



EXCEED THE BAR

CAREER NAVIGATOR SERIES

A close-up photograph of a person's hand, wearing a black watch, is shown against a light background. The hand is positioned as if interacting with a digital interface. Overlaid on the hand and the background is a complex network of white lines and circular nodes, resembling a circuit board or a data network. Several circular icons are also visible, including a thumbs-up, a magnifying glass, a network diagram, and a circular arrow.

COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT GUIDE
INFLUENCING AND ASSERTING

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This competency development guide is designed to take a closer look at yourself, **help you explore strengths and development opportunities** for a particular competency that is important for successful performance in a work environment, and provide practical guidance and tasks to help you develop a particular competency.

Whether you are at the start of your career, exploring opportunities for promotion within your current organisation, or in a period of career transition, this guide will to **help focus and guide your efforts**. It provides you with a **structured approach to increase your self-awareness** and to craft a personalised action plan.

Competency

Influencing and Asserting

Influencing and Asserting means demonstrating confidence and courage to disagree and question assumptions, challenging ideas and established views, and shaping opinions to facilitate action

Behaviours

- ✓ Gains the trust of others by providing information and advice in a professional and credible manner
- ✓ Is self-assured and projects inner confidence
- ✓ Asserts and influences through various modes of communication
- ✓ Persuades others in an assertive and constructive manner
- ✓ Makes a strong personal impression on others
- ✓ Has opinions and holds sway over the opinions of others
- ✓ Gains clear agreement and commitment from others
- ✓ Promotes ideas on behalf of self or others
- ✓ Convinces and positively influences others
- ✓ Engages and lands messages with different groups and people in an impactful way
- ✓ Persuades by using concrete examples to make a point
- ✓ Uses compelling argumentation to convey conclusions and ideas
- ✓ Handles difficult on-the-spot questions
- ✓ Takes well thought-out impactful actions to win a point or reach an agreement

Self-Assessment

Self-awareness is the first step in proactive career management. This process starts with a **sound assessment of your development needs**. You will benefit from acknowledging your own weaknesses so that you can actively plan for how you intend to overcome them. Use the questions below to guide your thinking and reflection.

How relevant is this competency and how does it apply to your job/role/career?

How does this competency contribute to success in your job/role/career?

	Rating Scale				
	1 – Limited (needs significant development)	2 – Basic (development area)	3 - Competent	4 - Potential Strength	5 - Clear Strength
Based on the above behaviours, what rating would you give yourself for this competency, and why? Try to identify specific practical examples for each behavioural indicator in your work environment, or even in your private life.					

Reflecting on the above examples in demonstrating this competency, what behaviours are supporting you in achieving success and which behaviours might be sabotaging your success with this competency?	

Based on a recent performance review, assessment results or other feedback you received, what observations and/or recommendations were made in relation to this competency?	

If you have not received feedback recently, it may be helpful to ask a trusted advisor for constructive feedback and ask them to clarify and elaborate on their observations. It is **important to understand and learn from their feedback to help guide your future development**, rather than to challenge it. The aim here is to learn how your behaviour is perceived by others. Remember that input from others which challenges your own self-perceptions can be extremely valuable in opening you up to new developmental opportunities that you have not previously recognized. During this discussion, consider asking the following kinds of questions:

- ✓ Can you tell me exactly what your impression is of my ability in relation to this competency?
- ✓ What is this observation based on?
- ✓ What do I do that you feel is less effective?
- ✓ Why do you feel that it was less effective?
- ✓ What do you feel I could have done instead?
- ✓ How do you feel that I could best develop my competence in this area?

Self-Reflection

Following on your self-assessment you will now conduct further reflection to enhance your self-awareness and to establish a clear mental image of your accomplishments in relation to this competency. It serves to **identify your strengths**, to celebrate your achievements **and to give you clarity and direction about what you need to develop**.

<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p>Think of a time when you communicated something unpleasant or difficult to say to your manager or work team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How did you assert yourself? - What was the outcome? 	

2

Reflect on a situation in which you were not able to influence the actions of others in a positive direction.

- Why and what did you do about it?
- What was the outcome?

3

Recall a time you were able to influence a co-worker, team member, or management to implement your suggestions.

- Were you successful?
- If not, think about the reason for this?
- What did you do?
- What was the result?

4

Think of when you needed someone else's support but were not able to get it.

- What were the factors that contributed to this?
- How did you handle it?
- What was the final outcome?

5

Recall a situation when you had to influence someone to achieve a task or assignment you were responsible for.

- What did you do?
- What was the result?

6

Refer to the recommended resources below for the video on what *will make you more assertive in 2-minutes?*

- Did you notice what things people do that prevents them being assertive?
- Write down 3 examples where you could have changed the outcome in a situation just by changing the way you responded.
- What are you going to do to be more assertive in future?

7

Refer to the recommended reading resources below and read the article *7 Ways to build influence in the workplace*.

- List the 7 things you need to do to build better influence at work.
- In your opinion, why is it important to be able to influence others?

Practical Development Tips and Actions

Now that you have a better idea of the specific aspects relating to this competency that may be an area of development you can **start exploring some practical tips and actions**. The majority of the recommendations in this guide are self-directed. However, if you have any questions about how any of these activities may be undertaken within the context of your work environment, **we encourage you to consult your manager, mentor or coach**.

Tip number ①

Building rapport is key to influencing people and it starts with your acceptance of the other person’s point of view as valid. You must be able to appreciate and understand another’s perspective. What should you do when you disagree with others on an issue? How can you shape assumptions and facilitate action?

Tip number ②

Identify a situation where you actively and visibly lead and facilitated problem solving efforts or a special project within the past year. Reflect on the following:

- ✓ How effectively did you influence the course of events and decisions that were reached?
- ✓ What could you have done differently to increase your influence over the event?
- ✓ What was your attitude to the issue at the time of engagement?
- ✓ How did your attitude to this issue impact on your ability to change the situation?
- ✓ What can you do when you feel that the issue is out of your hands / out of your sphere of influence?
- ✓ What can you do to be more assertive in future?

Tip number ③

The well-known statement “we judge ourselves on our intentions whilst other people judge us on our behaviour” applies to all of us. To maximise your influence and impact on others, you must consciously ensure that your behaviour is aligned with your intention. Remember, your behaviour is your character, competence and integrity in action. Test yourself frequently in this regard, keeping in mind that nobody can see into your heart. Others can only see what you show them through your actions. Ask others for feedback on your behaviour and perceived intentions and reflect on the following:

- ✓ How would others describe your level of assertiveness?
- ✓ How can you align your actions and intentions more effectively?
- ✓ How can you demonstrate greater flexibility and situational sensitivity?

Development Activity number ①

Find something you can do in your current role to **influence and assert** that will make a positive impact.

- Describe what you did.
- What impact did it have?
- How did it make you feel?

Development Activity number ②

List 5 things your team or department can do to **influence and assert themselves** to improve things in your organisation.

- What do you think can be done to put these ideas into action?
- Discuss your ideas with your team or department.
- Write down what feedback you received.
- How did it make you feel?

Preparation for Interviews

It can be difficult to answer a question like “what is your greatest weakness?”—especially when you expected to be discussing your strengths and what makes you better qualified or suitable for a particular role than others.

Although re-framing your weaknesses into a positive light can be challenging, in regularly conducting self-reflection and combining self-awareness with a clear plan of action, you will be able to deal with these difficult questions with ease.

The key to preparing for this question is to identify aspects that could be perceived as a weakness but could also still communicate strength. This will show the interviewer you are self-aware enough to acknowledge your weakness, know your areas of development, and appreciate the opportunities it presents too.

The following are examples of typical interview questions for this competency. Spend some time reflecting on each and make notes of specific examples to prepare for these curveball questions and ensure you can frame your weaknesses in a positive light and showcase how you are improving in each area.

① **Situation:**

Describe a situation when you had to understand another employee and / or team's position in order to influence their actions in a positive direction.

- How did you go about it?
- What was the outcome?

② **Task:**

③ **Action:**

④ **Result:**

Describe a situation in which you found it difficult to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.

- Why did you have to persuade that person to your point of view?
- Why was it difficult?
- How did you go about it?
- What was the outcome?

① **Situation:**

② **Task:**

③ **Action:**

④ **Result:**

Recommended Resources

Learning by Reading

- ✓ 7 Ways to build influence in the workplace by Jason Demers <https://www.inc.com/jayson-demers/7-ways-to-build-influence-in-the-workplace.html>
- ✓ “How to influence decision makers” by Marshall Goldsmith, Harvard Business Review

Learning by Watching or Listening

- ✓ Tony Robbins: This simple trick will make your more assertive in 2 minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gru7BLqiC0c>
- ✓ TED Talks “How to speak so that people want to listen” by Julian Treasure <https://youtu.be/elho2S0Zahl>

Personal Reflections

Reflection helps create and clarify the meaning and value of your learning experiences. You have an opportunity now to review your learning and progress. This section is about turning the learning and insight into actionable steps to support your personal development goals. Answer these questions before you create your individual development action plan.

Which of the above activities or resources did you find the most useful and why?

Briefly describe what you learned that was new, insightful, and gave you new thoughts and ideas.

Make a list of things you can do based on your newly acquired knowledge, insights, thoughts and ideas.

Make a list of things you still need to focus on.

Development Action Planning

Without a clear plan, it is difficult to track progress and measure your successes and accomplishments in relation to your career aspirations. Focus initially on your short and medium-term plan.

Consider specific work experiences, activities, actions that can be taken within the context of the current role that will enhance this competency. , relationships to leverage, other self-development strategies, including formal development solutions. Note 1) specific actions (2-3), timeline and milestones to maintain momentum and 2) concrete expected outcomes.

Identify the opportunity

List the development opportunity that will enhance performance in your current role in relation to this competency

Identify why it is important

State the reason why this particular development opportunity will make a difference in your career

Identify what good looks like

State what you would like to accomplish and achieve with this competency. This should be aspirational and what you would like to achieve over the medium-term

Identify learning experiences

List activities, assignments, and meaningful experiences that you pursue that will offer an opportunity to develop you develop, enhance, and apply this competency

Identify your stakeholders

Identify those people in your life and relationships you can leverage to provide you with honest feedback, support, information on what is required, and help you along the way in developing this competency

Identify training courses

Identify any other training courses, further relevant reading, podcasts or blogs that can provide the knowledge base that one can then apply to strengthen this competency

Identify support required

State what support you need and who you need it from in order to successfully develop and apply this competency

Identify support required

State what support you need and who you need it from in order to keep you on track, successfully develop and apply this competency

Identify tracking methods

Define your goal clearly, especially how you will know when you have achieved it and then indicate specific measures you will use to monitor and track your progress

Identify accountability

State who you can share your goals with. Sharing your goals with someone will help you stay on track and help you stay accountable

Identify possible derailers

Consider what challenges you may face in trying to achieve your goal and define how you will manage possible setbacks to ensure sustained effort and perseverance