21st Century IS Competencies

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Oaksmill Limited
IS competencies comprises of technical, business and behavioral competencies

- **Technical competencies** based on technology skills
- **Business competencies** based on business knowledge / awareness
- **Behavioral competencies** based on personal attitudes and characteristics

**Easy**  **Difficult**

Relative ease of acquisition

Complete competency comprises of technical competencies, business competencies and behavioural competencies. This session focuses on behavioural competencies, the least understood and the most important of the three.
To succeed long-term …

… IS professionals need to follow seven habits of highly effective IS professionals:

- Habit 1 - Be proactive
- Habit 2 - Begin with the end in mind
- Habit 3 - Put first things first
- Habit 4 - Think win-win
- Habit 5 - Seek first to understand and then to be understood
- Habit 6 - Synergize
- Habit 7 - Sharpen the saw

We use Stephen Covey’s The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People as a broad structure on which to hang the IS competencies.
Habit 1: Be proactive

- Don’t be a ‘victim’, take charge, be responsible
- Know the business; exploit IS’s unique position – helicopter view of world

- Position yourself so you know early and can influence what business needs and what is expected of you
Habit 2: Begin with the end in mind

- Where do you want to be:
  - By the time you retire
  - In five years’ time
  - In three years’ time
  - By the end of this year?
- Where do you want your department to be?
- Where do you want your company to be?
Habit 3: Put first things first

- **High Urgency, High Importance**: This should get your attention next.
- **High Urgency, Low Importance**: You’ll intuitively do this first.
- **Low Urgency, High Importance**: You’ll naturally ignore this.
- **Low Urgency, Low Importance**: This gets your attention next.

Source: Franklin-Covey - Time management course
Habit 4 - Think win-win

Effective IS executives:
• Need to communicate in right sequence
• Need to negotiate skilfully
Definition:

Conflict is the situation in which people’s concerns or positions appear to be incompatible.

Note:

- **Concern:** What you care about in a conflict; the thing that’s threatened that you would like to protect. The ‘non-negotiable’.

- **Position:** The *action* you propose to settle the conflict; what you think should be done.
The five conflict-handling modes

- Competing
- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding
- Accommodating

Contributions of each mode

- **Competing:** Advocacy for viewpoints
- **Compromising:** Pragmatism & moderation
- **Avoiding:** Managing transaction costs
- **Collaborating:** Innovation & resolution
- **Accommodating:** Building goodwill & cohesiveness

Although Collaborating is the ‘best’ mode, some companies have a culture that is combative and competitive (like ICL in the 70s/80s) and tend to drive individual behaviour. Your best option if your natural mode is collaboration is to be collaborative with a touch of competitiveness, so your colleagues don’t wrongly class you as being weak and disloyal!

The danger of a highly combative/competitive style is that valid opposition often gets stifled and the final decision may be either poor or even fatally flawed.

NOTE: despite your natural modes, you are in charge and can alter your own behaviour according to the circumstances. And you can steer others. For example:
- If you are competitive, STOP, give yourself a chance to think
- If you are an avoider, try to get engaged and see the picture from others’ viewpoints
- If you find yourself responding ‘as usual’, then take stock, replay the discussion and see if you are behaving ‘to type’ and then decide if that is what you want to continue to do.
Conflict–handling behavior: claiming, giving or sharing value

Compromise = both get half the pie. Better than none, but worse than the whole pie.

Compromise on minor issues, but only on significant issues if neither collaborating (usually the best) or competing is not feasible. Could be a temporary solution to a major, complex problem. Often to meet a deadline. But check it is a real deadline.

Make partial concessions where possible. Focus on fairness: agree what would be fair before offering a compromise or agreeing to one.
Conflict–handling behavior: creating value

- Collaborating
- Compromising
- Avoiding

Note that consensus tends to lead to Collaboration, whereas Compromise is sometimes the worst of both evils!

Avoidance may be needed:
- to reduce stress,
- for emotional conflicts,
- where little can be gained,
- knowing when to postpone.
Above average negotiators ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t</th>
<th>Do</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use irritators</td>
<td>Label agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Label disagreement</td>
<td>Seek information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defend - attack</td>
<td>Test understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counter propose</td>
<td>Summarise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dilute the argument</td>
<td>Express feelings</td>
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Irritators such as: generous offer, fair and reasonable; I hear you.

Attack-defend: You can’t blame us for that
It’s not our fault that the software does not work as planned

Labelling disagreement: I disagree with your point about
vs
The problems were due to BT, as you said earlier. So, the reason for the slow performance is not due to our software, but …

Express feelings: I’m uncertain how to respond to your point OR I feel good that we at least agree on …

Dilute argument: Exposing many points actually gives the other party more room to ‘win’ his points. The more educated and the more ‘scientific’ the negotiator the more likely that argument dilution occurs!
Habit 5 - Seek first to understand and then to be understood

Effective IS professionals try to understand and apply differences in behaviour preferences between individuals in group interactions.
FIRO-B: an intro

FIRO B (Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation - Behavior™):
• Created by Will Schutz, 1958
• A classic tool for building team compatibility
• A unique, world-leading indicator of interpersonal style.
• Ideal for team building, development and coaching.

The FIRO-B® instrument identifies:
• How you tend to behave toward others and
• How you want them to behave toward you.

Your FIRO-B results can help you increase your self-understanding in a number of important areas, including how you handle interpersonal relationships and your own social needs, how others perceive you, and how you see them.

Source: CPP, Inc. 3803 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303 | 800-624-1765 | www.cpp.com
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http://www.cpp.co.uk/solutions/psychometric/firo_b.asp
Inclusion: is about recognition, belonging, participation, contact with others, and how you relate to groups
Control: concerns influence, leadership, responsibility, and decision making
**Affection:** is about closeness, warmth, sensitivity, openness, and how you relate to others
**Expressed and Wanted Behaviour**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPRESSED</th>
<th>WANTED</th>
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<tr>
<td>• How much do you prefer to initiate the behaviour?</td>
<td>• How much do you prefer others to take the initiative?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How do you actually behave with respect to the 3 fundamental interpersonal needs?</td>
<td>• How much do you want to be on the receiving end of the 3 behaviours?</td>
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<td>• What is your comfort level engaging in the behaviours associated with the 3 needs?</td>
<td>• What is your comfort level when others direct their behaviours associated with the 3 needs to you?</td>
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FIRO-B®: courtesy – OPP Limited
## FIRO-B in summary, measures …

… how a person typically behaves towards others and how that person would like others to behave towards him or her.

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<th></th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Affection</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Expressed</strong></td>
<td>I make an effort to include others in my activities. I try to belong, to join social groups – to be with people as much as possible.</td>
<td>I try to exert control and influence over things. I enjoy organising things and directing others.</td>
<td>I make an effort to get close to people. I am comfortable expressing personal feelings and I try to be supportive of others.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wanted</strong></td>
<td>I want other people to invite me to belong. I enjoy it when others notice me.</td>
<td>I feel most comfortable working in well-defined situations. I try to get clear expectations and instructions.</td>
<td>I want others to act warmly towards me. I enjoy it when people share their feelings with me and when they encourage my efforts.</td>
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Habit 6 – Synergize: with external partners

Both organisations and IS departments typically have too many relationships. One way to classify individual ‘partners’ is by using this grid. Once classified, you will know how to behave to and treat each so-called partner.
Habit 6 – Synergise: with internal partners

- Work collaboratively with business sponsors to develop **jointly** business case:
  - Socialise and get under their skin
  - Set their expectations
  - Lead from behind

- Set up governance mechanism for:
  - Architecture
  - Infrastructure strategy
  - Applications portfolio
  - Clear project ownership
  - Benefit realisation process

- Appoint relationship managers
Habit 7 - Sharpen the saw

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<tr>
<th>1. Get coaching/mentoring</th>
<th>4. Take on non-IT responsibilities</th>
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<td>2. Ring-fence time</td>
<td>5. Educate yourself on wider business matters</td>
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<td>3. Build the strength of deputies</td>
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Source: Gartner EXP - Creating the CIO Success Cycle
And …?

“There are three kinds of people:
• Those who make things happen
• Those who watch things happen
• Those who wonder what’s happened”  
Manfred deVries

“It is easier to act into a new way of thinking than to think into a new way of acting.”  
Richard Pascale

“There is nothing more difficult to execute, more dubious of success, more dangerous to administer than to introduce a new system: for he has the enmity of those who will profit from the old system, and only lukewarm support from those who might profit from the new system.”  
Niccolo Machiavelli
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