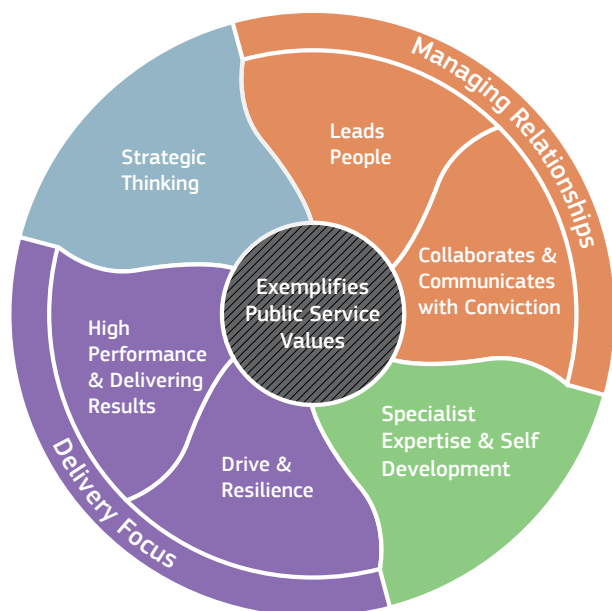


Irish Civil Service

Assistant Secretary Competency Model



The competency model for Assistant Secretaries in the civil service has been updated following a joint review by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (D/PER) and the Public Appointments Service (PAS).

The purpose of the review was to develop an up-to-date model which would be fit for purpose and, amongst other things, reflect the increased accountability expected at Assistant Secretary level, provide clarity on the standard of performance expected and underpin capacity-building for the future to address skills and/or performance gaps.

An extensive review examined national and international perspectives on the Irish public service and also considered progressive leadership competency models and practice from public and private sectors from around the world. There was extensive consultation with a range of external and internal stakeholders as part of the review, including Assistant Secretaries themselves, Secretaries General, the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform, Senior Public Service, Top Level Appointments Committee, and senior managers from the broader public service. The views of very experienced external practitioners with

an in-depth understanding and knowledge of leadership effectiveness and the Public Service were also taken into account.

The challenges facing senior management in the civil service have evolved significantly in recent years. The Assistant Secretary Competencies are intended to reflect the qualities needed by senior management in the civil service in dealing with current and emerging challenges. The competencies provide a cornerstone for future organisational and talent management developments in areas such as Recruitment & Selection, Performance Management, Leadership Development & Coaching and the identification of potential leaders / succession planning.

The new competency model reflects what is needed to operate effectively in the environment in which public servants and Assistant Secretaries find themselves, in a period of high demand for increased pace of decision making and delivery, increased complexity and volume of demand, fewer resources, increased media and public scrutiny and an ambitious and progressive public service reform programme. Compared to the previous model, it articulates more clearly the standards required for high performance at senior levels in action-focused terms.

The new model has an increased or new emphasis on:

-) The standards required for high performance at senior levels;
-) The importance of public service values;
-) The need for, and importance of, effective interaction with the political system;
-) The importance of resilience and self-development in underpinning performance over the longer term;
-) The need for strong project & financial management;
-) Balancing strategic focus over the longer term and delivering results at pace.

Assistant Secretary Competencies

Effective Performance Indicators



Exemplifies Public Service Values

Effective Performance is:

-) Serving the Government and people of Ireland
-) Acting at all times with integrity
-) Treating others with respect
-) Being responsible for own actions
-) Operating with professionalism and probity



Strategic Thinking

Effective Performance is:

-) Creating a vision for the organisation & sector and anticipating the requirements to deliver it
-) Analysing complex issues quickly and anticipating knock-on consequences
-) Taking a system-wide approach and seeing connections, risks and the potential for innovation in the wider environment
-) Leading on the implementation of risk assessment practices and engaging in balanced risk taking
-) Showing courage in making difficult decisions



Managing Relationships: Leads People

Effective Performance is:

-) Being a visible and energetic leader who fully engages others
-) Building and supporting cross functional and interdepartmental teams
-) Delegating responsibility and ensuring accountability in others
-) Setting challenging goals and implementing effective performance management
-) Coaching and supporting others to optimise their contribution and development



Managing Relationships: Collaborates and Communicates with Conviction

Effective Performance is:

-) Playing a full and active part on the senior team in shaping and leading the Department
-) Communicating professionally and credibly, managing the expectations of others
-) Skillfully negotiating and influencing with conviction
-) Anticipating political sensitivities and complexities and responding in an informed and constructive manner
-) Building and maintaining effective working relationships with key stakeholders
-) Facilitating collaboration, partnerships and networks internally and externally to achieve common goals



Delivery Focus: High Performance and Delivering Results '

Effective Performance is:

-) Assuming accountability for own actions and decisions
-) Ensuring the full range of management disciplines are used to deliver quality services at pace and within budget
-) Challenging processes to improve organisational capacity, responsiveness and citizen focus
-) Ensuring successful implementation through a range of delivery methods, including use of external parties
-) Focusing effort on priority tasks to maximise results
-) Ensuring a strong feedback loop between policy development and operations



Delivery Focus: Drive and Resilience

Effective Performance is:

-) Showing initiative and sustaining high levels of personal drive and energy
-) Leading and managing multiple complex priorities effectively
-) Speaking own mind with confidence and conviction
-) Keeping perspective and utilizing personal support strategies to help maintain focus and bounce back from disappointments
-) Staying positive and professional in the face of difficult situations



Specialist Expertise and Self-Development

Effective Performance is:

-) Maintaining a sound knowledge of departmental, sectoral, political and international issues and their wider implications for the citizen and the State
-) Continuously updating and demonstrating expertise in relevant areas
-) Being self aware and seeking opportunities to act on areas for own development
-) Seeking feedback and reviewing own practices and behaviours
-) Being regarded as an expert in own area(s) of specialism



Notes

