Case study: **MAPPING ORGANIZATION COMPETENCIES**

COMPETENCY TEAM BUILDERS and the INTEGRATIVE COMPETENCY MODEL

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THE CONTEXT: Relevant Competency models, as the INTEGRATIVE COMPETENCY Model presented here, are a fundamental component for managing more efficiently and effectively present Human Capital and a very significant system to forecast the management, technical and scientific needs of a future highly competent workforce.

Competencies are critical carriers of **Knowledge**; as such they are an effective way to capture the present reservoir of explicit and tacit **Knowledge** in a specific workforce. In addition, understanding the Organization trends and having in place an operationally Competency model covering the whole Organization, it will facilitate managing the future **needs of Knowledge** by updating existing suitable competencies or developing further new type of competencies.

As in many other Organizations, it became evident the need of establishing a competency-base management practice to assist linking diverse categories and types of competencies with the strategic objectives, plans and capabilities of the Organization, business lines and technological/administration processes. This, plus the complexity of mapping and managing present and future Knowledge in a specific workforce, led to design first a comprehensive organization competency model to manage more efficiently and effectively these problem areas. *Graphic 1.Management and Technical competencies & Competency-base management relationship within an overall Strategic Organizational Transformation Process*.
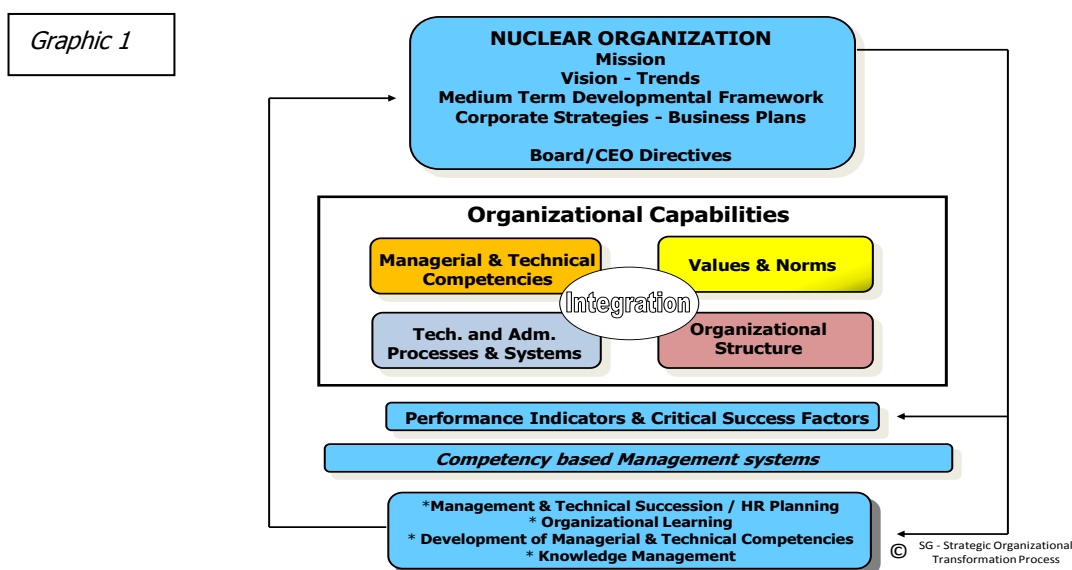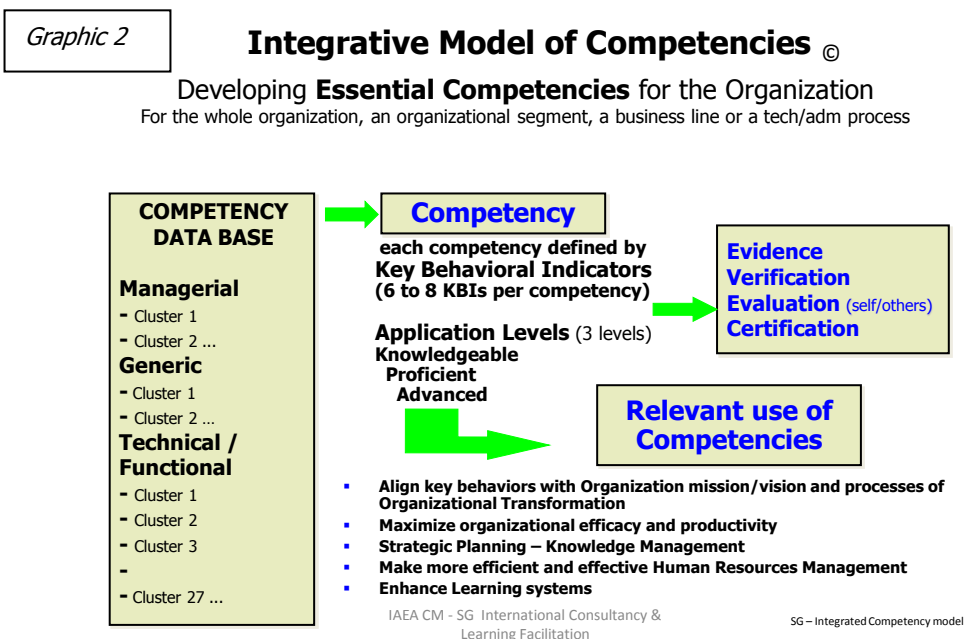

DESIGN AND CHARACTERISTICS of the INTEGRATIVE COMPETENCY Model (ICM): Considering the above, this model was conceived as an ORGANIZATION COMPETENCY model able to manage more effectively a large variety of Strategic, Organizational and Human capital issues, i.e. Align competencies with Organization Trends/Mission/Vision, Business lines, Processes and Corporate Strategy; Support process of Organizational Transformation; Building Strategic plans; Knowledge Management; Human Capital index; HR planning; Succession Management; Skills/Knowledge obsolescence; Attrition programmes; Jobs family & Posts benchmarking; Jobs description; Recruitment advertising; Interviewing/Selection of personnel; Performance Management including 360 degree feedback; Individual placement/Transfer; Building teams & Task forces; Learning needs analysis; Management development; etc.

After extensive research and deep analysis of Competency models or Competency applications in industrial corporations, public services and international organization became clear that our ICM design should be based on following principles: 1.Simple & Practical, 2. In company Design with a wide participatory process,

3. Organizationally specific & Linguistic appropriate, 4. Easy to maintain & Flexible to change, 5. Not expensive to Design and Implement, 6. Conceived as a Developmental system, 7. Engage an experienced internal professional or consultant as Competency Manager or Knowledge Manager.

In very simplistic terms the ICM could be presented as a comprehensive and reliable Organizational Competency Data Base operated by relational data base software. *Graphic 2. DATA BASE of essential competencies for the Organization*.

Graphic 2

Integrative Model of Competencies ©

Developing **Essential Competencies** for the Organization
For the whole organization, an organizational segment, a business line or a tech/adm process

COMPETENCY DATA BASE

Managerial
- Cluster 1
- Cluster 2 ...

Generic
- Cluster 1
- Cluster 2 ...

Technical / Functional
- Cluster 1
- Cluster 2
- Cluster 3
-
- Cluster 27 ...

Competency

each competency defined by **Key Behavioral Indicators** (6 to 8 KBIs per competency)

Application Levels (3 levels)
Knowledgeable
Proficient
Advanced

Evidence Verification Evaluation (self/others) **Certification**

Relevant use of Competencies

- Align key behaviors with Organization mission/vision and processes of Organizational Transformation
- Maximize organizational efficacy and productivity
- Strategic Planning – Knowledge Management
- Make more efficient and effective Human Resources Management
- Enhance Learning systems

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SG – Integrated Competency model

ICM Features. The Integrative Competency model is applied for the whole organization; however it could be started by an organizational segment, a business line, technological or management /administration processes. In this model a Competency is defined as a set of skills, related knowledge and attributes that allows a human being to perform a task or activity within a function or job. A competency is demonstrated or mastered in a job and could be easily transferred to another job.

Any essential competency in the ICM is defined by 6 to 8 Key Behavioral Indicators (KBIs), which would describe the proficient application of the competency. Behaviors should be observable and measurable in order to make it clear how the competency is demonstrated, i.e. Team Leadership, KPI 1. Can BUILD effective teams recognizing individual contributions, cultural factors and organizational context.

As described in Graphic 2, Competencies are being grouped through specific clusters in three main categories; **Managerial, Generic and Technical or Functional**. In this model, a simple and practical approach is used for the application level of each competency, **Advanced - Proficient - Knowledgeable**. It is to be noted that any **function or job** in the Organization requires a set of essential managerial/generic and technical/functional competencies to be performed efficiently and effectively. It has been the practice to describe functions or jobs with 8 to 12 essential competencies from the Competency Data Base. In some cases it was used up to 15.

THE MAPPING PROCESS

After completing ICM format design (as described previously), the competency model was exposed to a verification process by conducting series of simulations in specific applications, i.e. describing posts or jobs profiles, individual self-assessment, forecast learning needs, advertizing positions, performance evaluations or forecasting competencies for new technologies or processes.
In the meantime suitable relational database software was identified. Now, the moment arrived to start formally the mapping process for the whole organization or for any priority area.

Competency Team builders (CTBs). Having now a validated format of the model, it is easier and more practical to identify those individuals that can contribute substantively to the mapping process and made the competency model operational. Their main purpose is to collect suitable data, analyze it and propose a set of essential competencies including KPIs (Graph 2) of the subject area as per the Competency development plan, i.e. technological or functional process, management level, structural division, etc. Generally, CTBs were structured by at least two recognized specialists and one manager/supervisor of the subject area and a responsible person from the Competency management unit. Sometimes a third specialist was added or a responsible official from HR management, i.e. learning system or recruitment. CTBs organized with 5 members were found very effective.

Main sources for mapping MANAGEMENT/GENERIC competencies were found on results of internal management development programs, annual performance evaluation and management comments, practices perceived as ineffective, special team assessment exercises, top management directives, accepted experiences of effective management in other organizations, management trends in the international context.

Main source of mapping TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL competencies were found in the specific technological or functional processes, areas of specialization or services. In this case a TECHNICAL Competency framework is proposed in order to collect data and conduct its analysis in an efficient and organized manner. *Graphic 3, Technical Competency Framework*

Graphic 3

Technical Competency Framework ©
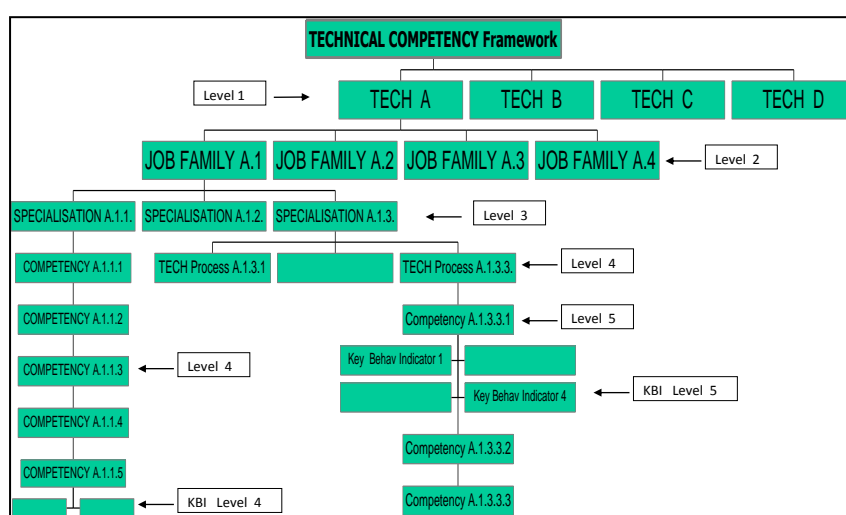
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Before starting their work, Competency Team Builders were brief on the Integrative Competency model format and trained on team performance, preparing knowledge maps, interview/observation techniques and protocols, improvement work processes techniques, technical drafting, and any other ad-hoc learning emerging from the specific area of work of the CTBs.

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED including reflections on the ICM by cooperating organizations. A) Before starting any mapping process is extremely important to have available a suitable competency format (including software) or design a special one able to cover the whole organization. It should be envisaged permanent inclusion of updates and the expansion of system. In the case of large corporate groups the competency model should be compatible with the one of company members. B) This competency team process of in-Company design and implementation provides the opportunity to management and staff of strengthening internal learning and start company improvement processes C) Top management should communicate and reinforce the statement that the Competency model is a developmental tool, and finally D) Organizations interested in simulating strategic scenarios and the relation with their human capital, could find this simple and practical model very helpful and effective.-