

Fact Sheet for the Federal Workforce Competency Initiative (FWCI)

What is a competency?

A competency is a measurable pattern of skills, knowledges, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics which an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully. General competencies reflect the cognitive and social capabilities (e.g., problem solving, interpersonal skills) required for job performance in a variety of occupations. On the other hand, technical competencies are more specific as they are tailored to the particular knowledge and skill requirements for a specific job series (e.g., engineering) or position.

What is the FWCI?

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is launching the Federal Workforce Competency Initiative (FWCI) to update the Governmentwide competency models. This initiative will provide OPM and Federal agencies with a current data-based foundation for a wide variety of human capital activities, including job design, recruitment, selection, performance management, training, and career development. OPM also will use the data to inform policy areas such as qualifications and classification. The FWCI will build upon and update competency data collected in OPM's MOSAIC (Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory—Closed-ended) studies conducted since the 1990s. The FWCI is an opportunity for OPM and agencies to work together to identify the competencies most important for success and provides critical data needed to continue building the foundation for effective human capital management across the Federal Government.

The FWCI will be completed in multiple phases. Phase 1 will update general competency and task data for a broad group of occupations. To update the general competencies and task data, a Governmentwide survey will be distributed to a random sample of employees and their supervisors in the targeted occupations. Future phases will update technical competency and task data by occupational family.

Who is being asked to complete the FWCI Survey?

A random sample of Federal employees across more than 350 occupations and their supervisors will be asked to complete the survey.

Why is OPM issuing a survey for the FWCI?

OPM is collecting information to identify the tasks and competencies that are most important for successful performance across a wide variety of occupations in the Federal Government. Results will be used to inform Federal human resources policy and to assist employees in career development and training, as well as to help organizations with workforce planning, selection, and performance management.

How will individuals receive the FWCI Survey?

Participants in the targeted job series covered by the FWCI will receive an email with an invitation to complete the survey.

What information does the *employee* survey cover?

The employee survey may contain all or a subset of the following four sections: (I) Occupational Background Information; (II) Competencies; (III) Tasks; and (IV) Background Information. The Occupational Background Information section asks employees to respond to questions regarding their background in the job. The Competencies section asks employees to rate competencies that may be required to perform their job. The Tasks section asks employees to rate tasks that may be performed as part of their job. The Background Information section asks for information about the employee (e.g., gender, race).

What information does the *supervisor* survey cover?

The supervisor survey may contain all or a subset of the following four sections: (I) Occupational Background; (II) Competencies; (III) Tasks; and (IV) Background Information. The Occupational Background section asks for information about the supervisor and their employees, such as the series and grade levels they supervise. The Competencies section asks supervisors to rate competencies that may be required to perform work in employees' jobs. The Tasks section asks supervisors to rate tasks that may be performed as part of employees' jobs. The Background Information section asks for information about the supervisor (e.g., gender, race).

Who will see the responses to the survey?

All information provided will be treated in accordance with the Privacy Act. OPM staff who will be involved in collecting or preparing the information for analysis and have access to completed surveys will be required to treat it confidentially. The information will be analyzed for the group of employees who responded and by certain occupational groupings (e.g., series, grade level). In any public release of survey results, no data will be disclosed that could be used to identify specific individuals. Agencies will not receive data that could be used to identify a specific individual or a person's specific response to a survey question.

When will the surveys be conducted?

The surveys will be distributed the week of April 26 and will be open for approximately 3-4 weeks.

How long will the survey take to complete?

The survey may take approximately 30 to 60 minutes to complete.

What do the survey results cover?

The results will include a general competency model, which describes the critical competencies needed to perform work.

How will the results of the competency model be used?

The competency models resulting from the FWCI efforts may be used in a variety of Governmentwide and agency-specific efforts across the entire human capital lifecycle (e.g., workforce planning, training and development, performance management, recruitment, and selection). With these competency models serving as the foundation for many human capital initiatives it is critical that the competencies are supported with data from employees and supervisors with first-hand knowledge of the day to day work being done.