Behavioural Competency Dictionary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attention to Detail</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change Leadership</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client Service</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Learning</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Management</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Awareness</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics and Integrity</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Understanding</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Organizing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving/Analytical Thinking</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Building</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results Orientation/Achievement</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress Management</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Leadership</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

What are behavioural competencies? They are the typical behaviours that separate a superior performer from a mediocre performer.

They are the typical behaviours that make McInnes Cooper more successful than other law firms. They are the behaviours that result in the most clients because success depends more on how you do the work rather than on the work just getting done. Research has proven that to be successful people who are hired must have this ratio:

- 49% technical competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) and
- 51% behavioural competencies (typical behaviours).

Behavioural competencies are not only used in recruitment and selection to make the best hiring decision, but also in performance management, training and development, compensation, recognition, succession planning and so on.

Each behavioural competency in this dictionary includes a definition and examples of typical behaviours associated with the competency.
Accountability

Accepts full responsibility for self and contribution as a team member; displays honesty and truthfulness; confronts problems quickly; displays a strong commitment to organizational success and inspires others to commit to goals; demonstrates a commitment to delivering on his/her duty and presenting oneself as a credible representative of the firm to maintain the clients’ trust and foster client loyalty.

- Follows through and meets personal commitments to others on time.
- Exceeds his or her commitment to others by frequently delivering work early.
- Commits to the firm’s goals and finds ways to get team members more involved toward accomplishing firm’s objectives.
- Generates enthusiasm among team members for accomplishing shared goals that elevates the team and ensures the firm’s success.
- Takes his/her responsibilities seriously and consistently meets the clients’ expectations for quality, service, and professionalism.
- Holds a strong commitment to exceeding client’s expectations for how the firm should provide service to its clients.
- Consistently presents a calm, competent, and professional image to the client and other employees.
- Presents oneself as a polished professional who exemplifies success and credibility; inspires others to be more professional.
Attention to Detail

Accomplishes a task through concern for all the areas involved, no matter how small. Monitors and checks work or information and plans and organizes time and resources efficiently.

- Provides information on a timely basis and in a usable form to others who need to act on it.
- Performs tasks accurately and thoroughly; double-checks the accuracy of information and work product; makes adjustments to ensure client expectations are met and exceeded.
- Expresses concern that things be done right, thoroughly, and/or precisely.
- Follows policies, procedures, safety and security measures in using various equipment.
- Completes all reports and documents according to procedures and standards.
- Maintains properly equipped work area.
- Takes necessary actions to produce work that requires little or no checking.
- Sets up procedures to ensure high quality of work; monitors the quality of work; verifies information.
- Develops and uses systems to organize and keep track of information or work progress.
Change Leadership

Initiates and/or manages the change process and energizes it on an ongoing basis, taking steps to remove barriers or accelerate its pace.

- Communicates a compelling vision that generates excitement, enthusiasm, and commitment.
- Communicates the need for change and inspires commitment to the process.
- Obtains and provides resources to enable implementation of change initiatives.
- Clearly communicates the direction, required performance, and challenges of the unit to its members.
- Identifies and enlists the support of key individuals and groups to move the change forward.
- Leads initiatives to change the structure, system, or talent mix of the organization to more effectively support the business strategy.
- Serves as a personal model of the change that she/he expects of others.
- Works to make other feel ownership in one’s own solution.
Client Service

Is dedicated to meeting the expectations and requirements of internal and external clients in a manner that provides satisfaction for the client and fosters client loyalty. It implies helping or serving others, to meet their needs. It means focusing on discovering those needs and figuring out how to best meet them.

- Asks questions to identify client's needs or expectations; takes time to question and understand the real, underlying needs of clients, beyond those initially expressed.
- Checks understanding by stating what he/she understands are the client’s needs or expectations; asks the speaker to verify or clarify.
- Considers the impact on the client when carrying out one's own job tasks.
- Works to remove barriers that get in the way of giving clients top notch service; develops a way to give them what they want and to make it right.
- Asks questions of clients to assess satisfaction with service being provided; investigates service delivery and provides solutions to problems.
- Continuously monitors delivery to make sure the client is receiving the service that they want; makes adjustments to improve operational execution.
- Refers client to appropriate department or employee to solve specific problems.
- Follows up to make sure that the client has been taken care of.
- Meets or exceeds deadlines; advises client of an inability to do in advance.
- Presents a positive manner with clients; interacts well with all clients.
- Communicates with and keeps clients up to date and informed.
- Acts promptly to ensure client problems are resolved.
- Endeavours to respond to phone calls and emails within the same business day; updates voice messages and email notification when going to be absent from the office for more than one half day.
- Makes him/herself or an alternate accessible and available to the client.
- Is punctual for meetings with clients; is fully prepared for the meeting.
- Is fully present when interacting with the client; when talking or meeting with clients, ensures communication devices are silent, unless unavoidable and explained.
- Delivers what is expected by the client, not what they think the client wants or needs.
- Questions “How is this adding value for the client?” and makes decisions with the client in mind.
- Accepts responsibility for mistakes, apologizes and makes suitable and timely amends.
- Takes pride in delivering a high quality product or service.
- Treats all clients with respect and cultural awareness.
- Knows when, and how, politely to decline an inappropriate client request.
Commitment to Learning

Demonstrates a commitment to learning by proactively seeking opportunities to develop new capabilities, skills, and knowledge; acquires the skills needed to continually enhance his/her contribution to the firm and to his/her respective profession.

- Engages in continuous learning opportunities to further develop skills and capabilities in technical and functional areas.
- Seeks out continuous learning opportunities that develop self and expands organizational intellectual capital.
- Uses feedback from co-workers and clients to find ways of enhancing his/her performance.
- Accurately identifies his/her own strengths and development needs, leverages strengths, and takes action to develop areas that can be improved.
- Takes part in professional associations to maintain a current knowledge base and relationships with others in his/her field.
- Updates professional knowledge and skills on a regular basis to stay current and apply new trends or best practices to his/her work at the firm.
- Anticipates client needs; stays abreast of changes in the external environment and anticipates how they will impact his/her department and/or the firm.
- Actively participates in the firm’s performance management program, including focusing on improving performance through learning and development opportunities.
**Communication**

Effectively communicates by actively listening and sharing relevant information so as to anticipate problems and ensure effectiveness of the firm; effectively communicates by adjusting style, tone and level of detail appropriate to the audience and occasion.

- Asks open-ended questions that encourage others to give their points of view.
- Keeps people accurately informed and up to date.
- Appropriately expresses one's own opinion.
- Refrains from immediate judgment and criticism of others' ideas, delivering criticism in a way that demonstrates sensitivity to the feelings of others.
- Waits for the other person to finish their intended message before responding.
- Uses vocabulary which is appropriate to the audience.
- Asks questions as necessary to clarify a message being delivered, demonstrating close concentration on the message.
- Acts to understand and respond appropriately to the concerns of others; demonstrates openness and receptivity to new information.
- Is willing to listen when approached by others; listens and responds to people's concerns by altering own behaviour in a helpful manner.
- Provides straightforward and understandable explanations and rationale.
- Makes effective verbal presentations, facilitates understanding.
- Speaks clearly and can be easily understood; maintains eye contact when speaking with others; summarizes or paraphrases to verify understanding.
- Expresses ideas clearly and concisely in writing.
- Organizes written ideas clearly.
- Tailors written communications to effectively reach an audience.
- Spells correctly; writes using concrete, specific language; uses punctuation correctly; uses proper grammar; uses an appropriate business writing style.
- Actively listens to co-workers and clients to put him/herself in other people's shoes to gain a better understanding of what they are saying.
- Communicates intentions, ideas and feelings openly and directly.
- Consistently delivers accurate, clear, and concise messages orally and/or in writing to effectively inform an audience.
Conflict Management

Addresses conflicts by focusing on the issues at hand to develop effective solutions when disputes or disagreements occur; helps others resolve conflicts by providing impartial mediation when needed.

- Openly addresses conflicts as they arise to ensure other team members are able to meet commitments successfully and maintain strong relationships.
- Effectively identifies and manages potential conflicts within relationships to prevent disagreements from arising.
- Communicates openly and respectfully when addressing problems with other team members.
- Works to resolve conflict among team members by showing respect for others’ opinions and working toward mutually agreeable solutions.
- Demonstrates a keen ability to distinguish between critical and non-critical conflicts; avoids nearly all unnecessary or unproductive confrontations.
- Consistently focuses on the issues at hand and avoids letting secondary or unrelated issues interfere with resolving conflicts.
- Recognizes differences of opinion, brings them out into the open for discussion, and looks for win-win solutions.
- Uses appropriate interpersonal styles and methods to reduce tension or conflict between two or more people/groups.
- Finds agreement on issues and follows through on implementation.
- Deals effectively with others in an antagonistic situation.
Cultural Awareness

Demonstrates an open-minded approach to understanding people regardless of their gender, age, race, national origin, religion, ethnicity, disability status, or other characteristics; treats all people fairly and consistently; effectively works with people from diverse backgrounds by treating them with dignity and respect.

- Recognizes cultural differences among people and effectively works to bridge cultural gaps.
- Treats all people with dignity and respect regardless of cultural or socioeconomic background.
- Effectively works with people of diverse backgrounds regardless of personal differences that may exist.
- Thrives within the context of diverse teams; capitalizes on diversity to find creative solutions and encourages other team members to leverage the diverse talents of firm members.
- Avoids making statements that may offend or hurt others from different cultural or socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Consistently communicates even the most difficult messages in a sensitive and supportive manner without compromising on the meaning of the message.
- Considers and honours different opinions, styles, and ways of working.
- Responds to and directly addresses comments and actions of others that reflect stereotypical views of people that are different from one’s self.
Ethics and Integrity

Has concern for the degree of trustworthiness and ethical behaviours with consideration for the knowledge one has of the impact and consequences when making a decision or taking action.

- Holds self and others accountable for making principled decisions; addresses unethical behaviours head-on.
- Knows and lives what is important to the firm and maintains his/her ethical principles even in the most challenging circumstances.
- Follows through on commitments.
- Respects the confidentiality of information.
- Respects the concerns shared by others.
- Displays honesty and is forthright with people.
- Carries their fair share of the workload.
- Takes responsibility for own mistakes and does not blame others.
- Conveys a command of the relevant facts and information.
- Is widely trusted; understands both published and tacit values.
- Acts in accordance with values at all times; rewards the right values and disapproves of others; practices what she preaches.
- Presents the “truth” in an appropriate and helpful manner; willing to take all necessary actions when serious ethical issues are at stake.
- Treats others fairly and with respect; demonstrates respect for all differences (e.g., race, gender, ethnic background, disabilities, sexual orientation, age, career levels, style and opinions).
- Refrains from behaviour or language that is exclusionary or offensive in nature.
- Solicits opinions from many diverse perspectives; considers different ideas when making business decisions.
- Identifies ethical dilemmas and conflict of interest situations and takes action to avoid and prevent them.
Flexibility

Able to adapt to and work with a variety of situations, individuals and groups. Able to think on feet, and not being disconcerted or stopped by the unexpected.

- Demonstrates willingness to change ideas or perceptions based on new information or contrary evidence.
- Is open to new ideas and listens to other people’s points of view.
- Applies rules or procedures flexibly, depending on the individual situation, to accomplish tasks or activities more effectively.
- Responds effectively to changing circumstances.
- Remains focused when faced with competing demands.
- Makes reasonable adjustments to ensure maximum effectiveness and motivation of self and others.
- Identifies a pragmatic approach in order to get the job done quickly and effectively.
- Uses an awareness of the bigger picture along with common sense to interpret and implement policy.
- Is comfortable with ambiguity.
- Changes the overall plan, goal or project to fit the situation.
- Creates and supports flexibility by introducing procedures which ensure quick turnaround and encourage flexibility in others.
- Is open to the benefits of change, embraces appropriate new ideas.
- Considers alternative approaches according to needs of situations or host cultures.
- Weighs up costs and benefits impartially.
- Is willing to investigate options in depth, even when they are the ideas of others.
- Thinks laterally and creatively to resolve problems.
- Adjusts schedules, tasks, and priorities when necessary.
- Anticipates and changes strategy before the current method proves to be ineffective.
- Recognizes when changing client or organizational expectations require new approaches and takes the necessary steps to meet new standards.
Initiative

Identifies what needs to be done and takes action to achieve standard of excellence beyond job expectations.

- Contributes new ideas; is a self-starter; looks for ways to add value to the department/firm.
- Assumes responsibility for results of own actions and their impact on the work group/department.
- Completes assignments without the need for prompting from his/her supervisor or others.
- Takes the initiative to complete assignments early; consistently exceeds expectations regarding the timing of deliverables.
- Plans ahead for upcoming problems or opportunities and takes appropriate action; recognizes and acts upon opportunities.
- Does far more than is minimally required in the assignment, task or job description.
- Demonstrates resilience against challenges and obstacles.
- Successfully completes most tasks independently but asks for additional support, as appropriate, when faced with unfamiliar tasks or situations.
- Focuses on achieving results, rather than activities that may not add value.
Organizational Understanding

Understands the workings, structure, and culture of the organization as well as the political, social, and economic issues affecting the organization.

- Knows how to use the firm’s formal and informal system to get things done.
- Demonstrates awareness of goals of other departments and of the firm and makes requests or decisions in support of this awareness.
- Uses the most appropriate channels and cost-effective means in communications within and between departments.
- Identifies key decision makers on issues of concern.
- Recognizes which issues are worth pursuing and when it is time to compromise.
- Keeps objectives that are related to the firm’s priorities at the top of one’s own priorities and the priorities of one's work group.
- Works to build a sense of common purpose across all work groups, avoiding a "we versus them" attitude.
Planning and Organizing

Establishes a systematic course of action for self to ensure accomplishment of specific objectives. Sets priorities, goals, tracking systems and timetables to achieve maximum productivity.

- Ensures a clear understanding of the desired end result; asks for clarification.
- Works independently; is responsible for the workflow and the management of it.
- Defines tasks and milestones to achieve objectives, while ensuring the optimal use of resources to meet those objectives.
- Develops or uses systems to organize and keep track of information (e.g., "to-do" lists, appointment calendars, follow-up file systems).
- Anticipates and prepares for upcoming events ensuring adequate resources are available.
- Considers the impact of something before it happens and makes necessary preparations or changes needed.
- Puts things in a sequential and/or logical order in preparation for accomplishing a goal.
- Provides/develops appropriate documentation to track progress of a project.
- Sets priorities with an appropriate sense of what is most important.
- Keeps track of activities completed and yet to do to accomplish stated objectives.
- Keeps clear, detailed records of activities related to the accomplishment of stated objectives.
- Plans with an appropriate and realistic sense of the time demand involved.
- Knows status of one's own work at all times.
- Creates action plans for achieving performance expectations.
Problem Solving/Analytical Thinking

Builds a logical approach to address problems or opportunities or manage the situation at hand by drawing on own knowledge and experience base and calling on other references and resources as necessary.

- Undertakes a complex task by breaking it down into manageable parts in a systematic, detailed way.
- Anticipates the consequences of situations.
- Thinks of several possible explanations or alternatives for a situation.
- Identifies the information needed to solve a problem effectively.
- Gets input from internal/external contacts that are closest to the problem.
- Presents problem analysis and recommended solution to others rather than just identifying or describing the problem itself.
- Acknowledges when one doesn't know something and takes steps to find out.
- Anticipates potential obstacles and develops contingency plans to overcome them.
- Considers the organization’s priorities when making decisions or analyzing the costs and benefits of various alternative solutions.
Relationship Building

Able to develop, maintain, and strengthen relationships with others inside or outside of the organization who can provide information, assistance, and support.

- Gets along and interacts positively with co-workers; understands the interests and important concerns of others.
- Notices and accurately interprets what others are feeling, based on their choice of words, tone of voice, expressions, and other nonverbal behaviour.
- Anticipates how others will react to a situation; understands both the strengths and weaknesses of others.
- Listens attentively to people’s ideas and concerns; understands the unspoken meaning in a situation.
- Finds non-threatening ways to approach others about sensitive issues; makes others feel comfortable by responding in ways that convey interest in what they have to say.
- Maintains stable performance and emotional control when faced with opposition, pressure, hostility from others and/or stressful conditions.
- Demonstrates appropriate and professional behaviour at all times.
- Uses a high degree of tact and diplomacy in working with others.
- Models and exercises sound judgment regarding personal conduct.
- Is aware of one’s own style or preference and its impact on others.
- Says or does things to address others’ concerns; makes others feel comfortable by responding in ways that convey interest in what they have to say.
- Earns the respect of others.
- Stays calm in the face of others’ anger or lack of control or when faced with complaints.
- Expresses gratitude and appreciation to others who have provided information, assistance, or support.
- Provides assistance, information, and support to others, to build a basis for future reciprocity.
- Builds positive and reciprocal relationships that benefit the firm.
- Makes personal commitments in order to build trust and credibility.
- Is friendly and optimistic with people they meet.
Results Orientation/Achievement

Consistently delivers required business results; sets and achieves achievable, yet aggressive, goals; consistently complies with quality standards and meets deadlines; maintains focus on the firm’s goals.

- Develops challenging but achievable goals; develops clear goals for meetings and projects.
- Maintains commitment to goals, in the face of obstacles and frustrations; seeks to understand reasons for obstacles and to find ways to overcome.
- Finds or creates ways to measure performance against goals.
- Exhibits a strong sense of urgency about solving problems and accomplishing work.
- Sets and maintains high performance standards for self and others that support organization’s strategic plan.
- Manages own time well in order to complete allocated tasks on time and with high quality.
- Takes responsibility and stays focused on problems until an effective solution can be found.
- Clarifies what is expected.
- Is positive and enthusiastic about the job.
- Respects the rights of others whilst achieving one’s own goals.
- Acknowledges the work and contribution of others.
- Seeks ways to improve overall performance levels to give higher levels of satisfaction to clients.
- Achieves significant progress in the long term, wider performance of the firm.
- Makes decisions through weighing up the cost-benefit and risk implications.
- Keeps a ‘to do’ list, and specifies due dates; monitors tasks for accomplishment, quality and timeliness.
- Asks for feedback.
**Stress Management**

Able to function effectively when under pressure and maintain self control in the face of hostility or provocation or heavy workload.

- Manages own behaviour/life style activities to prevent or reduce feelings of stress.
- Controls their own response when criticized or provoked.
- Remains calm under stress.
- Has a positive and constructive sense of humour; can laugh at themselves and with others; is appropriately funny and can use humour to ease tension.
- Maintains a sense of humour under difficult circumstances.
- Uses humour appropriately to provoke laughter and provide amusement as a means to relieve one’s own and other’s stress.
- Uses appropriate humour to better able self to cope with challenges.
- Handles several stressful problems or tasks at once.
Team Leadership

Effectively manages and guides group efforts; tracks team progress, adequately anticipates roadblocks, and changes course as needed to achieve team goals; provides appropriate feedback concerning group and individual performance, including areas for improvement.

- Involves team members in defining ways to achieve desired results and defining expectations about how team members will work together.

- Encourages a sense of mutual accountability in team settings that motivates individuals to do his/her best for each other and exceed goals.

- Sets and communicates clear goals for the team up front.

- Identifies the most important priorities for the team and focuses attention effectively.

- Monitors team performance continuously and provides “real time” project updates to stakeholders (e.g., clients, peers, supervisor) on a regular basis and/or when asked.

- Provides meaningful feedback to team members to keep them on track toward common goals.

- Identifies and promptly tackles morale problems and conflict resolution.

- Demonstrates an ability to identify underlying performance issues among team members and deliver highly insightful feedback.

- Provides feedback regarding both strengths and development needs on a regular basis; appropriately balances positive and negative messages.

- Recognizes and rewards people for their achievements and contributions.

- Expresses pride in the group and encourages people to feel good about their accomplishments.

- Shares knowledge and resources and encourages the same of others.

- Finds creative ways to make work rewarding.

- Signals own commitment to a process by being personally present and involved at key events.

- Gives talks or presentations that energize groups.
Teamwork

Able to effectively work and complete assignments in group settings. Works cooperatively, with a positive attitude with others to achieve common goals. Treats others with dignity and respect and maintains a friendly demeanour; values the contributions of others.

- Willingly co-operates; is friendly and cooperative.
- Provides assistance to others when they need it when time allows.
- Is not afraid to seek advice from others.
- Puts in extra effort when needed to help others.
- Capitalizes on diverse skills and ideas.
- Spends time helping others think through issues.
- Speaks of team members in positive terms.
- Proactively shares relevant or useful information and learning with colleagues; keeps other team members up to date.
- Addresses conflicts or issues within the team in a positive and open manner.
- Commits time and resources to team-based projects.
- Treats the concerns of other departments as important.
- Co-operates to meet team goals even at expense of personal preferences.
- Recognizes the need for flexibility and sensitivity in dealing with cross-cultural issues.
- Listens and responds appropriately to other team members’ ideas.
- Offers support for others’ ideas and proposals.
- Confers with other team members about their concerns.
- Expresses disagreement constructively (e.g. by emphasizing points of agreement, suggesting alternatives that may be acceptable to the group, etc.).
- Considers others’ input and expertise; is willing to learn from others.
- Reinforces and gives credit to team members for their contributions.
- Gives honest feedback to other team members in a caring and helpful manner.
- Works toward solutions that all team members can support.