BEHAVIOURAL COMPETENCIES

for Canada's Substance Use Workforce v. 3

Interview Tool for Educators

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

Evidence. Engagement. Impact.

MODIFYING INTERVIEWING TOOLS FOR THE NEW OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS

Each of the new occupational clusters has an associated competency profile that outlines the required **behavioural competencies** and the recommended **proficiency levels**.

There are different positions that can fall under each of the occupational clusters. Therefore, the competency profile for each occupational cluster should be reviewed to determine whether modifications are required. For example, some of the positions that fall under a particular occupational cluster may require a different proficiency level for one or more of the competencies. In these cases, adjust the proficiency level to best reflect the position of interest. Similarly, some of the positions that fall under a particular occupational cluster may not require some of the competencies included in the competency profile. In these cases, remove any nonessential competencies to ensure that **only** essential competencies are focused on during the interview.

The steps for modifying the existing interview tools for the new occupational clusters are outlined below. Additionally, Figure 1 illustrates the steps in a flow chart.

Step 1: Review Competency Profile to Determine Relevance.

- If the competency profile is relevant (i.e., no changes are required), then the existing interview tools and materials can be used.
- If the competency profile is not relevant, then the competencies should be reviewed to determine which competencies and proficiency levels should be changed to best represent the position of interest.

Step 2: Determine Which Competencies Will Be Assessed in the Interview and Decide on the Questions that Will Be Asked.

- Each competency profile is associated with sample questions for the relevant proficiency levels.
    - If no changes were made to the competency profile, then the existing questions can be used.
    - If changes were made, then the generic interview bank should be consulted to help select and adapt alternative questions.

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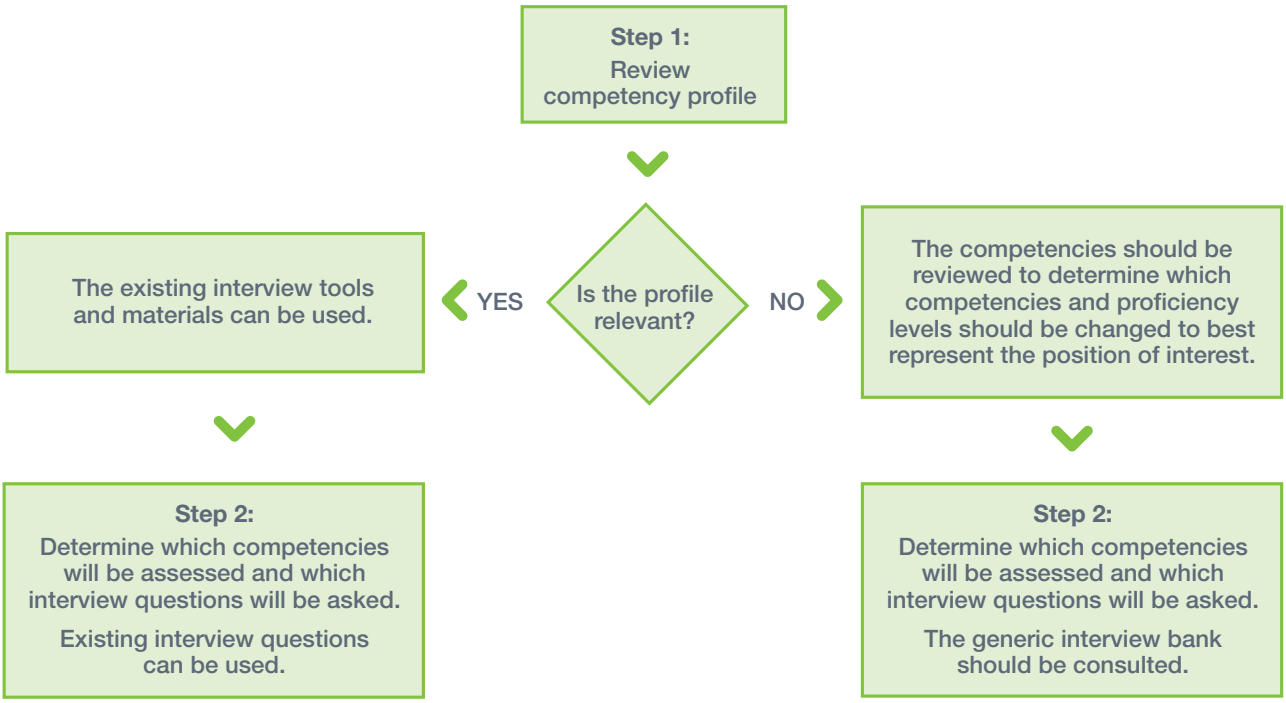
Figure 1. Modifying interview tools for the new occupational clusters



Competencies and Interviewing Best Practices

- Prioritize the competencies you will evaluate.
  A typical competency profile will consist of **only** critical competencies (i.e., those essential to perform the job successfully). Generally, a profile *will not exceed 12 competencies*. Although all these competencies are essential, *not all competencies can be assessed through an interview*. For a one-hour interview, a reasonable number of competencies and questions to assess or ask can range between five and seven.
- Make it relevant to your work and organization.
  The questions included in this guide are samples of **generic behavioural interview questions** for each proficiency level of each of the behavioural competencies. These questions can be used with their original phrasing, or they can be used as the basis for developing more tailored questions.
- Maximize efficiency and prioritization by minimizing redundancy.
  In deciding which questions to ask, the **relative importance of a competency should be considered**. In some cases, there will be overlap between competencies. In these cases, only assess **one** of these competencies as the interviewee's answer may provide valuable information that is relevant to the overlapping competency. For example, two competencies that overlap with one another are **Effective Communication** and **Interpersonal Rapport**. If both competencies are included in the competency profile, only assess **one** of these competencies.

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New Occupational Cluster: Educator

Interviewing Tool for Positions Related to Educator	
Position Title:	
Candidate's Name:	
Interviewer's Name:	Interviewer's Title:
Date of Interview:	Location of Interview:

Interview Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Review resumé and candidate file for skills and experience that are relevant to the job competition.
- ☐ Review the required competencies for the position.
- ☐ Determine which five to seven competencies to focus on in the interview.

Suggested Competency Profile

Job Cluster	Example Job Titles
Educator	Teacher, Guidance Counsellor, Nutrition Educator, Substance Use Educator

Competency Required	Proficiency Level
Adaptability and Flexibility	4
Analytical Thinking and Decision Making	3
Collaboration and Network Building	3
Continuous Learning	4
Creativity and Innovation	3
Culturally Safe and Anti-Oppressive Practice	4
Developing Others	3
Effective Communication	3
Ethical Conduct and Professionalism	3
Interpersonal Rapport	3
Planning and Organizing	3
Self-Management	2
Self-Motivation	2
Teamwork and Co-operation	2

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Sample Questions

Choose five to seven of the most relevant or most important questions.

Question 1: Collaboration and Network Building

Definition: Identify, create and build capacity with informal and formal interdisciplinary networks and allied community groups, including people with lived and living experience, families and communities from diverse backgrounds, to support the provision of service delivery and achievement of the organization's objectives. People who use services include individuals, groups, organizations and communities.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Describe a time when you developed a network of contacts to address a specific need in a community or population.

- Why did you need to build this network of contacts?
- How did you build this network of contacts?
- What factors did you consider when determining how to proceed?
- What was the result of your efforts?
- What has been the long-term effect of your efforts?

Notes		
Situation	Action	Results

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Question 2: Continuous Learning

Definition: Identify and pursue learning opportunities to enhance one's professional practice and development, and the delivery of high-quality programs and services.

LEVEL 4 [ADVANCED]

Question: Tell us about a time when you took a professional developmental opportunity beyond your own area (of expertise) to help meet future organizational needs.

- What future organizational needs were involved?
- How did you identify this need?
- What learning opportunities did you seek to address these needs?
- What did you learn from these opportunities?
- How useful was the developmental opportunity for you, the organization or both?

Notes		
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Question 3: Adaptability and Flexibility

Definition: Willingly adjust one's approach to meet the demands and needs of constantly changing conditions, situations and people, and work effectively in difficult or ambiguous situations.

LEVEL 4 [ADVANCED]

Question: Tell us about a time when you revised an education or awareness program to meet new demands or priorities.

- What were the demands or priorities, and how were they identified?
- How did you revise the program?
- What were the challenges or barriers you faced, and how did you navigate them?
- What was the outcome? How did this affect policy, processes or programming?
- What were the key learnings, and how did you implement feedback or new knowledge into the program?

Notes		
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Question 4: Analytical Thinking and Decision Making

Definition: Gather, synthesize and evaluate information and evidence to determine possible alternatives and outcomes and make well-informed, timely decisions. Includes critical thinking and reasoning skills.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Tell us about a time when you evaluated the effectiveness of an education or awareness program that you developed or delivered.

- What was the program?
- What evaluation methods did you use to measure effectiveness?
- How did you communicate your results?
- What was the outcome?

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Question 5: Creativity and Innovation

Definition: Use evidence-informed practices in innovative and creative ways to initiate effective new ways of working and advance the understanding of the field of practice. Innovation and creativity are achieved by collaborating with system partnerss to optimize improvements in service delivery and professional practice.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Describe a time when you used an innovative approach to develop an education or awareness program.

- What did you do? How did you identify that an innovative approach was needed?
- What was unique about your approach?
- What was the outcome?
- What were the key learnings from the experience?

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Question 6: Culturally Safe and Anti-oppressive Practices

Definition: Provide inclusive, anti-oppressive, sex- and gender-sensitive, equitable and timely services to diverse populations and cultures,* including but not limited to age, sex, gender, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, legal status, health, ability, sexual orientation, type and mode of substance use, continued substance use, concurrent conditions, etc. Challenge oppressive structures, unequal power relations, affirm and value the worth of all individuals, families, groups and communities; and protect the dignity of all with cultural awareness, competence, sensitivity, humility and cultural safety. (*Refers to the distinct cultures that exist around Indigeneity, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, substance use, etc.)

LEVEL 4 [ADVANCED]

Question: Describe a time when you worked with diverse communities to inform program planning and development.

- Who did you work with, and what was your engagement strategy? What was your role?
- What was your decision making process in selecting the communities you worked with?
- How did it inform program planning and development?
- What was the outcome?
- Were there any unintended outcomes (positive or negative) as a result of this work?
- Is there anything you would have done differently? And if so, what?

Notes		
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Question 7: Developing Others

Definition: Facilitate and motivate sustained learning and create learning opportunities and resources, as well as promote and respect others' ownership of learning outcomes. Includes creation of a continuous learning environment that fosters positive growth in both work and public contexts among peers, individuals, families, communities and other groups.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Describe a time when you used a variety of methods in designing learning materials.

- What methods did you use?
- What was your rationale for selecting these methods?
- What challenges did you face?
- How did you design the learning materials?
- What was the outcome?

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Question 8: Effective Communication

Definition: Articulate, both verbally and in writing, across a range of technologies in a manner that builds trust, respect and credibility, including in-person and technology-assisted communication (e.g., video conferencing, texting, social media). Checks with the audience to ensure the message is received and mutually understood. Includes active listening skills (attending, being silent, summarizing, paraphrasing, questioning and empathizing), communicating with gender sensitivity, cultural humility and congruent non-verbal communication.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Tell us about a time where you fostered open communication with participants in your education or awareness program.

- Describe the situation.
- How did you foster open communication?
- What methods of communication did you use?
- What was the outcome?
- What would you do differently next time?

Notes		
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Question 9: Ethical Conduct and Professionalism

Definition: Provide professional services according to the principles and values of integrity, competence, accountability, respect and trust to safeguard both self and others. Includes the development of professionalism and ethical behaviour in self and others (e.g., individuals, groups, organizations, communities).

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Describe a situation where you updated a program or activity to reflect up-to-date professional practices.

- What was the situation?
- How did you identify the need to update the program or activity?
- What updates did you make?
- What was the outcome?

Notes		
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Question 10: Interpersonal Rapport

Definition: Establish and maintain relationships based on mutual respect and trust, appropriate sensitivity and transparency, empathy and compassion with people using services, colleagues, professional associates and the greater community. Encompasses skills of tact, engagement and sensitivity in all encounters with others.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Describe a time when you expressed compassion and empathy toward a participant in your program.

- Describe the situation.
- What did you do?
- What was the person's reaction?
- What was the value to demonstrating empathy and compassion toward your participants?
- What was the outcome of your interaction?

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Question 11: Planning and Organizing

Definition: Develop and implement plans, identify and prioritize tasks, evaluate outcomes, and adjust activities to achieve objectives.

LEVEL 3 [PROFICIENT]

Question: Tell us about a time when you revised timelines for a program due to changing priorities.

- Describe the situation.
- How did the changing priorities affect your program?
- How did you adjust?
- What was the outcome?
- Were there any unanticipated outcomes?

Notes		
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Question 12: Self-Management

Definition: Appropriately manage one's emotions and feelings; maintain a calm and respectful composure under a broad range of challenging circumstances, and think clearly and stay focused under pressure. Encompasses self-regulation and mindfulness.

LEVEL 2 [DEVELOPING]

Question: Tell us about a time when you had a difficult conversation with a participant in your program.

- Describe the situation.
- What was the challenge that needed to be addressed through the conversation?
- How did you approach this situation?
- What was the outcome?

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Question 13: Self-Motivation

Definition: Remain motivated and focused on goals until the best possible results are achieved, with both passion for making a difference in the substance use field and persistence despite confronting obstacles, resistance and setbacks.

LEVEL 2 [DEVELOPING]

Question: Tell us about a time when you reflected on past successes and challenges to improve your program in the future.

- Describe the situation.
- What successes and challenges did you reflect on?
- How did you use the successes and challenges (or results) to improve your program?
- What was the outcome?

Notes		
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Question 14: Teamwork and Co-operation

Definition: Work co-operatively and productively with others within and across organizational units to achieve common goals; demonstrate respect, cooperation, collaboration and consensus-building.

LEVEL 2 [DEVELOPING]

Question: Describe a time when you acknowledged others' contributions to your program.

- Describe the situation.
- What did you acknowledge them for?
- How did you acknowledge them?
- What was the outcome?

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Evaluating the Interview

All the energy and effort devoted to capturing good job-related information during the selection interview will be lost if this information is not evaluated consistently and appropriately for all candidates. This section provides guidance on how to evaluate information from the candidate gathered through the competency-based interview.

Each behavioural question is designed to elicit information relevant to a specific competency. However, human behaviour can be complex and the following situations can arise:

- A behaviourally based question is asked focusing on one competency area, but a candidate provides an example that relates to another area.
- A candidate provides examples that relate to more than one competency area.
- A candidate provides examples that relate to the required competencies during the introductory phases of the interview or during the close of the interview.

The whole interview should, therefore, be reviewed carefully for evidence of the competencies being assessed. One method for doing this is to circle each behavioural example and, if one demonstrates a competency other than the one intended by the question, note the competency demonstrated alongside the example. Then cross-reference this example in the section of the interview tool devoted to that competency.

Once all relevant information from the interview has been reviewed and correctly classified, the interviewer is in a position to understand and evaluate a candidate's past behaviour for each competency.

The next step is to assign a rating, or score, for each competency, using the rating scale below. The assigned score is based on the candidate's demonstration of the relevant behaviour indicators for the proficiency levels in the competency profile at the beginning of this tool. Refer as necessary to the *Behavioural Competencies for Canada's Substance Use Workforce* for an extended sample of appropriate behaviour indicators for each competency.

Record the score in the scoring grid on the next page. Add any particular comments needed to support the rating.

If there are multiple interviewers, each interviewer completes the scoring grid individually, without consulting the others. Upon completion of all scoring, the interviewers discuss the ratings they assigned and arrive at a consensus score for each competency.

Interview Rating Scale	
5	**Well Above Standard** *(significantly exceeds requirements)* Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is exceptional and reflects superior ability to perform; all aspects of the competency are demonstrated to a high degree.
4	**Above Standard** *(exceeds requirements)* Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is above average and reflects more than an adequate ability to perform; all or most aspects of the competency are demonstrated at an above-average level.
3	**Meets Standard** *(meets requirement)* Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency meets expectations and reflects an adequate ability to perform; candidate may have demonstrated minor weaknesses in some aspects of the competency, but none of major significance.
2	**Below Standard** *(falls below requirements)* Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is inadequate in key respects.
1	**Well Below Standard** *(falls significantly below requirements)* Evidence of candidate's demonstration of the competency is far from adequate in all or most respects.

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Scoring Grid

Competency	Interviewer Score	Rationale/Comments	Consensus Score
Adaptability and Flexibility			
Analytical Thinking and Decision Making			
Collaboration and Network Building			
Continuous Learning			
Creativity and Innovation			
Culturally Safe and Anti-Oppressive Practice			
Developing Others			
Effective Communication			
Ethical Conduct and Professionalism			
Interpersonal Rapport			
Planning and Organizing			
Self-Management			
Self-Motivation			
Teamwork and Co-operation			

ISBN 978-1-77871-078-0
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