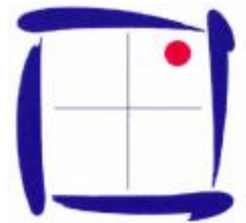


# Implementing a Skills Framework



## Knowledge and Skills as a Strategic Issue

In a highly competitive world, the organisations that are achieving success are those that develop, utilise and nurture the skills and knowledge of their people. They know that these are essential if they are to retain good people, improve responsiveness and engender a high degree of flexibility.

Many organisations don't know the full extent of their staff's skills - leading to frustrated staff, inadequately resourced projects and wasted training budget. IT skills, in particular, are the least well described and rarely recorded. The symptoms can be:

- Ø High staff turnover
- Ø Difficulty in taking strategic training decisions
- Ø Late or over-budget projects
- Ø Inappropriately staffed projects
- Ø Gaps revealed by departing staff
- Ø Low staff morale

With increasing pressure on budgets, organisations must find new ways to raise productivity, refresh skills, and reduce costs.

## Skills Frameworks

A skills (and knowledge) framework provides a way of describing skills in a consistent language that *everyone* understands. We frequently find that different "groups", such as project managers, HR professionals, line managers and specialists, describe the same set of skills in widely differing ways.

A common description of both skills and skill-levels allows an individual's own capabilities to be recorded in precisely the same way that a job or project's skill requirements are. Gaps can thus be identified and the appropriate training or recruitment arranged.

A framework can range from a simple paper based record of skill descriptions, job requirements and employee capabilities, to software with powerful reporting capabilities. ValueAdding.com has experience in implementing all these approaches.

## Benefits

A skills framework supports management's strategic objectives by providing:

- ü A clear, well-structured view of their staff's skills
- ü A tool for more accurate planning, and management, of resources
- ü A method of building the right project teams - quickly
- ü A tool for accurate development of careers, so improving retention
- ü A better way of building personal development plans
- ü A method of risk assessment for the loss of key skills
- ü A tool for accurate and efficient recruitment or redeployment

Job Title	Skill Category	Skill Level	Current Status	Required Status
Project Manager	Leadership	Advanced	High	High
Project Manager	Communication	Intermediate	Medium	High
Project Manager	Teamwork	Basic	Low	High
HR Professional	Recruitment	Advanced	High	High
HR Professional	Training	Intermediate	Medium	High
HR Professional	Employee Relations	Basic	Low	High
Line Manager	Supervision	Advanced	High	High
Line Manager	Quality Control	Intermediate	Medium	High
Line Manager	Customer Service	Basic	Low	High
Specialist	Technical Skills	Advanced	High	High
Specialist	Problem Solving	Intermediate	Medium	High
Specialist	Attention to Detail	Basic	Low	High

# Implementing a Skills Framework

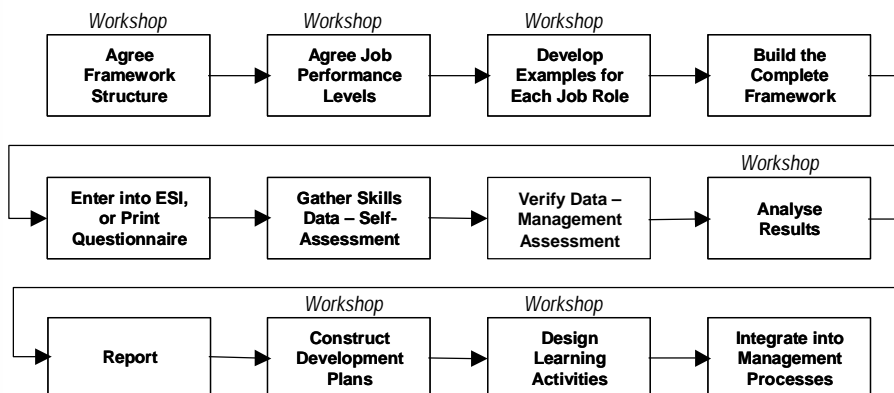


## Following a Structured Path

We start by helping you to specify the level of detail, frequency of update, fit to your HR processes and ownership of the finished product. This is particularly important when using industry standard frameworks such as SFIA (Skills Framework for the Information Age) or Call2Contact, as the organisation's version must map into the standard, if the full benefits are to be realised. Our experience shows that the most critical element in implementing a skills framework is the careful consideration of the users, and uses, to which it will be put.

We help you arrive at what is right for your organisation through facilitated workshops. This is the most cost-effective support for you, with the fundamental benefit of achieving staff engagement and buy-in, as well as ensuring a practical solution for your unique circumstances. We always work with your managers, users, staff and unions to ensure a usable, robust outcome.

Some typical steps in the implementation programme could be:



## Electronic Skills Frameworks

The only way to reap all the benefits of using a knowledge and skills framework is to have it in electronic format. We can help you to define and configure software to support your framework. We use the industry leading software for skills frameworks – Enterprise Skills Infrastructure (ESI) – which can fully exploit all the benefits of skills frameworks at strategic, team and individual level.

## Our Track Record

We have helped several organisations to use skills frameworks including the National Blood Service, The Army and Norwich Union. We work with your staff to identify and use real examples of working practice and incorporate those into your document thus ensuring that you have something which is practical and specific to you whilst at the same time using acknowledged industry standards. We encourage staff to attend facilitated workshops throughout as this level of involvement ensures staff buy-in and makes implementation easier.