GS-0090 Guide Competency Model

U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of Human Capital

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Guide Competency Model Study Summary

The DOI Office of Human Capital (OHC) conducted a comprehensive study to identify the critical competencies and tasks for successful performance of guide work across the Department. OHC worked with guide subject matter experts from across the Department in order to create a thorough and accurate representation of the work performed by DOI guides and the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform that work.

The study involved a variation of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory – Closed-Ended (MOSAIC) method for gathering and analyzing information about work. The MOSAIC approach has been utilized to study and describe work performed within the Federal Government for over 25 years. The study included a wide-ranging literature review to build lists of tasks and competencies used to describe guide work across the Department. Next, focus groups with DOI guide subject matter experts were held to ensure these lists were complete and accurately represented the job. A trained job analyst also linked each task to competencies to confirm they were required to perform the work. DOI guides rated the tasks and competencies to demonstrate the importance and utility of each component of the study. Finally, guide subject matter experts reviewed the results of the study to ensure its accuracy.

The results of this study establish a common set of guide tasks and competencies across the Department, which can be used to create assessment and selection techniques and tools and establish common practices and terminology for recruitment, performance management, workforce planning, training, and employee development. This work provides DOI with current, validated information that can be used to ensure its guide workforce has the tools to meet future challenges.

Please reference the Competency Model Interpretive Guidance for assistance in interpreting and applying the results of this study.

Table 1: General Competencies by Grade[1]

The following general competencies are valid for assessment and selection, performance management, and other related human capital functions across the guide occupational series included in this study at the grade levels listed below.

GS-3	GS-4	GS-5	GS-6	GS-7
Customer Service *Flexibility* *Interpersonal* *Skills* *Oral* *Communication* *Resilience*	*Accountability* Customer Service Flexibility Interpersonal Skills Oral Communication Resilience	Accountability *Continual* *Learning* *Creative Thinking* Customer Service Flexibility Interpersonal Skills Oral Communication *Problem Solving* Resilience *Self-Management*	Accountability *Conflict* *Management* Continual Learning Creative Thinking Customer Service Flexibility *Information* *Management* Interpersonal Skills Oral Communication Problem Solving Resilience Self-Management	Accountability Conflict Management Continual Learning Creative Thinking Customer Service Flexibility Information Management Interpersonal Skills Oral Communication Problem Solving Resilience Self-Management

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[1] Italics represent the lowest grade at which the competency appears.

Table 2: Required Proficiency Levels by Grade Level

Proficiency Level Scale Definitions

Proficiency Level	General Competencies	Technical Competencies
5 = Expert	- Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations - Serves as a key resource and advises others	- Applies the competency in exceptionally difficult situations - Serves as a key resource and advises others - Demonstrates comprehensive expert understanding of concepts and processes
4 = Advanced	- Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations - Generally requires little or no guidance	- Applies the competency in considerably difficult situations - Generally requires little or no guidance - Demonstrates understanding of concepts and processes
3 = Intermediate	- Applies the competency in difficult situations - Requires occasional guidance	- Applies the competency in difficult situations - Requires occasional guidance - Demonstrates understanding of concepts and processes
2 = Basic	- Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations - Requires frequent guidance	- Applies the competency in somewhat difficult situations - Requires frequent guidance - Demonstrates familiarity with concepts and processes
1 = Awareness	- Applies the competency in simplest situations - Requires close and extensive guidance	- Applies the competency in simplest situations - Requires close and extensive guidance - Demonstrates awareness of concepts and processes

Table 2: Required Proficiency Levels of General Competencies[2]					
	GS-3	GS-4	GS-5	GS-6	GS-7
Accountability	3	**3**	**4**	**5**	**5**
Conflict Management	2	3	4	**5**	**5**
Continual Learning	2	3	**4**	**5**	**5**
Creative Thinking	1	2	**3**	**3**	**4**
Customer Service	**3**	**3**	**4**	**4**	**5**
Flexibility	**3**	**4**	**4**	**5**	**5**
Information Management	1	2	3	4	**5**
Interpersonal Skills	**2**	3	**4**	**5**	**5**
Oral Communication	**3**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**5**
Problem Solving	1	2	**3**	4	**5**
Resilience	**3**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**4**
Self-Management	2	3	**4**	**5**	**5**

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[2] Bolded competencies are validated for use for assessment and selection purposes.

Table 3: Behavioral Examples for Competencies

Competency Name	Definitions
Accountability	**Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.** • *Takes responsibility for results and work products* • *Ensures work is completed on time and at the level of quality required* • *Understands the rules and regulations of the work performed and ensures compliance with them* • *Demonstrates responsibility with important materials, critical processes, or confidential information*
Conflict Management	**Manages and resolves conflicts, grievances, confrontations, or disagreements in a constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.** • *Ensures disagreements between two or more parties remain civil* • *Effectively uses conflict resolution techniques to allow for productive discussion of potential solutions between disagreeing parties* • *Addresses grievances or disagreements and brokers accord and respect*
Continual Learning	**Assesses and recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development.** • *Takes honest inventory of own strengths and weaknesses* • *Identifies personal skill gaps or areas for development* • *Actively identifies and pursues training or developmental opportunities* • *Seeks out feedback from others on performance* • *Displays a desire to learn new things or new ways of accomplishing tasks*
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.** • *Creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation* • *Explores new ideas, methodologies, and alternatives to reach outcomes* • *Introduces new concepts or strategies that significantly improve or revise the way work is performed* • *Suggests or proposes alternative ways to view or define problems; is not constrained by conventional thinking and established approaches* • *Combines ideas in unique ways or makes connections between disparate ideas*
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.** • *Commits to serving the public and understands their advisory role* • *Utilizes outreach, needs assessment, evaluation, and other marketing skills to identify and anticipate customer needs and provide exemplary customer service* • *Understands diverse customer groups, their perspectives, issues and needs* • *Works to ensure customers' needs are met, even when those needs are outside of the typical role of the position* • *Identifies and develops metrics to assess customer service satisfaction* • *Continuously improves products and services*

	• *Works and plans strategically, using a systems perspective to anticipate developing customer issues and needs and to provide timely solutions that focus on long-term benefits*
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.** • *Effectively adjusts strategies or course of action in response to changing conditions* • *Makes quality decisions when faced with ambiguous situations* • *Is willing to incorporate new information into decision making process* • *Adapts behavior to overcome challenges*
Information Management	**Identifies a need for an knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.** • *Demonstrates an understanding of where and how data or other information are maintained* • *Shows familiarity with the information management systems of the organization* • *Effectively searches for and finds appropriate information to address the needs of a project* • *Uses discretion when handling sensitive content*
Interpersonal Skills	**Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.** • *Shows respect for the values and ideas of others, even when not agreeing with them* • *Empathizes with the concerns of others* • *Demonstrates tact and courtesy when interacting with associates* • *Is proactive in defusing arguments among peers* • *Seeks feedback from others to avoid blind-spots that can cause misunderstandings* • *Explores issues with the team; shares information; solicits ideas' uses participative decision-making processes*
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.** • *Speaks honestly, effectively and with integrity* • *Makes convincing, articulate, and accurate oral presentations using non-verbal and vocal qualities that support the verbal spoken message* • *Effectively uses various communication channels, including meetings, presentations and briefings* • *Actively considers, plans for, and reacts appropriately to the audience and the contextual environment in order to minimize barriers to understanding* • *Explains complex information clearly and accurately, and seeks feedback to determine that understanding has occurred* • *Acts as an effective facilitator in group or team settings*
Physical Strength and Agility	**Ability to bend, lift, climb, stand, and walk for long periods of time; ability to perform moderately heavy laboring work.** • *Able to lift or carry loads consistent with the requirements of routine work* • *Able to spend multiple hours without being seated* • *Can maneuver oneself in order to avoid obstacles*

Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations. • *Examines problems and solutions with a long-term perspective* • *Effectively leads others in the effort of developing, identifying, and formulating problem-solving strategies consistent with organizational goals* • *Uses logic to develop and implement innovative tools and techniques to resolve complex problems and issues* • *Uses logic to resolve complex, unique, or unusual problems* • *Consistently anticipates challenges that are not obvious to others* • *Determines the relevance of information in reaching effective conclusions* • *Formulates recommendations for the best course of action to address problems*
Resilience	Deals effectively with pressure; remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks. • *Achieves desired results in face of adversity* • *Overcomes barriers to accomplish goals* • *Stays positive in spite of setbacks* • *Works successfully in high pressure environments*
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. • *Sets own goals and priorities and coordinates activities and deadlines with others to ensure project goals are met* • *Continually applies significant effort and persistence toward achievement of goals in all situations* • *Takes initiative and seeks out new or additional responsibilities and tasks* • *Completes work and meets objectives with minimal supervisory intervention*

Table 4: General Competencies by Assessment Tool

Competency	Occupational Questionnaire	Structured Interview	Biodata	Cognitive Ability Test
Accountability	Low	High	High	Low
Conflict Management	Low	High	Medium	Low
Continual Learning	Low	High	High	Low
Creative Thinking	Low	High	Medium	Medium
Customer Service	Low	High	Low	Low
Flexibility	Low	High	Medium	Low
Information Management	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Interpersonal Skills	Low	High	Low	Low
Oral Communication	Medium	High	Medium	Low
Problem Solving	Low	High	Medium	High
Resilience	Low	High	Medium	Low
Self-Management	Low	High	Medium	Low

Competency	Job Knowledge Test	Personality Inventory	Situational Judgment Test	Work Sample
Accountability	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
Conflict Management	Low	Medium	High	Medium
Continual Learning	Low	Medium	Medium	Low
Creative Thinking	Low	Medium	Low	High
Customer Service	Low	Low	High	High
Flexibility	Low	High	Medium	High
Information Management	Medium	Low	Medium	High
Interpersonal Skills	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium
Oral Communication	Low	Low	Low	High
Problem Solving	Low	Low	Medium	High

Resilience	Low	Medium	Low	Low
Self-Management	Low	Medium	Low	Low

Table 5: Technical Competencies for Assessment & Selection

The following technical competencies are valid for assessment and selection, performance management, and other related human capital functions for the GS-0090 Guide occupational series. (NOTE: While the technical competencies below have been validated for assessment and selection for the GS-0090 Guide series, they are not REQUIRED to be used for assessment and selection for this series. Further, other technical competencies not listed below may be required depending on the position. Rely on the results of a job analysis and feedback from the hiring manager and subject matter experts to determine the exact technical competencies needed for a particular hire).

Table 5: Technical Competencies for Assessment & Selection GS-0090 Guide	
• Communication Approaches • Geography	• History and Archaeology • Public Safety and Security

Appendix A: Guide General Competencies

Accountability	Holds self and others accountable for measurable high-quality, timely, and cost-effective results. Determines objectives, sets priorities, and delegates work. Accepts responsibility for mistakes. Complies with established control systems and rules.
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.
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.
Information Management	Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.
Interpersonal Skills	Treats others with courtesy, sensitivity, and respect. Considers and responds appropriately to the needs and feelings of different people in different situations.
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.
Physical Strength and Agility	Ability to bend, lift, climb, stand, and walk for long periods of time; ability to perform moderately heavy laboring work.
Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.

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.

Appendix B: Guide Technical Competencies[3]

Communication Approaches	Knowledge of the creation, communication, and sharing of information and ideas to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.
Fire Management	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of fire management, including the characteristics, behavior, and ecology of fire; methodologies, strategies, and equipment used in prescribed fires; fire detection, prevention, and suppression strategies; and integration of fire with natural resource management.
First Response	Knowledge of emergency management methods, such as first aid, rescue techniques, and threat assessments.
Geography	Knowledge of geographical locations, their relationships, and characteristics.
History and Archaeology	Knowledge of historical events and their causes, indicators, and impact on particular civilizations and cultures, and of preservation and archival techniques.
Public Security and Safety	Knowledge of public safety and security operations; occupational health and safety; or rules, regulations, precautions, and prevention techniques for the protection of people, data, and property.

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[3] Includes competencies identified for positions by SMEs that were not considered "critical" across each occupational series. These competencies may still be used for training and development purposes.

Appendix C: Guide Study Tasks

1	Orients hikers to conditions and equipment needs.
2	Provides information about weather conditions, highway routes, activities, services, facilities, and prices.
3	Presents pre-established talks, including introductions to films, map talks, and static exhibit interpretation.
4	Interprets park values for visitors with varying interests and backgrounds.
5	Performs minor maintenance duties at park.
6	Performs emergency medical treatment as trained.
7	Answers or responds to visitor inquiries.
8	Issues camping and/or wilderness cabin permits.
9	Maintains order among visitors, prevents crowding or damage to historic sites, or takes appropriate action in case of emergency until relieved.
10	Assists customers with lost articles, car trouble, and first aid.
11	Operates and maintains audio-visual equipment and inventory.
12	Serves as a member of area's research and rescue team and/or fire suppression crew.
13	Reports incidents relative to personal injury, property damage, or resource damage.
14	Protects historic and scientific objects and natural or engineering features.
15	Guides groups, maintains a pace, and conforms to prescribed schedules.
16	Performs crowd control at entrances and visitor center.
17	Serves on task- and event-oriented teams.
18	Maintains park property inventory.