



# LEARNING FRAMEWORK GUIDE

College and University Professional Association for Human Resources  
[www.cupahr.org/framework](http://www.cupahr.org/framework)

# CUPA-HR Learning Framework

## Individual Action Planning

The CUPA-HR [Learning Framework](#) supports professional development planning by illustrating dynamic higher ed HR competencies and creating a foundation for discussion and measurement of those competencies.

The framework is:

- Designed around HR expertise and professional competencies
- Compatible with current HR practices
- Tailored to the development of essential higher ed HR skills
- A basis for consistent higher ed HR discourse and expectations

### Getting Started: First Things First

1. What competencies are necessary to do your job now? Where should you be a year from now? Three years from now?
2. What are your greatest professional strengths and weaknesses?
3. What is most important to you for your career now? A year from now? Three years from now?

### Next Step: Self-Assessment

The table on pages 2 and 3 will help you to assess how important each competency is to you and what level you would like to achieve. Use the following importance scale and proficiency levels to assist in completing the assessment.

#### Level of importance:

0 = not applicable; 1 = not important; 2 = somewhat important; 3 = important; and 4 = very important

#### Proficiency:

**Awareness** = At this proficiency level, you can perform the competency in its most basic level and require regular supervision and direction.

**Application** = At this proficiency level, you can perform the competency at the required level, without supervision, and have the ability to question and/or initiate improvement without instruction.

**Influence** = At this proficiency level, you are able to use your expertise in a skill to advise, support and influence others and spark change in actions, behavior and processes to achieve a common goal.

<b>Core</b> (Operational. Achieving specific higher ed HR skills from experience or learning)	<b>Level of Importance</b> (use scale of 0-4)	<b>Current Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Target Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Prioritize Competency Work</b> (use 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)	<b>Time to Achieve Target Level</b> (3 mos, 6 mos, 1 year, other)
AI and Technology					
Benefits					
Budget and Finance					
Communications					
Compensation					
Compliance, Risk Management and Public Policy					
Employee Development					
Employee/Labor Relations					
HR Data, Systems and Analytics					
Leadership					
Organizational Development and Planning					
Project Management					
Recruitment					
<b>Building Capabilities</b> (Experiential. Overseeing the functioning and activities of teams, departments or divisions)	<b>Level of Importance</b> (use scale of 0-4)	<b>Current Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Target Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Prioritize Competency Work</b> (use 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)	<b>Time to Achieve Target Level</b> (3 mos, 6 mos, 1 year, other)
Change Management					
Culture-Building					
HR Service					
Identify, Recruit and Onboard Talent					

Performance Management					
Succession Planning					
<b>Engagement</b> (Relational. A strong culture that places importance on relationships, connections and care throughout the entire institution)	<b>Level of Importance</b> (use scale of 0-4)	<b>Current Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Target Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Prioritize Competency Work</b> (use 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)	<b>Time to Achieve Target Level</b> (3 mos, 6 mos, 1 year, other)
Building Trust					
Coaching					
Collaboration					
Constructive Inquiry					
Emotional Intelligence					
Ethics					
Mentoring					
Relationship Management					
Self-Awareness and Accountability					
Team-Building					
<b>Strategic Leadership</b> (Influential. Having strategic influence on work and direction of work and building rapport)	<b>Level of Importance</b> (use scale of 0-4)	<b>Current Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Target Proficiency Level</b> (list a proficiency)	<b>Prioritize Competency Work</b> (use 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.)	<b>Time to Achieve Target Level</b> (3 mos, 6 mos, 1 year, other)
Continuous Improvement					
Critical Thinking					
Influence					
Planning					
Strategic Positioning					
Understanding the Business of Higher Ed					

# Final Step: Conversation Process

Inspiring our staff, our teams and ourselves to grow is essential to any institution's success. Growth can be nurtured through meaningful conversations that go well beyond formalized performance reviews and evaluations. To help facilitate ongoing professional development conversations, use the following questions or identify a few additional ones that aid in encouraging development:

- What do you like about your role? What don't you like about it?
- After completing the assessment, describe what you learned about your competency strengths and weaknesses?
- Which competencies do you want to improve immediately?
- How would you identify your current competency proficiency level? How do you think others would describe your proficiency level?
- What gaps do you see in your current proficiency level and the ability to achieve your goal(s)?
- What is getting in your way of enjoying what you do?
- How do you want to contribute to the team, the institution?
- What can I do to help you throughout your professional development pursuits?
- What questions do you have for me?

## Working on your own development:

Once the handout is complete, who will you identify to tackle some or all of the above questions? Have you identified more than one person? Be sure to schedule a meeting within 30 days of completing the assessment. The longer you wait, the less likely you'll have the conversation. Once you've had time to meet with someone, what additional goals will you set for yourself? What resources will you need to achieve them? Have you asked the person(s) you involved in the process to hold you accountable (ex. set target dates, follow-up plans, etc.)?

What if you are the only person in your department – who do you identify to discuss the assessment? Sometimes asking someone outside your department can offer a different perspective about responsibilities and development. Contact someone you collaborate with on campus. Or locate a peer at another institution and discuss what types of competencies are most important, and ones you'd like to improve. Don't forget to set goals, and be sure to take steps to remain accountable.

## Working with someone else's development:

Once this handout is complete, confirm the employee feels clear about next steps, which could include learning by experience, from others, or through additional education. Be sure to follow up and have the employee set reasonable goals.





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