

Information Note



Contributors:
Selena Whitehead,
Independent Consultant/
ASCAP Vision ApS

Developing Managerial Competencies

Following EPN4, there has been interest in compiling a generic list of competencies for human resource managers and programme managers working for relief NGOs across the UK and Europe. This document pulls together common competencies from a wide range of NGOs from the UK, France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Norway. The following websites indicate the agencies used in the document.

www.christian-aid.org.uk

www.savethechildren.org.uk

www.warchild.org.uk

www.oxfam.org.uk

www.merlin.org.uk

www.oxfam.org.uk

www.britishredcross.org.uk

www.RedR.org.uk

www.catholicrelief.org

www.alisei.org (Italy)

www.accioncontraelhambra.org (Spain)

www.btcctb.org (Belgium)

www.acted.org (France)

www.psfci.org (Pharmaciens sans Frontieres France)

www.movimondo.org (Italy)

www.cesvi.org (Italy)

www.npaid.org (Norway)

www.healthnetinternational.org (Netherlands)

Human Resource Manager Competencies

Experience: All NGOs demanded HR qualifications or high experience, including a detailed knowledge of: current employment law; models of good employment practice; equal opportunities; health and safety legislation; employee relations including experience of working in a unionised environment; budget and financial processes; and an understanding of humanitarian HR issues.

- 1 Highly developed **communication** skills both written and oral to establish effective relationships with a wide variety of internal and external audiences, including at a geographical distance. Write policies and procedures providing complex information to staff. Ability to research, compile info and produce management reports.
- 2 Highly developed **inter-personal** skills. Ability to work with people with tact and diplomacy, setting a good example and being a good listener. Stature, personal credibility and integrity, including the ability to work collaboratively with personnel and management colleagues, using well developed influencing and persuasion skills. Process oriented.
- 3 Strong **management** skills including: analytical skills, judgement and decision making; project management; resource management and managing multiple priorities is essential. Be able to provide leadership and direction on all HR issues.

- 4 Display considerable **initiative** and independence and shoulder considerable responsibility.
 - 5 Highly **flexible** in style with the ability to produce creative and pragmatic solutions to complex HR problems. Resourceful and creative with the capacity to implement and respond to change. Solution focussed with the ability to work quickly and flexibly in changing circumstances.
 - 6 Capability to think **strategically**, to identify the HR implications of the organisation's plans and to respond with an integrated HR approach. An ability to spot trends and issues, propose strategic solutions and deliver practical results.
 - 7 **Drive** and determination to ensure that the HR perspective is considered at all levels. Highly organised and methodical.
- 2 Management of resources and the programme - This includes using a range of management skills to ensure effective running of the programme, problem solving skills in day-to-day and crisis situations, ability to manage multiple project sites. Ability to think and plan strategically and experience of strategy development.
 - 3 Management of self - Ability to work effectively in a relatively isolated setting and challenging physical and psychological climate, often with challenging deadlines. To work under pressure and prioritise effectively, to demonstrate initiative and to apply own learning.
 - 4 Networking, negotiating and managing relations with beneficiaries, local partners, community leaders, authorities and donors, including a knowledge of donor reporting requirements. The ability to relate to and influence government, donors and other organisations and advocacy experience.
 - 5 Financial and administrative skills, including strong analytical, proposal and report writing skills, a high level of numeracy and an aptitude for analysis and synthesis. Accurate financial budgetary control and maintenance of financial systems.

Programme Manager

Experience: Ranging from two to over five years including: wide experience of programme implementation; logistics, food distributions and accountability; security management and insecure environments; knowledge of basic human rights issues in a humanitarian context; and familiarity with the rules and regulations guiding humanitarian work. Specific subject knowledge was also often essential.

The competencies listed are divided into management competencies and core competencies – it could be argued, as it is in the EPN 4 report, that a combination of these competencies is asking for a super man or woman. Certainly many do, if not conflict, demand an extraordinary range of attributes from a single person. Equal weight was given in the job descriptions to these two key competency areas.

Management Competencies

- 1 Management of staff - Strong leadership and management skills. These include: capacity building of all staff – local and expatriate; communication skills; team builder; able to manage, coordinate, organise, live and work closely within a large team under extremely volatile circumstances; diplomacy; negotiation skills as well as experience of representation and

Core Competencies

- 6 A high level of interpersonal skills - great flexibility, tolerance, a sense of humour in a sometimes frustrating and tense working environment. Good listener, empathetic, creative, highly motivated and willing to work on own initiative. Willing to adapt and learn, good coach and mentor. Team working and relationship-building skills. Calm under pressure.
- 7 Sensitive and respectful to cultural diversity and difference, and the ability to work in a wide variety of cultural contexts. Not jarring with the environment in which they work or with organisation's values. Ability to take a consultative team approach to decision-making and the ability to work together and be a part of a cross-cultural team.