

Canadian Peace Professionals: Core Values and Key Competencies

A Discussion Paper

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Core Values and Key Competencies of a Peace Professional

A Discussion paper

Executive Summary

This document identifies CPSC's competency-based approach to building a roster of qualified Peace Professionals who demonstrate the shared Core Values and Key Competencies which we propose as necessary to serve effectively in areas of conflict. Development of the Core Values and Key Competencies is largely based on the input of seasoned experts with a passion for peace and a heart for helping others. Two CPSC conferences, including the most recent involving Johan Galtung, have inspired and informed the work presented here.

The document outlines CPSC's approach to recruiting, equipping and referring Peace Professionals wherever they are needed most. That approach begins with the assessment of potential candidates against Core Values as an entry qualification. Successful candidates are then measured against the Key Competencies and invited to participate in training as appropriate. Seasoned Peace Professionals agree that while Key Competencies can be learned, Core Values need to be in place from the start. Consequently, if Core Values are not identified during rigorous initial screening, candidates are not invited to continue the qualification process.

A template is proposed for the use of managers and practitioners who wish to describe the work of particular jobs in terms of Key Competencies and mission-specific competencies.

The Core Values that are felt to be critical for professional peace work are:

- Empathy
- Humility
- Personal maturity
- Sound judgment
- Sincerity
- Strong desire for social justice and peace for all
- Willingness to learn

The Key Competencies identified in this report as essential are:

- Communication:
- Conciliation:
- Conflict Analysis:
- Facilitation:
- Mediation:
- Negotiation:

- Operational Planning:
- Peace Building:
- Personal Security:
- Strategic Thinking
- Teamwork:

Finally, a template is proposed for the use of managers and practitioners who wish to describe the work of particular jobs in terms of Key Competencies and mission-specific competencies.

Canadian Peace Professionals: Core Values and Key Competencies

Vision:

The Civilian Peace Service of Canada consists of qualified individuals who are inspired to develop, foster and promote non-violent solutions to conflict. They reflect a set of Core Values shared by all stakeholders, and have met high standards of performance in a broad range of peace-related disciplines identified as Key Competencies. Canada's Civilian Peace Service is dedicated to facilitating the recruitment, training and referring of peace professionals for field deployment.

Enabling activities:

In pursuit of its vision, the Civilian Peace Service of Canada works toward the following enabling goals:

- establishment of professional standards and associated assessment and measurement tools for recruitment and on-going professional development
- development of a core curriculum which would ensure that essential competencies have been learned before deployment
- building of a national roster of qualified individuals who reflect the Core Values and have demonstrated the requisite Key Competencies.

The CPSC Model For Competency-Based Human Resource Management

Core Values and Key Competencies

We believe that effective performance as a Peace Professional depends on a set of Core Values and Key Competencies. Seasoned Peace Professionals agree that while Key Competencies can be learned, Core Values need to be in place beforehand. Individuals who do not demonstrate the Core Values identified in this model are unlikely to demonstrate, much less master, all of the Key Competencies required of Peace Professionals. Core Values are underlying traits which motivate and constrain individuals to behave in certain ways and to seek out employment or vocations which value these behaviours. The presence of a Core Value often predicts the sort of behaviours which can be expected from an individual. Core Values develop early in life, shaped by significant life experiences, and seldom change in the course of everyday life unless there occurs an emotionally significant event of such fundamental nature that it brings the individual to question values previously taken for granted. The Key

Competencies (knowledge, skills, abilities) described in this model, on the other hand, may be acquired and mastered through education, training and practice.

An example may be useful in clarifying the difference between values and competencies. In the CPS model, we identify **Strong desire for social justice and peace for all** as a Core Value. Individuals who share this value can generally be expected to be drawn to and perform well in fields related to the active fostering and promotion of peace. The knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to perform a particular set of related skills can be acquired and mastered through a combination of education, training and practice. On the other hand, an individual who does not share this **Strong desire for social justice and peace for all** is unlikely to become an exemplary Peace Professional. Consequently, the CPS screens potential applicants initially for Core Values and subsequently for Key Competencies. If a candidate successfully demonstrates the proposed Core Values through an appropriate screening process, a learning needs analysis then determines appropriate areas for further study in one or more Key Competencies. If Core Values are not evident during initial screening, candidates are not invited to continue the qualification process. Hiring agencies are encouraged to make use of the CPSC competency model to describe specific jobs they wish to staff. The model supplied here enables agencies to determine levels required within each competency for a particular job. Candidate profiles from the CPSC roster will indicate levels demonstrated by the individual in each competency. Additional mission-specific requirements will be defined and measured by hiring agencies through their own processes.

Core Values

Purpose: to state the essential values which underlie, motivate and help to predict effective performance in any sector of the Peace Profession. We are of the opinion that recruitment and training of Peace Professionals should begin with an individual assessment of these values. Following successful completion of this assessment, candidates will be invited to register in the CPSC or other inventory (such as CANADEM, for example) to further describe their work experience or register for additional training in one or more competency areas.

Based on a review of the current literature and the direct input of theoreticians and practitioners, the following Core Values are identified as fundamental to success as a Peace Professional. They are considered equal in value, and are listed here in alphabetical order for convenience.

Empathy:

“I work to understand the depth of feeling of the various stakeholders in a conflict in order to take everyone’s interests into consideration before acting.”

Humility:

“I value as equal to my own the knowledge and experience of others and their contribution to the mission at hand. ”

Personal maturity:

“I am well aware of my own personal strengths and weaknesses; I work to put the former to their best use, and to remedy the latter.”

Sincerity:

“I am as I say and do. I do not pretend to be other than what I am . I aspire to be free of hypocrisy.”

Sound judgment:

“I ensure that my decisions and actions take into consideration the interests of all concerned so that I can move forward with confidence.”

Strong desire for social justice and peace for all:

“I use whatever knowledge, skills and experience I have to support the less privileged and oppressed. I am motivated to work toward a resolution of their plight. I believe in non-violent means to resolve conflict.”

Willingness to learn

“I have much yet to learn, I enjoy learning, and I seek out opportunities to learn in a variety of ways.”

Key Competencies Identification:

The Key Competency areas listed below are based on direct input from academics and field practitioners in peace professions, as well as a review of the documented work of international leaders in the field.

The following are not included as Key Competencies:

1. Core Values or other traits which are considered as non-trainable. While people's values and fundamental traits can indeed change, those changes generally come about as a result of major life events, and are neither planned nor engineered.
2. Specific skills such as "driving on muddy roads in rainy season" or "treating snake bites". Responsibility for screening and training candidates for these specific, learnable skills falls within the responsibility of mission organizers and hiring agencies.

What is included?

Everything in this list is considered as "learnable" or "trainable"; in other words, competencies that can be acquired through a combination of education, training and practice. Each Key Competency is described in terms of specific observable behaviours which characterize superior performers.

Key Competencies:

Communication:

The exemplary performer communicates effectively orally and in writing in a manner that takes into account the audience being addressed. Listening or attending skills are as important as speaking or writing.

Conciliation:

The exemplary performer transcends conflict by creating options for resolution and inspiring creativity among the parties themselves

Conflict Analysis:

The exemplary performer uses all available tools and input to determine the evident and underlying elements of a conflict so as to work toward peaceful resolution. These elements include past and present issues that fuel the conflict, as well as the role and use of power by various parties.

Facilitation:

The exemplary performer finds ways to assist people and organizations with diverse perspectives in working together to identify and achieve common goals and objectives.

Mediation:

The exemplary performer works successfully toward enabling individuals and/or groups to achieve deeper understanding of one another and to resolve their differences.

Negotiation:

The exemplary performer finds ways to assist organizations and individuals with seemingly divergent objectives and interests in reaching mutually acceptable agreements.

Operational Planning:

The exemplary performer effectively plans the steps required to attain a desired outcome.

Peace Building:

The exemplary performer effectively combines the use of a variety of competencies and tools to model characteristics of a peaceful community / society.

Personal Security:

The exemplary performer acts effectively to assure his/her personal safety, and the safety of others, while continuing to work toward the mission's objectives.

Strategic Thinking

The exemplary performer develops and closely adapts effective strategies to the mission's objectives, clearly linking individual and group activities to those objectives.

Teamwork:

The exemplary performer integrates individual and group objectives and efforts in order to work toward shared goals.

Applying Key Competencies To Existing Organizational Positions

Specific Behaviours

Consistent with competency-based human resource practices, each Core Competency is further described in terms of observable behaviours. These are the behaviours which distinguish exemplary performers from the rest.

With definition of particular behaviours, the competency profile becomes a useful tool for recruiting, selection, training and development and performance management.

The range of activities to which a Canadian Peace Professional may be called is large indeed. The CPS facilitates the training of candidates in core competencies through an integrated learning and certification system. Responsibility for mission-specific training outside the CPS Core Curriculum falls to employing organizations. The CPS is happy to consult and offer advice on mission-specific learning needs from its extensive contacts in the field.

The following model illustrates how a particular job might be described using the CPS Core Competencies and additional competencies described by the hiring agency.

Assumptions:

1. The hiring agency looks to the CPS as a professional, authoritative source for assistance in recruitment, selection and staffing of personnel for various positions under the rubric of Peace Professional.
2. The hiring agency is aware of and supports the two primary tools used to screen candidates for potential deployment: the Statement of Core Values and the Key Competencies for Peace Professionals, and understands that all candidates available for deployment have been successfully screened against these criteria. The profile of each successful candidate indicates the level of proficiency assessed for each core competency.
3. The hiring agency recognizes the scope and limitations of the Statement of Core Values and Key Competencies, and augments CPS's candidate assessment with its own assessment of additional, mission-specific competency requirements and pertinent training services as required.

Levels of Competency:

The model proposed provides the opportunity to assign one of four levels to each Key Competency and each of its supporting behaviours. The intent is to allow mission directors and hiring agencies to tailor the profile to a particular job or group of jobs, and to query the roster for a list of candidates who meet or exceed the profile for the job. For example, a candidate being sought specifically to escort a local official may not require a high level of competence in Strategic Thinking or Facilitation, but he or she may need to be very knowledgeable and highly experienced in assessing and mitigating risks to personal security.

Level 0

Candidate has little or no training or application experience in the competency or specific behaviour, although he/she may be aware of the principles underlying it.

Level 1

Candidate has knowledge and some practical training in the Competency or specific behaviour, but little or no practical experience in applying or implementing it in an operational setting.

Level 2

Candidate has knowledge, practical training and some field experience using the Competency or specific behaviour.

Level 3

Candidate has knowledge, practical training and extensive field experience in the Competency or specific behaviour. Candidate is able to coach and support others in the Competency or specific behaviour.

Competency Profile for a Particular Peace Professional Assignment

Section 1: Key Competencies for Peace Professionals

Key Competency	Level Req'd				Comments (Specific job requirements, etc.)
	0	1	2	3	
Communication: The exemplary performer communicates effectively orally and in writing in a manner that takes into account the audience being addressed.					
- identifies audience(s) to be addressed and considers best medium for communication with each/all					
- identifies and confirms key messages to each key stakeholder (common and/or distinct)					
- crafts messages to support and further the goals of the mission					
- considers potential reaction and adjusts accordingly					
- monitors reaction and uses results to enhance future communications					
Conciliation: The exemplary performer acts as intermediary between conflicting parties when the conflicting parties are unwilling or unable to sit down face to face to discuss differences					
- develops trust between conflicting parties and confidence in his/ her ability to communicate key messages between parties					
- maintains neutrality while effectively communicating the messages intended by each of the parties participating in the conciliation effort					
- advises parties with appropriate candour and sensitivity of the reaction of other parties to proposals or positions put forward					
- advises parties as to other dispute resolution mechanisms available to them					
- consults with key stakeholders to build a shared understanding of the essential elements of the conflict					
- verifies this understanding through relations with people on the ground who are living the conflict					
- continually updates intelligence to ensure a timely understanding and identify new developments					

Key Competency	Level Req'd				Comments (Specific job requirements, etc.)
	0	1	2	3	
Conflict Analysis: The superior performer uses all available tools and input to determine the evident and underlying elements of a conflict, as well as the role and use of power by various parties..					
- maintains awareness of, and familiarity with, current tools and methodologies available to facilitate a thorough understanding of the nature and causes of a conflict.					
- conducts research from all available sources to ensure that relevant information is taken into consideration					
- consults with key stakeholders to build a shared understanding of the essential elements of the conflict					
- verifies this understanding through relations with people on the ground who are living the conflict					
- continually updates intelligence to ensure a timely understanding and identify new developments					
Facilitation: The exemplary performer finds ways to assist help people and organizations with diverse perspectives in working together to identify and achieve common goals and objectives.					
- works with parties involved to identify respective positions and underlying interests					
supports parties involved to expand their perspectives on the issues at hand					
- fosters understanding of all perspectives and works to alleviate fears / concerns					
- supports parties in the development of alternative means to achieve their respective goals and objectives without violence					
Mediation: The exemplary performer works successfully at assisting others in resolving their differences (individuals and/or organizations).					
- facilitates the process of identifying positions and interests of the parties and assists them in understanding the distinction between positions and interests					
- establishes credibility as an unbiased, “neutral”, to the extent possible					
- stresses the value of dialogue, as well as other non-violent means of conflict resolution					

Key Competency	Level Req'd				Comments (Specific job requirements, etc.)
	0	1	2	3	
- engages services of appropriate resources					
- facilitates development of options for resolution and arrival at a sustainable, peaceful agreement					
Negotiation: The exemplary performer represents the interests of the party (or parties) effectively and with sensitivity, always remaining cognizant of the importance of a fair, equitable and sustainable agreement.					
- identifies the key stakeholders and decision makers and the nature of the relationships between them					
- determines the initial positions of each of the parties involved, and what has led to the establishment of these positions					
- determines areas of compromise and / or flexibility; searches for common ground					
- develops alternatives that may be acceptable to both (all?) parties					
- facilitates preparation of a fair, equitable, sustainable, written agreement which addresses the concerns of all parties					
Operational Planning: The exemplary performer effectively and objectively plans the steps and processes required to attain a desired outcome.					
- clearly articulates desired outcomes so that they reflect mission goals and are understood and shared by others					
- leads and facilitates in the identification of specific actions necessary to attain the desired outcome					
- documents and revisits the operational plan, adjusting and revising as required					
- reviews and learns from successes and failures					
Peace Building: The exemplary performer effectively combines the use of a variety of competencies and tools to model characteristics of a peaceful community / society.					
- bears in mind latent hostility which may impede progress towards the building of a peaceful environment					
- proposes/ fosters/encourages support for positive steps toward a peaceful future for the parties involved					
- encourages dialogue among interested parties with the aim of discovering creative ways to move forward					

Key Competency	Level Req'd				Comments (Specific job requirements, etc.)
	0	1	2	3	
Personal Security: The exemplary performer acts effectively to assure his/her own personal safety, and that of others, while working toward the mission's objectives.					
- identifies real and potential threats to the safety of all those involved					
- considers potential impact of each threat and the likelihood of its occurrence					
- actively plans actions and strategies to mitigate risk					
- gives appropriate consideration to the impact of identified threats to the ultimate objective(s) of the initiative					
Strategic Thinking: The exemplary performer develops and closely adapts effective strategies to the mission's objectives, clearly linking individual and group activities to those objectives.					
- clearly articulates long-term goals as over-arching and inclusive of individual and group activities					
- builds a strong strategic framework for the development of operational plans					
- periodically monitors operations as they relate to strategic goals					
Teamwork: The exemplary performer integrates individual and group objectives and efforts in order to work toward shared goals.					
- identifies the range of activities required to accomplish a given goal					
- assesses individual and team strengths accordingly					
- proposes/ assigns specific tasks based on strengths					
- actively recognizes the value of individual and team efforts					
- promotes attitudes, behaviours and methods which support a team approach to goal achievement					
- effectively facilitates the resolution of team issues/concerns as they arise					

Section 2: Mission -Specific Competencies Defined by Mission Lead, Hiring Agency)

Note: At this level, the whole panoply of peace-building activities begins to open up. No doubt, further work with key stakeholders could result in significant gains in identifying and measuring specific competencies related to “sub-fields” of the Peace Profession. The viability of such further work will depend on factors such as potential for economies of scale, generated by needs on the world scene at any given time. In the short term, we need a system that can respond quickly to recruiting agencies based on Core Values and Core Competencies.

Listed below are two examples of potential mission-specific competencies. The CPS has not undertaken at this point to enumerate or develop the full range of competencies which could be required. This responsibility rests with coordinating and hiring agencies. CPS will offer its services in consulting with and advising these agencies on ways to identify and define particular competencies required for particular missions.

Mission -Specific Competencies (Supplementary to Core Values and Key Competencies)	Level Req`d			Comments (Specific job requirements, etc.)
	1	2	3	
Interposing: The exemplary performer intentionally and effectively places himself or herself directly between individuals or groups in conflict in such a way as to reduce the likelihood of hostile acts.				
- identifies representatives of parties in conflict				
- assesses the potential for physical harm or intimidation				
- establishes an action plan to mitigate or reduce risk				
- executes action plan				
- monitors and evaluates results				
Preventive Diplomacy: The exemplary performer engages in active dialogue with key stakeholders with the intent of avoiding the escalation of conflict.				
- identifies all stakeholders and analyzes their respective roles and interests related to the “conflict”				
- assesses possible entry points for effective intervention				
- actively seeks to engage in dialogue with all key players / interested parties				
- identifies individuals or groups at various levels with perceived interest in avoiding hostilities				

Mission -Specific Competencies (Supplementary to Core Values and Key Competencies)	Level Req`d			Comments (Specific job requirements, etc.)
	1	2	3	
- understand and separates history from myth related to the current conflict				
- identifies potential fault lines in specific issues and plans to address them				
- devises strategies to engage those interested in peaceful resolution				
- explores opportunities to influence hostile parties in favour of peaceful resolution				