



Chief Workforce Officer (CWO)

CORE COMPETENCIES: Domains, Skills/Tasks, and Examples by Behavioral Stage

How to Use This Document

Core competencies are key concepts that help to ensure the proper development and knowledge acquisition of a high-functioning CWO. Broken down into defined skills/tasks, as well as behavioral examples to help with self-assessment, the core competencies serve as a roadmap for a CWO regardless of their career level, to support an ongoing and dynamic learning journey. This self-assessment may also serve as a job description outline for a CWO's role and allows CWOs to assess themselves and identify knowledge, skill, and/or behavior gaps that may require further training opportunities. This document is not intended to be used for performance review, which could be perceived as judgmental or (at worst) punitive; rather, it is meant to be a positive instrument for ongoing professional self-development. Moreover, the CWO core competencies comprise a living document that is not all encompassing and is ever-evolving.

Chief Workforce Officer Role Summary

The Chief Workforce Officer (CWO) is a visionary thought leader who, with other key business leaders, co-creates the strategy to design and develop an agile workforce that is responsive to the changing needs of the industry and the community. This position anticipates potential shifts in the industry and the workforce to develop and drive strategies that are advantageous for the organization, the employees, patients and families, and the communities being served.

Definitions

Domains: The major functional roles or areas of competence for which the CWO is accountable.

Foundational Competency Domains:

- Team Growth & Development
- Strategy & Innovation
- Professionalism, Personal Integrity, and Effectiveness
- Cultural Humility

Leadership Domains:

- Organizational & Leadership Effectiveness
- Partnership & Collaboration
- Resiliency & Joy in Work

Technical/Functional/Occupational Domain:

- Workforce Optimization

Tasks/Skills: The major responsibilities that comprise each Domain.

Behavioral Stages: Actions that reflect how responsibilities are expected to be carried out at different stages in a CWO's competency development journey. Implementing tasks/skills will involve more or less support (depending on behavioral stage) from directors, managers, HR professionals, and others playing a leadership role at the health center. Advancement through each stage involves ongoing training to improve the CWO's skills/tasks knowledge and behaviors.

These stages are based on the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition¹:

<p>Stage 5: Expert Innovating</p> <p><i>(Incorporates Stages 1-4)</i></p>	<p>Identifies and executes activities that are innovative and effective. Brings a broad range of experiences and expertise to bear on current and anticipated challenges in a complex and uncertain environment. Develops, demonstrates, and effectively shares well-informed and thoughtful innovations, advanced knowledge, and cutting-edge practices.</p>
<p>Stage 4: Skilled Modeling High Function</p> <p><i>(Incorporates Stages 1-3)</i></p>	<p>Demonstrates significant experience with a range of tools and proven solutions. Coaches others. Brings a holistic lens to addressing organizational issues while working proactively and efficiently as a key member of the C-suite team. Applies a future-focused mindset, staying abreast of emerging technology, skill mastery, and communicating modernization of industry.</p>
<p>Stage 3: Applied Fully Functioning</p> <p><i>(Incorporates Stages 1 & 2)</i></p>	<p>Implements most tasks independently and is able to view issues holistically with minimal support. Develops and executes plans and establishes productive routines. Seeks input as appropriate for novel or complex tasks and situations. Serves as an effective member of the C-suite team.</p>
<p>Stage 2: Basic Knowing</p>	<p>Reflects a broadening understanding of tasks and context, with supervision and support in learning new skills and prioritizing</p>

¹ Dreyfus, S.E., Dreyfus, H. L. (1980). *A five-stage model of the mental activities involved in directed skill acquisition*. Washington, DC: Storming Media.



<i>(Incorporates Stage 1)</i>	workload. Develops knowledge and skills with guidance and feedback regarding information relevant to the role.
Stage 1: Learning Awareness	Executes tasks at a novice skill level based primarily on knowledge-based training. Requires ongoing supervision and support to complete tasks and gain experience with applying knowledge to the health center context.

Core Competencies Domains, Skills/Tasks, and Examples by Behavioral Stage

Foundational Domains		
<i>Domain</i>	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Team Growth & Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a healthy, high performance team environment that facilitates the development of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and behaviors necessary for team members to function collaboratively with a high degree of engagement and satisfaction within the department and the health center and at the highest possible levels of effective performance. 2. Initiate approaches for change management to support the evolution of the workforce. 3. Create opportunities for advancement within the organization through career ladders, leadership development, and succession planning. 4. Support effective performance management by promoting strategies such as goal setting/coaching/mentorships to support success within the organization. 5. Drive alignment and teamwork across clinical, administrative, and financial functional teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oversee development, implementation, monitoring, and updating of a data-driven, visionary workforce plan for achieving strategies to meet current and anticipated development needs of the workforce. ● Understand and apply principles of change management. ● Develop strategies for career ladders that account for unique needs of every employee (regardless of position or role). ● Prepare a succession plan for key staff roles. ● Advocate for leadership training opportunities for any career pathway and also in succession planning. ● Develop coaching and mentorship programs with a focus on justice, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (JEDI-B) for all staff. ● Lead development/update of guidance for staff to assess and improve performance. ● Continuously shape staffing models that optimize the workforce (e.g., team-based care) and address changing business needs. ● Collect feedback, conduct staff satisfaction surveys, and respond to the workforce needs of all staff.

Foundational Domains		
<i>Domain</i>	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Strategy & Innovation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Perpetuate proactive problem solving and use health information technology (HIT) to engage in data-driven decision making to advance innovative strategies that meet the needs of the workforce. 2. Set clear direction for the organization's workforce initiatives to ensure alignment across overall operations and facilitate commitment for business goals and objectives aimed at enhancing and strengthening the organization's workforce. 3. Think outside existing healthcare strategies to identify and implement new practices that have shown promise in improving the delivery of care while minimizing workforce burden. 4. Utilize a worker-centric/human-centered approach to the development of workforce strategies. 5. Assess the healthcare environment to identify opportunities and best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff are involved or have a voice in the development of a comprehensive workforce plan. This includes leading the collection and analysis of staff satisfaction surveys and other communication channels with employees. • Identify the business goals of the health center and align workforce initiatives with these goals and staff input. Ensure that the business goals properly reflect the mission, vision, and values of the health center, balancing employee well-being with financial sustainability. • Stay current on the changing workforce needs of healthcare employees and appropriate technology/tools (e.g., AI integration), including discernment on when routine tasks can be addressed with technology while maintaining the capacity to address tasks requiring creativity, empathy, and other cognitive abilities. • Stay current on new technologies to automate/support tasks related to workforce recruitment, retention, and well-being. • Identify trusted sources and references to retrieve appropriate market data, then build a consistent and trusted compensation strategy. • Take time and initiative to regularly research benefits models and trends in correlation with employee needs to ensure benefits and total compensation programs are aligned with employee needs and fiscal stewardship. • Build strong communication and transparency models in partnership with executive leadership to help



		<p>build trust and maintain mission directives throughout the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contribute to strategies related to labor market and staffing models when exploring new business initiatives.
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Foundational Domains

Domain	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Professionalism, Personal Integrity & Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply knowledge, sensitivity, and judgment to act effectively and with personal integrity in accordance with the fundamental principles of professional and personal ethical behavior. 2. Effectively manage self and resources to achieve the health center mission and objectives. 3. Demonstrate credible, executive presence including strong verbal, non-verbal, written, and active listening communication skills with a focus on consensus building, action orientation, and results generation. 4. Assess personal strengths/challenges and manage learning and guidance needs (e.g., participate in structured self-assessments and education, seek feedback and guidance and lifelong learning, etc.) proactively and continuously. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Model and practice utmost integrity and ethics as the CWO with a focus on advocating for the needs of the entire workforce no matter position or role. ● Develop a knowledge of leadership styles and understand the workforce's various preferences in the way leadership interacts with staff and makes decisions. ● Practice emotional intelligence and lead from a place of trust, respect, empathy, humility, and support. ● Put into action strong verbal, non-verbal, and written communication that is multi-directional and not only top down. Practice an inclusive decision-making process, engaging all affected parties and considering their input. ● Prioritize strengths-based communication. ● Implement conflict management into the communication strategies. ● Regularly conduct self-assessments and elicit feedback from others to identify strengths and areas of growth. ● Attend training and other development opportunities to strengthen leadership and communication skills.

Foundational Domains

<i>Domain</i>	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Cultural Humility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement strategies to foster justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (JEDI-B) within the health center workforce, and use JEDI-B values to guide relationships with community groups and business partners as applicable to ensure representation of the local community. 2. Facilitate positive, constructive interactions among staff, patients, families, and the community by demonstrating and fostering cultural humility. 3. Engage patients and community in workforce development and planning efforts tailored to meet individual and population-based needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure a thorough understanding of justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (JEDI-B). ● Implement JEDI-B principles into all workforce strategies and initiatives. ● Assess diversity across the health center and implement recruitment, retention, and engagement strategies that allow diverse staff to achieve leadership positions. ● Conduct difficult conversations with C-Suite on the topics of JEDI-B. ● Implement organizational culture practices that are built on JEDI-B principles. ● Participate in continuing education on various JEDI-B topics such as inclusive language, discrimination, microaggressions, and anti-racist practices. ● Be trained on and provide training to staff on cultural humility. Support accountability for leadership to embody JEDI-B principles with all staff, patients, and the community the health center serves.

Leadership Domains

Domain	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Organizational & Leadership Effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate organizational agility and improve the organization's identity through engagement of the workforce. 2. Prioritize the workforce needs based on the current state and changing circumstances of healthcare. 3. Understand the health center budgetary implications and strategies as it relates to the workforce. 4. Establish bidirectional communication methods with frontline workers and managerial staff to identify workforce needs. 5. Advocate for the health center mission, values, and culture. 6. Partner with senior leadership to ensure succession planning and leadership development plans/programs address the strategic business needs and gaps. 7. Maintain in-depth knowledge of legal requirements related to day-to-day management of team members, reducing legal risks and ensuring regulatory compliance. 8. Understand UDS reporting metrics as it relates to staffing needs. 9. Demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the unique dynamics of the health center model such as team based care, telehealth, the patient-centered medical home (PCMH), and use this knowledge as a lens for developing workforce strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve as an advocate for health center staff by identifying and mitigating moral distress. • Inspire health center staff in communicating to external audiences about the health center's organizational mission, vision, values, culture, services, and leadership. • Work with leadership team (e.g., CFO and CHRO) to identify and implement robust investments in the workforce. • Work with leadership team (e.g., CFO and CHRO) to establish a pay equity methodology that ensures a thriving wage (goes beyond a living wage) for all staff. • Support equity- and data-driven compensation transparency for effective recruitment, retention, and engagement of the workforce. Make salary ranges publicly available. • Ensure that the health center's mission is reflected not only externally, but also accounts for leadership's treatment and investment in the workforce. • Build an organizational culture focused on workforce wellness and well-being that goes beyond self-care and makes substantial and meaningful changes to the health center's organizational practices. • Implement data-driven strategies to meet workforce needs. • Secure cohesiveness and buy-in from all leadership to advance workforce wellness and well-being. • Look beyond productivity measures to develop a people-first organization.



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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the data, legal, and operational requirements that affect the workforce. |
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Leadership Domains		
<i>Domain</i>	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Partnership & Collaboration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop strategic partnerships with academic, community-based, and vocational partners to build pathways for quality and diverse candidates. 2. Provide experiential learning opportunities for health professions students. 3. Cultivate strategic partnerships that provide added knowledge and resources to the organization's workforce so they may enhance the quality of services and solutions rendered to the community. 4. Facilitate proper placement and use of volunteers to advance operations. 5. Contribute expertise in the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) program including working with federal partners such as the Bureau of Primary Health Care, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid, etc. 6. Partner with leadership across the organization to develop and implement solutions to address any workforce gaps, issues or opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop and maintain relationships with community organizations, academic institutions, and other potential partners to support workforce pathway development and other advancement opportunities. ● Lead development of a health professions and education training (HP-ET) program. ● Increase the health center's resources by strategically leveraging partnerships, collaborations, and volunteers. ● Lead, along with the rest of the C-Suite, the communication and data collection efforts required by HRSA, BPHC, and other agencies. ● Support advocacy for increased funding to support workforce needs. ● Cultivate strategic partnerships with community workforce organizations that bring value to the organization.

Leadership Domains		
<i>Domain</i>	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Resiliency & Joy in Work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Successfully navigate, drive change, and inspire commitment as the health center adopts new initiatives and addresses new care models. 2. Regularly assess workforce health, engagement, and satisfaction using evidence-based or standardized assessment tools. 3. Implement strategies that address resiliency and mitigate factors contributing to burnout, compassion fatigue, and moral distress among the workforce. 4. Understand and implement strategies that increase joy in work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and implement regular all-staff communications conveying why well-being in the workplace is important. • Create a business case to gain resources needed to support workplace well-being. • Lead development and implementation of action plans based on staff satisfaction and wellness surveys and other sources to understand organizational drivers behind burnout and barriers to staff well-being. • Develop strategies to support health center staff during a crisis. • Actively prepare for and ensure bi-directional communication between leadership and staff during disruptive change. • Respond to concerns expressed by the workforce and advocate for fair and equitable resolutions. • Practice transparency in all workforce areas (e.g., compensation, promotions, career advancement, executive decisions). • Build a trauma-informed organization that addresses the struggles faced by the healthcare workforce (e.g., burnout, compassion fatigue, moral distress). • Support staff resilience by developing programs and policies that support the emotional, physical, financial, and communication needs of the workforce. • Integrate the ideas and suggestions of all staff in the development of a resilient and wellness-focused organizational culture to become an employer of choice.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop, regularly assess, and report out on metrics to gauge the level of resiliency and professional, personal, and financial well-being in the workplace.
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Technical/Functional/Occupational Domain

Domain	Skills/Tasks	Behavioral Examples
Workforce Optimization	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with health center leadership (e.g., Chief Information Officer) to leverage and reduce administrative burden related to information technology (e.g., AI enhanced capabilities). 2. Hire, promote, and develop the workforce to ensure proper placement of staff in positions that highlight their strengths and encourage positive engagement. 3. Understand the role of skill-building in positively impacting performance and create opportunities for employee skill/knowledge development. 4. Ensure all clinical workforce are working to the top of their licenses. 5. Establish relationships with staff to provide and promote professional development, continuing education opportunities, onsite training, cross-training, and programs responsive to the needs and preferences of the workforce. 6. Collaborate with the internal recruitment team to refine onboarding, professional development, retention strategies, recognition tools, career advancement, and other policies and programs to maintain a skilled and agile workforce. 7. Apply advanced workforce planning techniques and tools (e.g., supply and demand forecasting, trend analysis) to provide insight, data analysis, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leverage new technology (e.g., AI) to reduce administrative burden and repetitive tasks. ● Hire scribes and other administrative staff to support clinical reporting and reduce administrative burden. ● Develop strategies for hiring, promotion, and advancement to include in the health center's comprehensive workforce plan. ● Develop frameworks that support career advancement centering justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and belonging (JEDI-B). ● Ensure promotions or the addition of more job responsibilities are always aligned with a raise in salary. ● Develop training programs to advance the skills of all staff. ● Build career pathways that are based on the specific needs and wants of the different members of the workforce. ● Lead by example to support/coach managers and supervisors to engage in regular communications with direct reports, to assess individual career goals and appropriate career paths. ● Collaborate with human resources, C-Suite, and other leadership/workforce staff to support innovative and effective workforce policies, programs, and initiatives to ensure efficacy and sustainability. ● Conduct assessments with the goal of supporting the workforce.



	recommendations on workforce development planning.	
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