

Skills vs. Competencies

What is a Skill?

- Proficiency, capability, or skill that is acquired or developed through training or experience
- An ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly and adaptively carry out complex activities or job functions (technical skills)
- A learned capacity to carry out pre-determined results
- A learned ability to bring about the result you want, with maximum certainty and efficiency
- So, a skill is something learned in order to be able to carry out one or more job functions

What is a Competency?

- A cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enable a person (or an organization) to act effectively in a job or situation
- A competency is more than just knowledge and skills. It involves the ability to meet complex demands, by drawing on and mobilizing psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in a particular context
- Competencies specify the “how” (as opposed to the what) of performing job tasks, or what the person needs to do the job successfully
- Competencies, therefore, may incorporate a skill, but are MORE than the skill, they include abilities and behaviors, as well as knowledge that is fundamental to the use of a skill

Types of Competencies

- Behavioral Competencies
- Functional (or Technical) Competencies
- Professional Competencies

The University of California’s UC Core Competencies is a competency model developed to describe the performance behaviors expected off all staff and managers throughout the system.

Source: UCOP <http://www.ucop.edu/information-technology-services/files/webinars/ITS-prof-dev-presentation-w-changes.pdf>