool.

The capability levels provide career markers, a way to measure current capability levels and to identify what capabilities are required for career progression or to make lateral moves within the sector.

Capability-based role descriptions help clarify the requirements of different jobs and the level of capability required for success in these roles. This allows individuals to shape their learning and development plans to meet their career goals and to take charge of their career development.

Resources to support application of the Capability Framework

A range of guides and tools have been developed to help HR, managers and employees understand and use the Capability Framework. These are listed in the Capability Framework Resources Index and the Role Description Resources Index.

The Manager and Employee User Guides provide:

- a toolkit of useful resources published by the Public Service Commission,
- action steps to assist managers and employees engage with the Capability Framework, and
- key points to remember when using the Capability Framework at each stage of the employment lifecycle.

Capability Framework resources index



Role description resources

Resources to help you design, develop and update role descriptions.



For more information about the Capability Framework, please [contact us](#).