EVALUATOR COMPETENCIES AND PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: Supporting professional development in evaluators can be challenging because evaluators come from varied backgrounds and conduct many different types of evaluations. Evaluation competencies are a means of determining the developmental needs of individual evaluators, and can be used as the foundation for a comprehensive performance development system within organizations that do evaluations. This article defines professional development in the context of strategic human resource development and outlines the elements of a human resource development system, showing how evaluation competencies can be used as a basis for the system. The article gives an example of the system's application, provides samples of tools that can be used for self-reflection and assessment, and outlines the benefits of a human resource development system.

Résumé: Appuyer le perfectionnement professionnel des évaluateurs peut s'avérer difficile parce que ces derniers proviennent de milieux différents et réalisent plusieurs types différents d'évaluation. Les compétences en évaluation sont une façon de déterminer les besoins en perfectionnement des évaluateurs et peuvent servir de fondement à l'élaboration d'un système complet de développement du rendement au sein des organismes qui effectuent des évaluations. Cet article définit le perfectionnement professionnel dans le contexte du développement stratégique des ressources humaines, décrit les éléments d'un système de développement des ressources humaines, et montre comment les compétences en évaluation peuvent servir de base au système. L'article donne un exemple de l'application du système, fournit des échantillons d'outils pouvant être utilisés pour l'auto-réflexion et l'évaluation, et présente les avantages d'un système de perfectionnement des ressources humaines.

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Supporting professional development in evaluators can be challenging because evaluators come from varied backgrounds and conduct many different types of evaluations. Given the tremendous variety of skills, knowledge, and approaches in evaluation, how does one assess an employee's level of competence and/or support ongoing professional development?

Over the years, evaluation professionals have attempted to define the field, developing lists of competencies that are important for people conducting evaluations. Two recent efforts have produced comprehensive inventories of evaluation knowledge and skills. In 2001, King, Stevahn, Ghere, and Minnema developed a preliminary taxonomy of essential competencies. The following year, the Canadian Evaluation Society (CES) developed a comprehensive list of evaluation knowledge elements used for evaluation (Zorzi, McGuire, & Perrin, 2002). Although these two efforts do not provide a definitive list of skills and knowledge that every evaluator should have, such competency inventories can be used as the basis for strategic human resource development within organizations that conduct evaluations.

This article will focus on the use of the competencies as an integral component of human resource development. It will provide background on the evaluation competencies, discuss how these link to strategic human resource development, provide a case example of the use of evaluation competencies in human resource development, and discuss the implications for practice.

BACKGROUND ON EVALUATION COMPETENCIES

Evaluation competencies are the skills, knowledge, abilities, and attributes required to conduct evaluation. Competencies are of interest to evaluation associations and educators who wish to develop a core curriculum for those who practice evaluation. They are also relevant to those who wish to ensure or promote quality in evaluation practice, the logic being that individuals who possess the requisite competencies are more likely to produce high quality, useful evaluations. Consequently, clients and employers might be interested in competencies, as might evaluation associations or others looking to protect the reputation of the discipline.

Evaluators come from so many different backgrounds, experiences, and methodological approaches that it has been challenging to define exactly what makes a competent evaluator. The knowledge and skills

required to conduct an evaluation vary from situation to situation, depending on the type of evaluation being conducted, the level of rigour needed, and the specific needs of the client and other stakeholders. For example, an evaluation of a program or policy could be conducted using an ethnographic approach, with in-depth qualitative methods and rigorous qualitative analyses, or it might instead use a randomized controlled experiment, with standardized measures and complex statistical analyses. Alternatively, it could take a very pragmatic approach, with mixed methods and analysis at a relatively superficial level to quickly identify emergent themes for decision-making. The competencies required of the evaluator or evaluation team would clearly be different in each of these three scenarios.

The W. K. Kellogg Foundation (1998) provides advice on what to look for in an evaluator, depending on what the evaluation is intended to do.

> If the evaluation purpose is to determine the worth or merit of a program, you might look for an evaluator with methodological expertise and experience. If the evaluation is focused on facilitating program improvements, you might look for someone who has a good understanding of the program and is reflective. If the primary goal of the evaluation is to design new programs based on what works, an effective evaluator would need to be a strong team player with analytical skills. Experience tells us however that the most important overall characteristics to look for in an evaluator are the ability to remain flexible and to problem-solve. (pp. 59–60)

Most evaluation associations have guidelines or standards that reflect the situational nature of evaluation competencies. For example, the Canadian Evaluation Society's Guidelines for Ethical Conduct (n.d.) state:

> Evaluators are to be competent in their provision of service.
> 1.1 Evaluators should apply systematic methods of inquiry appropriate to the evaluation.
> 1.2 Evaluators should possess or provide content knowledge appropriate for the evaluation.
> 1.3 Evaluators should continuously strive to improve their methodological and practice skills.

Likewise, the American Evaluation Association's Guiding Principles for Evaluators (AEA, 2004) require evaluators to "provide competent performance to stakeholders," specifically noting that evaluators must possess the requisite education, abilities, skills, and experience to undertake the evaluation; demonstrate cultural competence; practice within the limits of their competence; and maintain and improve their competencies.

Both the CES and the AEA guidelines note the need for continuous improvement in competencies. This is especially important given the evolving nature of evaluation. As noted by McLean (2000),

> Case studies, performance indicators, logic models, high-tech measurement, critical theory — none of these were discussed widely, if at all, even 20 years ago. The theory and practice of program evaluation are both rich and varied in ways no one predicted, as the annual conferences of the CES and AEA attest. What we can safely predict is that they will continue to evolve and grow in exciting ways. (p. 189)

Despite the variety and evolution of evaluations, competency inventories have been developed and there appears to be a high degree of agreement on some basic elements. King et al. (2001) developed such an inventory based on their exploratory study on the extent to which evaluation professionals could reach agreement on essential evaluation competencies. They concluded that there may be more agreement on the competencies needed by evaluators than initially anticipated, based on finding a 78% agreement on the competencies in their taxonomy. They also concluded that the areas where consensus did not emerge reflected the role- and context-specific nature of evaluation practice, thus supporting the notion that the knowledge depends on the purpose and context of the evaluation. Their table of essential evaluator competencies is comprehensive and shows areas of agreement and disagreement.

A second study carried out for the CES (Zorzi et al., 2002) resulted in a comprehensive list of evaluation competencies. This study involved consultation via the Internet with evaluation practitioners both within and outside of Canada. Practitioners were asked to consider a specific evaluation in which they had participated in the past, and to identify the competencies they needed to complete it so that it resulted in benefits for the program being evaluated. The results

of the survey were interpreted with the assistance of an international reference panel of 36 evaluation experts with diverse backgrounds.

The CES study identified 23 general knowledge elements, within which more specific knowledge, skills, and practices were identified. Reference materials were identified for each specific item. The authors were unable to identify a list of core competencies that every evaluator should have, and they noted that it was neither possible nor desirable for any one person to be competent in all areas. Instead, they emphasized that evaluators need to be (a) aware of the different methods and approaches, (b) able to realistically assess their own capabilities, and (c) able to assemble teams of people with the knowledge and skills needed for a specific evaluation.

In sum, the competencies needed to conduct an evaluation vary depending on the purpose and context of the evaluation, evaluation competencies are constantly evolving, and no individual need be competent in all areas.

Taking all of this into account, it is clearly not easy to determine a single set of competencies that all evaluators must possess. This poses a challenge for organizations that employ evaluators and want to manage and further develop the performance of their evaluators. These organizations may find it difficult to support performance development without a well-defined set of required competencies. However, as will be demonstrated shortly, competency inventories can be used as the basis for performance development within organizations that conduct evaluations.

BACKGROUND ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (HRD)

The workplace is an important context for ongoing professional development, and is the primary location for human resource development (Bierema & Eraut, 2004). Human resource development links professional development with organizational expectations and the provision of systematic assessment and learning experiences in order to bring about performance improvement and professional growth, thus providing a context for the application of evaluation competencies.

"Organizations work the way they do because of the way people work in those organizations" (Senge, 1996, p. 19). Recently, increased at-

tention has been given to strategic human resource development that includes the integration of training and development into wider business planning. Garavan (1991) points to the need to place continuous knowledge development in the context of the external environment. Human resource development plans and policies need to be linked to the organization's business plan, with monitoring of the external environment (Garavan, 1991; McCracken & Wallace, 2000). The mission and goals of the specific organization combine with professional competencies to define the performance expectations of a practicing evaluator.

The human resource development system establishes the means by which the organization supports individuals so that they are able to perform their current job functions, and creates an environment for growth. Increasingly, attention has been paid to "learning organizations" that create a workplace where people can continuously expand their capacities. Some of the elements of a learning organization include application of systems management methods, the development of openness and trust, a tolerance for error, finding new ways of reframing and thinking through issues and problems, and embedded self-reflection (Ellinger, 2004; Smith, 2004). The concept of critical self-reflection has emerged from adult learning theory. Van Woerkom (2004) points out that human resource development practices should not only play a role in the development of competencies, but should also support critically reflective work behaviour.

In order to be effective, a human resource development system must meet the needs of the organization, meet the needs and wishes of the individual, and be consistent with the expectations of the profession.

ELEMENTS OF A STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

A human resource development system is often established in consultation with those who are most affected by it. It includes the following elements: a conceptual framework, articulation of the expectations of each position within the organization, support for self-reflection, ongoing feedback, a formal assessment, and an individual learning and development plan that is supported by the organization.

Conceptual Framework

A human resource development conceptual framework provides the foundation for the performance appraisal process by identifying the mission, values, and goals of the organization as well as those skills, behaviours, and the knowledge that are fundamental to the organization and the work that it carries out. For evaluation positions within an organization, the evaluation competencies would be combined with attributes, behaviours, and knowledge that are specific to the organization. It would include the core values that each individual within the organization is expected to demonstrate, the skills and knowledge essential to support the organization's mission and goals, and an indication of how professional competencies are to be integrated into the human resource development system. For example, a hospital may have stated values such as individual-focused care, pursuit of excellence, and evidence-based practice. The primary goal may be provision of emergency, in-patient, and out-patient health care services to a particular population. All individuals within the hospital would be expected to embrace the stated values and support the overall goal, within the context of their own professional practice. The conceptual framework establishes the foundation for addressing organizational expectations and at the same time ensuring that professional requirements are supported.

Position Description

A position description concretely defines the expectations of a particular job within the context of the human resource development conceptual framework. It outlines the responsibilities, accountabilities, and qualifications of the particular position, referencing the professional requirements associated with the position. It is used as a primary tool for defining job expectations.

Responsibilities can include professional activities to be carried out by the individual, as well as responsibilities related to the functioning of the organization.

The *qualifications* required should be consistent with the responsibilities of the position. For example, the position of junior researcher might be responsible for conducting literature reviews, conducting surveys, entering data, and assisting with quantitative analysis. The performance expectations of a junior researcher would therefore be substantially different than those of a project manager, who needs

to be highly skilled in project management and have advanced skills in most other evaluation areas. An inventory of evaluation competencies can be helpful for determining the professional qualifications that are appropriate for a particular evaluator position.

Self-reflection

Self-reflection links to conceptual framework, position description, and personal aspirations. It is an ongoing process in which a staff member reflects on his/her knowledge, skills, and practices, and identifies personal strengths as well as areas that require improvement. It can occur informally through discussions around the composition of a team for a particular assignment and the role of each evaluator in that assignment. It can also occur as an evaluator carries out an assignment and finds there are gaps in his/her knowledge or skills. During the performance development process, it may also be appropriate to conduct a formal self-assessment of knowledge and skills that are relevant to one's position.

Ongoing Feedback

Ongoing feedback contributes to the self-reflection process and helps to create a learning environment. It can be provided informally through discussions around building a team for an assignment or providing support in carrying out an assignment. The 360° approach is useful in this informal process; that is, feedback should come from superiors, subordinates, peers, clients, and anyone else who is involved in or impacted by the particular individual's work. Any member of the organization can be approached and asked for guidance in their area of expertise. Any member of the organization can provide suggestions. This provides opportunity for continuous feedback from a number of sources, creates the opportunity for continuous learning, and supports a learning environment within an organization.

Formal Assessment

The formal assessment is what most people think about when they hear the term human resource development. It brings together the ongoing feedback and self-reflection. It can include a 360° process where formal feedback is received from a range of people who would be aware of or impacted by the individual's performance. Minimally, both the manager and the individual should spend time reflecting

on the individual's performance. The process generally involves the following steps:

1. Preparation through the completion of a performance appraisal form by the individual and the manager, as well as others who have knowledge and could provide constructive feedback. The performance appraisal form should be designed to support critical self-reflection by the individual. The performance appraisal form should include those competencies that are key to the individual's position, including both evaluation and non-evaluation competencies.
2. A performance appraisal interview, in which the employee and his/her supervisor discuss the employee's strengths, as well as areas that could be improved. Even for a highly competent employee, this can be a very stressful meeting. Just as with evaluation feedback, beginning with (and focusing on) the positive aspects of an individual's performance helps the individual accept feedback about areas that require development. The feedback is more likely to be acted upon if it is placed in the context of the individual's own goals, both personal and professional. It is important for the manager to provide an atmosphere in which the individual feels free to discuss goals and aspirations. This sets a positive context for discussing areas of future development. If there are serious performance issues, those need to be addressed in the most constructive way possible.

Personal Learning Development Planning

Personal learning development planning is a critical element of a learning environment. If it is to be useful, it must be part of the formal assessment process and continue throughout the year. In this part of the process, the employee and his/her supervisor make concrete plans for actions that will increase the levels of competence in specific areas. For example, once an evaluator has demonstrated competence in planning and conducting various types of evaluations, that person may wish to gain some project management experience. This knowledge can be gained through courses, workshops, mentoring, and/or experiential learning. Often, a combination of learning opportunities is used. The manager and the individual must either plan a specific opportunity or seek opportunities to gain the skill. The development of an individual rests not only with that person, but also with the organization.

It is important to revisit the personal learning development plan throughout the year to assess progress and make needed adjustments. The personal learning development plan shown in Appendix B includes timelines for achievement of learning goals, as well as indicators of achievement, which facilitate ongoing self-reflection and performance appraisal.

CASE EXAMPLE: USING EVALUATION COMPETENCIES FOR HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN A SMALL CONSULTING FIRM

In this section, we describe how the staff of a small consulting firm undertook to establish a human resource development system that would provide them with feedback and support for ongoing professional development in evaluation. The firm was approximately three years old and had four staff members at the time the system was developed. All staff members of the firm were involved in strategic-level discussions about the process and in reviewing the tools to be used.

Conceptual Framework

As part of the organizational development process, the goals of the firm were articulated first through informal discussions among staff and then formalized into the following mission and value statement:

> Our mission is to contribute to the improvement of programs, organizations, systems, and society as a whole by conducting high quality evaluations and reviews through sound methodology, using appreciative, respectful, and transformative processes. The underlying values in carrying out our work include creativity, innovation, excellence, honesty, integrity, timeliness, rigour, and fun.

The human resource development conceptual framework integrated the mission and value statement with the core competencies outlined in the CES core body of knowledge work (Zorzi et al., 2002). One of the challenges was determining expectations regarding levels of competencies. Ranges of expectation were agreed upon through lengthy discussion, with the understanding that each individual would bring a different mixture of attributes and competencies, and that together the team would provide the full range of competencies required for the organization to carry out its mission. In this way,

the human resource development processes contributed directly to the organizational development efforts and at the same time supported professional expectations.

Position Description

When the system was developed, the firm had a formal written position description only for the research associate position. Job expectations for junior- and senior-level consultants had not been explicitly stated, although the responsibilities of these positions were tacitly understood.

To define the professional qualifications required for each position, the staff members initially used the CES's list of evaluator competencies (Zorzi et al., 2002). They developed an assessment tool that listed each competency, and collectively rated the minimum required level of knowledge or skill for each position in the firm.

Minimum levels for evaluation *knowledge* were rated on the following scale:

0 = Not present (i.e., not required for the position)
1 = Basic (awareness of the idea, knowledge of some of the basic concepts)
2 = Intermediate (foundational knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

Minimum competence levels for evaluation *skills* were set according to this scale:

0 = Not present (i.e., not required for the position)
1 = Basic (can perform with structured guidance)
2 = Intermediate (can perform with minimal guidance)
3 = Advanced (can perform independently)
4 = Expert (can perform with finesse and adapt to new situations)

Because the list of competencies was quite long and technical (the full list of competencies is shown in a similar tool in Appendix A),

the process was time-consuming and not all staff members were able to complete it. In the end, it was necessary for senior-level staff to reduce the list of competencies to those directly related to the job responsibilities and to assign minimum competence levels for these. The full list was useful primarily as a guide for experienced evaluators to reference in selecting applicable qualifications.

As an aside, using the complete version of the tool was useful for identifying areas of specialty that were important for the firm, but that would not necessarily be required of every staff member in a given position. For example, the firm determined that they would like to have at least one staff member who has expert-level knowledge about various types of sampling and measurement. While this would not be a minimum requirement for a given position, the firm selected staff members with aptitude in this area and supported their professional development so that they would develop such expertise.

In addition to professional competencies, each position required other competencies that related to corporate citizenship. For example, competencies related to teamwork and communication were included in the position descriptions.

Self-reflection

The self-assessment tool in Appendix A, which is based on the CES list of evaluator competencies (Zorzi et al., 2002), was made available to staff for self-reflection. Some staff chose not to use this tool, preferring a more intuitive process. Others found the tool very useful for identifying areas in which they would like to further develop their knowledge or skills. Knowing the required minimum competency level for each knowledge element or skill made the self-assessment tool less onerous, because staff members could choose to ignore those competencies that were not required for their position.

Ongoing Feedback

In addition to regular feedback from supervisors and project managers, the firm supported informal ongoing feedback with each project. "Post-mortem" meetings were held to analyze what worked well and what did not for a given project, particularly when significant challenges had been encountered. In these meetings, all staff members had an opportunity to reflect critically on the project and

provide constructive feedback to their colleagues. The success of this
method is rooted in the open and collegial atmosphere in the firm,
where constructive criticism is encouraged on a day-to-day basis.

Formal Assessment and Personal Learning Development Planning

Formal performance appraisals were conducted for each staff mem-
ber, using the performance appraisal form shown in Appendix B.
This form was based on the key elements of the position descrip-
tions. (Because all staff members in this organization conducted the
same type of work, the firm was able to use a single performance
appraisal form for all staff, modifying only the level of expectation.
In organizations where job descriptions are significantly different,
multiple forms would be required.) Both the staff member and his/
her supervisor(s) completed the form. They then met to discuss the
form, as well as the self-assessment the staff member had previ-
ously completed. Staff members were encouraged to identify their
own aspirations, strengths, and areas requiring development. The
supervisor also identified areas where they wanted to see profes-
sional growth.

Through this process, staff members and their supervisor identified
both long-term and short-term learning goals, and created a learning
plan for the next year, using the template in Appendix B. The firm
allocated resources for appropriate professional development activi-
ties (e.g., conferences, workshops, journals, textbooks, mentors).

The personal learning plan provides an additional element for re-
flection by both the individual and the organization in the following
year's performance appraisal process. The individual can reflect on
the extent to which he/she carried out the plan. The organization
must consider the extent to which it supported the individual in
carrying out the plan.

Reflections on the Process

A human resource development system works only to the extent that
it is used and supported. Often the work of the organization is given
priority over human resource development. In this case, the impe-
tus for human resource development was a priority for all staff. In-
dividuals took the task of self-reflection seriously and determined
areas where development was needed. Staff were eager for formal-

ized feedback and ensured that the process occurred. A personal development plan was created for each individual with initial thinking on how that plan could be implemented. The organization supported the plans through creating experiential opportunities such as managing a project for the first time, allowing work time for courses, and paying workshop fees.

The primary gap in the current system is evaluation of the head of the organization. In a non-profit organization, this would be carried out by the board of directors. In this case, the staff need to engage in the process with the support of the head so that the inherent power differentials do not undermine the ability to enter into a critically constructive process.

DISCUSSION

Ongoing professional development is essential for evaluation practitioners to maintain their knowledge and skills in an evolving field. The challenge for organizations that employ evaluators is to determine how best to assess learning needs and to support professional development when there is such a wide range of competencies for evaluators.

In our case example, a comprehensive list of evaluation competencies (Zorzi et al., 2002) was used in the creation of a human resource development system for a small consulting firm. The success of this process required some key elements in the organization:

1. The firm already had a very open atmosphere that was conducive to informal feedback and constructive criticism. Staff members did not feel threatened when considering their own areas in need of improvement, because this was seen within the organization as a learning opportunity, not one that would put their jobs in jeopardy. Had there been an atmosphere where frank consideration of professional strengths and weaknesses was more threatening, or where feedback was destructive rather than constructive, the system would not have been as successful.

2. The staff in the firm reviewed the organization's mission, purpose, and values with an eye to identifying fundamental "corporate citizenship" competencies that were important for all staff. Without this link to the overall goals of the organization, the human resource development system

would have been disconnected from the day-to-day reality of the organization.

3. The firm had experienced evaluators on staff who were able to pick out the core competencies needed, and to determine the level of competency needed, for each of the positions. Without the evaluation knowledge provided by these senior staff members, it would have been very difficult to determine which competencies were important. There is a danger that organizations without the capability of assessing the relative importance of the different competencies will attempt to assess all of the competencies, which would be overwhelming and result in their seeking a "super evaluator" who possesses each and every one of the competencies. As previously noted, it is not realistic for a single evaluator to be competent in all areas.

4. The firm had a genuine interest in supporting staff members' professional development, and was willing to allocate resources to make it happen.

Future Directions

To help organizations develop human resource development systems for evaluators, we need more advanced tools that make it easier to determine which competencies are relevant and important for specific staff members. When the organization has experienced evaluators on staff, they can use the self-assessment tool presented in Appendix A as a reference, along with a description of the responsibilities in the position, to make these assessments. However, this process is time-consuming and would be difficult or impossible for a supervisor with little evaluation knowledge. It would be useful to develop a tool that would help organizations analyze the types of evaluations they need, and thereby define the qualities needed by their evaluators.

Other Possible Uses of Evaluation Competencies

We believe that evaluation competencies would also be useful for other aspects of human resource development, as follows:

- Hiring – by articulating the evaluation competencies needed by a new staff member, it becomes easier to write job descriptions, post job openings, and develop appropriate assessment criteria and interview questions.

- Identifying organizational competencies – taking the position development idea to a macro level, it is possible to identify what competencies are required by the organization, and determine whether or not the staff (as a team) do indeed have the strengths required for the types of evaluations that they carry out. If those competencies are not strong in terms of the overall team, it is possible to consider hiring someone with the skills that are missing, or encouraging an existing team member to develop the skills.
- Assembling teams for specific projects – identifying specific project needs, and selecting team members with the required competencies. If the team does not have all of the required skills, it is often possible to look externally in order to fill the gaps. In some cases, a decision not to take on a project will be made if the competencies to do a high quality evaluation are not available.
- Helping each other learn – identifying expertise in team members and using each other as resources for learning.

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Appendix A
Self-Assessment Tool

KNOWLEDGE

Ethics and QA	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Knowledge and application of ethical guidelines			
Freedom of information and protection of privacy			
Awareness of the steps in conducting an evaluation			
Awareness of risks to the integrity of the evaluation process			
Application of standards for evaluation			
Meta-evaluation			

Systems Theory	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Organizational development and change			
Knowledge management			
Evaluation's role in organizational development and change			
Evaluation uses (e.g., formative, summative)			
Understanding of how decisions are made in a political context			
Systems approaches, systems thinking			
Chaos and complexity theories			

Specific Types of Evaluation	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Needs assessment			
Evaluability assessment			
Process evaluation/implementation evaluation			
Outcome evaluation/impact assessment			
Efficiency evaluation/cost analysis			

Knowledge Competency Levels
0 = Not present
1 = Basic (awareness of the idea, knowledge of some of the basic concepts)
2 = Intermediate (foundational knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

History, Theory, Models	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
History of evaluation			
Evaluation paradigms (e.g., positivism, constructivism, collaborative interpretation, hermeneutics)			
Human construction of meaning			
Utilization-focused evaluation			
Empowerment evaluation			
Participatory evaluation			
Goal-free evaluation			
Realistic evaluation			

Research Design	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Experimental, quasi-experimental, non-experimental			
Longitudinal			
Case study			
Ethnography			
Naturalistic inquiry			
Phenomenology and epistemology			
Program review			
Survey research			
Mixed method			
Ruling out alternative interpretations			

Sampling and Measurement	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Probability sampling			
Purposeful sampling			
Reliability			
Validity			
Psychometric theory, including factor analysis			

Knowledge Competency Levels
0 = Not present
1 = Basic (awareness of the idea, knowledge of some of the basic concepts)
2 = Intermediate (foundational knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

Capacity Building	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Adult education principles and techniques			

SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS

Ethical Conduct & Competence	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Respect the human dignity and worth of the people involved			
Sensitivity to cultural and social environment of the program and its stakeholders			
Ensure honesty and integrity of the evaluation			
Act in the best interest of the program stakeholders and the general public			
Disclose biases, conflicts of interest, and methodological limitations			
Self-assessment of competency to perform the evaluation (knowing one's own limits)			
Ongoing improvement of skills, knowledge, networks			

Groundwork	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Become familiar with the program			
Analyse the social, political, and cultural context of the program			
Develop a program description			
Develop a logic model			
Determine if it is appropriate to evaluate the program			
Be clear who is the client			
Identify stakeholders			
Identify the goals and values of stakeholders			
Obtain cooperation of stakeholder groups			
Identify program objectives			

Knowledge Competency Levels
0 = Not present
1 = Basic (awareness of the idea, knowledge of some of the basic concepts)
2 = Intermediate (foundational knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

Identify information needs
Specify evaluation questions

Evaluation Planning	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Selecting appropriate data collection and analysis methods			
Adapt the evaluation to situational needs/constraints			
Attend to cross-cultural, age, or gender issues			
Design the evaluation so as to minimize intrusiveness			
Incorporate triangulation, multiple methods, multiple perspectives, and multiple lines of evidence			
Incorporate consultation and stakeholder involvement as appropriate			
Select appropriate sampling methods			
Adapt/change the study as needed			

Data Collection	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Literature review			
Program records, documents			
Development of performance measurement systems			
Questionnaires			
Interviews			
Focus groups			
Observation			
Participant observation			
Group concept development, brainstorming			
Town hall meetings and other group processes			
Experiential methods (games, classroom activities)			
Projective techniques, psychological tests			
Narrative inquiry, logs, journals oral histories			
Using physical evidence			
Unobtrusive evidence			

Knowledge Competency Levels
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3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
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Data Analysis	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Narrative review			
Content analysis, quantifying qualitative data			
Identifying and verifying emergent themes			
Grounded theory			
Flow diagrams			
Database construction and manipulation			
Handling missing data			
Descriptive statistics (frequencies, means)			
Multiple regression or analysis of variance			
Meta-analysis			
Trend analysis			
Structural equation modelling			
Cost-effectiveness analysis, case costing, etc.			
Development of regular analysis and reporting systems for performance measures			
Grading			
Ranking			
Setting criteria			
Making judgements			

Critical Thinking	*Competency Level*		
Competency	*Self Rating*	*Required*	*Learning Goal*
Analysis			
Synthesis			
Problem-solving			
Conceptual thinking			
Be open to unintended impacts and effects			
Remain neutral			
Be willing to question the system			
Be curious, inquisitive			
Think outside the box			

Knowledge Competency Levels
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3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

Draw conclusions

Make recommendations

Reporting	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Presentations			
Report writing			
Preparation of cabinet documents and presentations			
Graphical displays			
Media communications			
Presenting negative/lukewarm evaluation results constructively			
Regular and timely communications			
Developing a communication strategy			

Communication and Interpersonal	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Facilitation			
Negotiation			
Diplomacy			
Group processing			
Collaboration, be a team player			
Motivating others			
Conflict resolution, dealing with antagonistic people			
Political astuteness and perceptiveness			
Able to work within a multicultural environment			
Questioning			
Active listening			
Sensitivity			
Probing, obtaining clarification			
Providing constructive feedback in a tactful way			
Able to communicate in both English and French			

Knowledge Competency Levels
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3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

Project Management	Competency Level		
Competency	Self Rating	Required	Learning Goal
Be clear who is the client			
Fiscal responsibility, budgeting			
Scheduling, time management			
Risk management			
Assembling an evaluation team			
Making use of outside expertise			
Managing/supervising others			
Writing proposals			
Accessing needed resources (personnel, information, instruments, funding)			
Organizing resources, maximizing use of available resources, doing evaluation on a shoestring			
Writing formal agreements			
Computer skills			
Good documentation practices			
Systematically reviewing data, analyses, and reports for accuracy/quality			

Knowledge Competency Levels
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3 = Advanced (thorough knowledge, able to apply the knowledge appropriately)
4 = Expert (sophisticated theoretical and applied knowledge, understands complexities in application)

Appendix B
Sample Performance Appraisal Form

Name: _____ Date: _____
Position: _____ Completed by: _____

Level of Practice: ___ Junior Consultant/Researcher ___ Senior Consultant ___ Principal

Evaluation Practice: Ethics and Quality Assurance

Elements	Exceeds Expectations	Always Meets Expectation	Sometimes Meets Expectation	Does Not Meet Expectations	Does Not Apply	Comments/ Notable Observations
Knowledge and application of ethical guidelines						
Knowledge of freedom of information and protection of privacy						
Awareness of the steps in conducting an evaluation						
Respect the human dignity and worth of people involved						
Sensitivity to cultural and social environment of the program and its stakeholders						
Self-assessment of competency to perform the evaluation						
Discloses biases, conflicts of interest and methodological limitations						
Ongoing improvement of skills, knowledge, networks						

Evaluation Skills

Elements	Exceeds Expectations	Always Meets Expectation	Sometimes Meets Expectation	Does Not Meet Expectations	Does Not Apply	Comments/ Notable Observations
Evaluation Planning						
Project Management						
• Client management						
• Time management						
• Fiscal management						

Evaluation Skills (cont.)

Elements	Exceeds Expectations	Always Meets Expectation	Sometimes Meets Expectation	Does Not Meet Expectations	Does Not Apply	Comments/ Notable Observations
• Quality control						
• Managing/supervising others						
Data collection:						
• Interviews						
• Focus groups						
• Document review						
• Surveys						
• Literature review						
• Observation						
• Experiential methods						
• Narrative inquiry						
Data analysis:						
• Content analysis						
• Grounded theory						
• Flow diagrams						
• Database construction and manipulation						
• Statistical analysis						
• Interpreting data						
Critical thinking in the areas of analysis, synthesis, problem-solving						
Reporting:						
• Presentations						
• Report writing						
• Graphical displays						
• General communication						

Corporate Citizenship

Elements	Exceeds Expectations	Always Meets Expectation	Sometimes Meets Expectation	Does Not Meet Expectations	Does Not Apply	Comments/ Notable Observations
Works effectively as a team member						
Assumes personal responsibility for team's effectiveness • Makes constructive suggestions • Avoids placing blame • Models behaviours that contribute to the welfare of the team						
Communicates respectfully with colleagues. Provides feedback in a respectful manner.						
Understands and applies the business elements of consulting						

Personal Learning Development Plan

Career Goals:

What do you want to learn or change?	What do you need to do?	By when?	Indicator that learning or change has occurred	Date objectives are met
		Intervention		

Date	Progress
Date	Accomplishment of Goal

Performance Review Meeting Date:

Signature of employee:

Signature of manager: