# PROFESSIONAL MAP

Powering professionalism. For better customer outcomes.

## USING THE PROFESSIONAL MAP TO SUPPORT ROLE DESIGN

The Professional Map sets the international benchmark for the insurance and personal finance professions, describing the competencies needed to succeed in the workplace and drive good customer outcomes. Each competency includes several measurable or observable performance statements (the competency standards) which can aid you in defining your talent management processes such as in role design.

| WHO IT'S FOR | WHAT YOU'LL GET | WHY YOU NEED IT | WHEN IT APPLIES |
|---|---|---|---|
| HR practitioners, Operations and Office managers with HR responsibilities, line managers | Help with applying the Professional Map to job descriptions and person specifications | Competency-based job descriptions support a consistent approach to selection and performance management | During the recruitment and performance management cycles |

### What is this help sheet for?

Ensuring you recruit the best person into a role is notoriously challenging and time-consuming, so it's important to maximise the chances of success, which can be improved by using objective selection methods such as competency-based interviews.

This help sheet focuses on using the Professional Map to inform competency-based interviews.

### What are competency based interviews?

Also known as behavioural, or situational interviews, they are designed to test one or more competencies and work on the principle that past performance is the best predictor of future behaviour. They differ from standard interviews, as far as they are structured, objective and evidence based.

In unstructured interviews recruiters ask a set of open-ended questions relevant to the job, such as 'what can you do for the company?' and 'why did you apply for the job?' to get an overall impression of the candidate. A competency-based interview is more systematic, and each question targets a competency needed for the job.

### Benefits of using the Professional Map to inform competency-based interviews

✓ Provides assurance that you are assessing competencies against a market-led standard

✓ Ensures consistency across your recruitment process as you will always be using the same standard as your assessment criteria

✓ Mitigates against unconscious bias by taking away some of the subjectivity involved in unstructured or biographical interviews

✓ Provides evidence of having in place fair selection processes in the event of any challenge you may face

✓ It supports interviewers to stay open-minded, listen throughout, and not to be overly influenced by first impressions

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## Before you start

It's important to use an up-to-date job description and person specification against which you are going to identify the critical competencies that are key to succeed in the role and will inform the interview. Please refer to the Designing a role help sheet to learn how to use the Professional Map for creating a job description and person specification.

### 1 Identify which band the role you are recruiting for most closely aligns to

The Professional Map is structured into 4 bands of experience, each describing the different level of impact professionals have in the work they do.

Consider which of the four bands the role most closely aligns to. If you were interviewing a for a Managerial role whose purpose is set oversee the running of a department or function, you will likely map the role against band 3 standards.

Read the behaviours, enablers, and technical expertise (where relevant) at the band identified, but also explore whether there are standards within different bands that would also be critical, as roles will not always fall perfectly within a specific band.

### 2 Identify the competencies required to succeed in the role

Use the job description and person specification to identify which are the critical competencies required for the role. Each role requirement may draw upon several competencies. For example, if the person specification requires 'excellent customer service skills', you may consider the competencies of 'Customer Focus' and 'Inclusivity'.

### 3 Identify the competency standards against which you will assess the candidates

Look at the competencies you have identified in step 2 and select the competency standards that candidates will have to demonstrate or provide examples of during the interview. The standards you select will become criteria against which you will assess their responses.

For example, you could select from the competency of 'Customer Focus' the following standards as the criteria against which to assess candidate in this area:

- BAND 2: I proactively seek to understand the needs and issues of customers and ensure I am serving their wider best interests

- BAND 2: I make decisions that balance the customer and business requirements

- BAND 1: I treat all customers fairly and take particular care when dealing with those in vulnerable circumstances

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# Build your competency-based interview questionnaire

Your questions should focus on one or more specific competencies critical to the role. You may not have long during the interview, so it's best to select a few areas of competence to explore in depth. Use our bank of competency-based questions to choose the questions.

The candidates' responses will be evaluated against the competency standards you have selected in step 3. All candidates are assessed against the same areas of competence and using the same standards as assessment criteria to ensure that the selection is fair and objective.

Competency based questions typically ask the candidate to give examples of when they have demonstrated the specific competencies being explored. They often start with "Can you give me an example of when…." to "Tell me about a time when…". The interviewer writes down the response without evaluation at this stage. They then use the criteria to evaluate the response before deciding on the outcome. For example:

### Questions

Opening question: Can you give me an example of a time when you have anticipated the future needs of your customers and been proactive in trying to meet them?

Probing questions: What did you do? Why did you think it was important? Did you encounter any challenges?

### Assessment sheet

| Answer | | |
|--------|--|--|
| | | |
| Score | Competency | Assessment criteria (has the candidate evidenced each of the standards?) |
| | Customer Focus | I proactively seek to understand the needs and issues of customers and ensure I am serving their wider best interests |
| | Customer focus | I make decisions that balance the customer and business requirements |
| | Inclusivity | I actively listen to others in order to address their views and concerns |

## How else might you use the Professional Map in your talent selection?

The standards can also be used in the selection process to inform the development of:
- shortlisting criteria
- assessment centres
- development of exercises, e.g. role plays or presentations, being used as part of the selection

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