SPS
SCOTTISH PRISON SERVICE

Relationships & Collaboration

Support & Motivate

Accountability & Initiative

Solve Problems & Make Decisions

Listen & Communicate

Plan & Organise

Develop Ourselves & Others

Change & Improve

Competencies for Success Framework

Introduction

The Competencies for Success Framework (CSF) outlines the behavioural competencies that are essential to support effective performance in all roles in SPS.

The framework forms the basis of our people management processes and provides a common language for how we go about our daily work; it does not describe what we do in each of our roles, but how we do it. It helps us assess, manage and improve performance aligned to our personal goals and organisational objectives.

The framework is underpinned by the SPS core values, recognising the integral connection between our personal values and our behaviours. Fundamentally, our personal values influence the decisions we make and the actions we take and therefore impact how we behave. It is recognised that a strong alignment between personal values and organisational values will support SPS achieve its Vision which is why they are so important to us in defining and describing how we will perform our roles.

The framework outlines eight core behavioural competencies, which apply consistently to all roles, regardless of the nature, context or level. This ensures there is one transparent set of standards, which we will all work to, regardless of the job we do. This helps us understand what is expected of us, as well as what we can expect from each other. In addition to defining each of the eight behavioural competencies, the framework describes what each competency looks like in practice, and includes development questions to support self-reflection and development activities.

Please note: the new CSF will be formally launched in the coming months. This framework will replace the existing Behavioural Competency Framework.

How to use the framework

The framework supports a range of people management processes:

Process	Line Manager	Employee
Learning & Development	The CSF can help line managers identify and discuss strengths and development priorities for employees to support performance in their current role, support development aligned to future aspirations, or when considering longer term development needs.	The CSF can help you identify areas of strength as well as learning and development priorities for performance improvement in your current role, for continual professional development, and aligned to your future aspirations.
Recruitment	During the recruitment process, hiring managers should refer to the CSF to identify the essential behaviours that are required for the role that should be included in the person specification and assessed during the recruitment process in line with the Recruitment and Selection Policy & Guidance	The CSF will help you prepare for and during recruitment and promotion campaigns. Used alongside the relevant role profile, the CSF will provide insight into the essential behavioural competencies for the role and as a tool to support reflection on and development of evidence and examples of behaviours in practice.

Process	Line Manager	Employee
Probation	Line managers should refer to the CSF alongside the Line Managers Probationary Guidance when establishing performance standards, setting objectives and measuring performance in probation. The CSF is a useful tool to support discussions on the behavioural aspects of performance in – how the role is carried out, in addition to what has been achieved. This helps employees understand the standards of behaviour expected. Regular reflection and discussion helps promote and embed positive behaviours.	Probationary employees should refer to this document along with the Probationary Employee Guidance to identify the behaviours that will enable you to effectively perform in your role, evidence applying these behaviours in practice, and to highlight any development needs you may have during the probation period.
Performance Management	The CSF helps clarify performance standards and expectations which can be observed and measured by line managers. This should be discussed during informal or formal Performance Management discussions with employees and captured during Performance Feedback 'check-ins'. The CSF is a useful tool to support discussions on the behavioural aspects of performance – how the role is carried out, in addition to what has been achieved. This helps employees understand the standards of behaviour expected. Regular reflection and discussion helps promote and embed positive behaviours.	To support the Performance Feedback process, you should refer to the CSF when providing evidence of performance and achievements in the Performance Feedback Form and to help identify development priorities during performance 'check-ins' with your line manager. When reflecting and evidencing performance, consideration should be given to how you have carried out your role as well as what you have done. The CSF can also be used to support discussions on your practice and approach aligned to your aspirations. See the Learning and Development Section for more information.
Performance Improvement	The CSF can support line managers setting performance objectives when addressing unsatisfactory performance through the Performance Improvement Policy. Behaviours contribute to effective performance and the CSF can help clarify expectations and support discussions on areas for improvement.	The CSF is a useful tool to support improvements in your performance in line with the Performance Improvement Policy as it clearly sets out the standards and expectations of positive behaviours for all employees and can support discussions with your line manager on what aspects of your behaviour can be developed to improve your performance.

Resources

Development

There are a number of tools and resources that can support with reflection and development of behavioural competencies. Within each behavioural competency section in the following pages, there is a link to a resource section on MyLO, which contains relevant learning modules and courses aligned to the behavioural competency.

Just click on the to access the resource library and to get started.

Wellbeing

Maintaining our wellbeing is critical to performing our best at work and it is recognised that a number of factors can affect our wellbeing, at different times and in different ways, which in turn can impact our behaviours at work. SPS is committed to fostering a positive working environment that proactively promotes and protects the physical and mental wellbeing of its employees through appropriate wellbeing.

To support us in prioritising and managing our wellbeing to ensure we can individually and collectively succeed, a range of useful resources can be accessed at the wellbeing resource area.

Click on the to explore.

Relationships & Collaboration

What does it mean?
Creating positive connections with people, groups and partners built on trust, respect and empathy. Working with other people and organisations to support each other, share knowledge and ideas and achieve common goals.

Why is it important to us?
Relationships are at the heart of what SPS does; when approached with understanding and compassion, they generate meaningful change. When we work together we are stronger, achieve more, and create a great environment to work in.

What does it look like?
- Investing time and energy in building relationships
- Taking time to get to know people, their interests, preferences, and what is important to them
- Using warmth, humour and shared interests to build rapport
- Being open, consistent and honest in our communication and interactions to build trust
- Being present and focused on the other person
- Treating everyone with dignity, respect and empathy so they feel welcome and included
- Understanding the different preferences and needs of other people and adapting our approach to be more inclusive
- Acknowledging and working to remove our biases to become more open-minded
- Using empathy, compassion and respect when we communicate with, or about, other people
- Anticipating areas of conflict and taking proactive steps to reduce it
- Building connections with individuals, groups and organisations to create a diverse network and multi-disciplinary approach
- Pro-actively finding ways to include and work with others
- Seeking out people and organisations who can provide alternative perspectives and ideas to diversify our thinking and understanding
- Sharing information, knowledge and resources with other people, teams and organisations

How do we develop?
- Describe a relationship you have initiated. How did you go about building this relationship? In what ways did you build trust?
- When has your use of respect, compassion and/or empathy improved a relationship or interaction?
- When have you had to change the way you approached a relationship? How did you realise something wasn't working? What did you change in your approach?
- When have you chosen to include others in a piece of work? What impact did working collaboratively have?
- When have you deliberately sought out different views? How did this impact your thinking?

Listen & Communicate

What does it mean?

Listening to deepen our understanding of other people and their position.

Effective and open exchange of information, thoughts and ideas in written, oral, digital and non-verbal form. Being flexible and adapting our approach to suit our audience. Creating an open space for other people to safely express their opinions or concerns.

Why is it important to us?

Listening so someone feels heard, creates respect, inclusion and a sense of being valued.

Good communication is key to ensuring we all understand each other and what we need to do. It builds trust, engagement, team work and acts as the foundation for all the work we do.

What does it look like?

- Paying thoughtful attention to what is being said through people's words, tone and body language
- Asking open questions to understand what other people are thinking and how they are feeling
- Using open and positive body language to show we are listening and interested
- Keeping an open mind and considering the other person's position without judgement or trying to impose our solutions
- Being approachable and available so other people feel comfortable speaking to us and safely expressing their views
- Respecting the different needs, and welcoming the responses and opinions, of other people
- Explaining complex issues in a way which is clear and easy to understand
- Producing well-structured, accurate, concise and professional written communication
- Adapting style, tone and approach to suit our audience and message
- Delivering difficult messages with respect and compassion
- Being open, honest and transparent with information
- Ensuring key people are kept informed of situations
- Providing context and explaining why actions are required so other people can understand and take ownership

How do we develop?

- When have you listened to really understand someone? How did you encourage the conversation to open up? Did it change your opinion?
- When has someone's body language or tone of voice helped you to recognise how they were feeling? How did this change your approach?
- When and how have you had to adjust your style and approach to suit a particular audience? How did you identify what change was required?
- Describe a time you've had to deliver a difficult message. How did you ensure it was done with respect and compassion? What did this look like? What impact did it have?
- How do you encourage open communication? How do you help other people feel safe expressing their opinions?

Support & Motivate

What does it mean?
Inspiring and encouraging other people to take action and achieve goals. Recognising effort and contribution. Understanding our own and other people's drivers and values and linking these to our work and the SPS vision. Prioritising our own and other people's wellbeing, including physical, emotional and mental health.

Why is it important to us?
When we are supported and motivated we feel connected, achieve more and have a sense of purpose.

What does it look like?
- Recognising that every interaction, no matter how small, matters and can make a difference
- Making sure we welcome, include and treat everyone fairly
- Providing colleagues with praise and recognition for effort, behaviours and achievements
- Understanding our own and other people's motivations and values and finding ways to include these at work
- Involving and valuing other people by asking for their thoughts, ideas and contributions
- Celebrating and sharing ours and other people's successes
- Focusing on our own and other people's strengths rather than weaknesses to encourage growth and self-worth
- Giving other people autonomy and ownership to build trust and a sense of purpose
- Creating enthusiasm and commitment by linking work to the SPS vision and values and highlighting impact
- Prioritising our own and other people's wellbeing
- Offering practical and emotional support to help other people
- Increasing resilience by recognising the need to recharge and support work life balance
- Treating everyone as individuals by being flexible in our approach to meet different needs

How do we develop?
- What are your values? How do they show up at work? How do they impact how you work with others?
- How do you recognise other people's effort, behaviours and/or achievements? What impact does this have?
- In what ways do you recognise your own achievements, strengths and contributions?
- When have you involved others as a way to connect and motivate them? What impact did this have?
- How do you prioritise and support your own wellbeing? How do you support other people's wellbeing? How do you balance this with the practicalities of your role?
- Describe a time when you have given someone practical help or emotional support? How did you know this was wanted? When have you asked for, or accepted, help yourself?

Develop Ourselves & Others

What does it mean?
Proactively taking ownership for our personal and professional development, learning and growth. Seek out opportunities to understand ourselves better, gain new skills and enhance existing ones. Recognising strengths and capabilities in other people and supporting them to develop and reach their potential.

Why is it important to us?
Development of ourselves and other people leads to growth, progression, confidence, fulfilment, and ultimately helps us to do our jobs better.

What does it look like?
- Setting aside time to focus on our development
- Challenging ourselves to work outside our comfort zone to support growth and development
- Having regular catch-ups with peers, line managers and any direct reports that focus on learning and reflection
- Being open by approaching every situation as an opportunity to learn more about ourselves
- Increasing knowledge, skills and experience within our functional area to support our professional development
- Developing our self-awareness, building on our strengths and areas for improvement to support our personal development
- Developing a Growth Mindset which recognises that we are all still learning and sees challenges and mistakes as an opportunity to grow
- Reflecting on our behaviours, performance and decisions to better understand what works and what we need to do more or less of
- Seeking feedback from others to understand ourselves better
- Identifying our strengths and areas to improve and making plans to develop these
- Recognising potential and talent in other people and finding ways to help them develop
- Giving specific, constructive and supportive feedback to other people which focuses on strengths, improvement areas, impact and helping them to reflect
- Providing opportunities for other people to grow through supported delegation
- Sharing knowledge and skills to support other people to learn and grow

How do we develop?
- What was the last thing you learnt about yourself?
- In the last month, how much time have you spent on your development? How have you prioritised your own development?
- How often do you reflect on situations, pieces of work, decisions to think about what went well and what could have gone better? When have you approached a situation differently because of learning that came from reflection?
- How do you deliberately seek out feedback? What have you learnt about yourself and your approach from doing this? When have you provided feedback to others to help their development?
- Have you identified talent and potential in others? How have you supported their development?

Accountability & Initiative

What does it mean?
Taking ownership and personal responsibility for our behaviour, actions, decisions and performance. Encouraging other people to deliver and achieve by holding them to account to do the same. Being self-driven, taking action and proactively sorting issues without waiting to be asked.

Why is it important to us?
We all need to play our part to achieve our vision. By taking accountability and using initiative we build trust and respect. Collectively it allows the organisation to deliver on the commitments we make and be transformative.

What does it look like?
- Taking ownership and pride in our work
- Keeping promises and delivering on commitments we make
- Setting high standards for ourselves and other people
- Setting clear goals, expectations and areas of responsibility for ourselves and other people
- Constructively challenging other people when they don't meet their own or the organisation's standards and values
- Driving pieces of work forward to get things done on time and to expected standards
- Acting with integrity and according to SPS values in all interactions and decisions
- Being open, transparent and taking responsibility for our mistakes
- Considering the impact of our actions, behaviours and decisions on other people and the bigger picture
- Pro-actively taking action because it's the right thing to do rather than being told to
- Thinking and making decisions for ourselves which are within our remit and area of responsibility
- Being determined and resilient to find ways to achieve goals
- Delegating where appropriate and using the strengths of other people

How do we develop?
- What are you most proud of at work? In what ways did you take ownership for this?
- When have you taken action because you knew it was the right thing to do rather than because you were told to do it?
- When have you considered the impact your actions and behaviours had on others? What did you change and learn from this?
- Give an example where you have been open and transparent about a mistake you made? How have you encouraged others to do the same?
- When have you constructively challenged someone who was not living up to their standards or values? How did you approach it? What did you learn about yourself and your own values?

Plan & Organise

What does it mean?
Managing our time and resources to achieve our goals and objectives. Creating realistic and feasible plans, and then monitoring progress to ensure we deliver on time and to agreed expectations. Considering the bigger picture and being able to prioritise, adapt and respond to competing priorities.

Why is it important to us?
It means we are efficient and effective as individuals, teams and as an organisation. We understand what is expected of us and can provide the same clarity to other people, ensuring we are all working towards agreed objectives.

What does it look like?
- Setting clear, realistic, achievable and measurable goals and milestones for our work
- Using tools and techniques to approach work in a logical and structured way
- Prioritising and managing resources (time, finances, people) to make sure they are used efficiently and on the right things
- Producing and using plans and schedules to breakdown complex goals into achievable steps
- Thinking beyond our own immediate situations, roles and tasks to consider the bigger picture and impact of our plans
- Making sure our plans and objectives align with team and organisational plans and objectives
- Valuing, scheduling and achieving both urgent and important tasks and projects
- Reporting, monitoring and tracking progress against plans and goals
- Being flexible, resilient and adapting plans to accommodate changing work priorities and deadlines
- Identifying risks and building in contingencies to mitigate these
- Planning with a view to the medium and long term as well as short term
- Clarifying plans and understanding to ensure everyone knows what is expected of them
- Evaluating work and activities to understand whether plans worked

How do we develop?
- How do you prioritise tasks, goals, projects in your workload? What factors do you consider?
- What tools and techniques do you use to plan and organise your work? What system or approach do you use?
- Give an example of an important but not urgent task that you have recently worked on. How did you create the time to work on it?
- How do you monitor progress towards goals? When have you had to adapt to make sure a goal was still achieved?
- How do you ensure your work plans align with team, area and organisational objectives?
- When have you taken into account the bigger picture in your planning? How did this change the approach you took?

Solve Problems & Make Decisions

What does it mean?
Gathering and analysing information to understand the root causes of problems, exploring potential options and identifying appropriate solutions. Using strong judgement to make defensible, evidence-based, risk aware, appropriate, timely and fair decisions. Ensuring these decisions are taken at the right level and are consistent with the SPS vision and values.

Why is it important to us?
Good problem solving and decision making creates fairness, efficiency and trust. It allows the organisation to tackle complex issues, mitigate risks and provide reasonable assurance.

What does it look like?
- Identifying problems and risks and breaking them down to understand the root causes
- Collecting and analysing an appropriate amount of information from multiple sources
- Establishing and exploring options to reach the best solution
- Identifying trends, patterns and themes to proactively tackle problems before they happen
- Judging when a decision needs to be taken with limited information and consultation due to urgency and time constraints
- Using SPS values and policies as a framework to make fair and consistent decisions
- Recognising the scope of our authority for decision making
- Empowering and supporting others to make decisions
- Involving other people in decision making to gain alternative viewpoints, question assumptions and challenge our blind spots
- Making tough and unpopular decisions when necessary
- Acting with consideration and compassion for others when making and implementing decisions
- Explaining the reasons behind our own and organisational decisions to help others understand
- Evaluating decisions and embracing mistakes to gain personal and organisational learning and make improvements

How do we develop?
- Describe a problem you identified and tackled pro-actively. How did you identify it? What impact did this have?
- What is your internal decision making process? Can you describe the stages, techniques, values, approach you use? What information do you rely on?
- When have you made a poor decision? What have you learnt from it? How did it change the way you approach similar situations?
- When have you made a tough and unpopular decision? How did you know it was the right thing to do?
- How do you support others to make decisions?

Change & Improve

What does it mean?
Being open to change and adapting to support new and different approaches. Driving positive change and overcoming barriers and resistance to improve things for other people and the organisation.

Why is it important to us?
By responding, adapting and driving change, we keep evolving and enhancing our service. This increases our impact and ability to make a difference to the communities we serve.

What does it look like?
- Being open to change and demonstrating a willingness to learn new approaches
- Supporting other people who are trying to introduce positive change
- Identifying opportunities for continuous improvement in existing work
- Thinking creatively to generate new and innovative approaches to our area of work
- Benchmarking, researching and networking to understand what other organisations are doing to improve
- Finding ways to test new initiatives and ideas
- Delivering change through small incremental steps as well as larger initiatives
- Understanding and considering the bigger picture and implications of change beyond our area
- Making sure the reasons for change align with objectives and it's the right thing to do
- Adapting and finding ways to overcome obstacles
- Being resilient to keep going in the face of challenge and opposition
- Considering the impact, and differing needs, of changes and improvements on other people
- Providing information, updates and context to engage and inspire those around us to believe in change and the value of their contributions
- Involving others in change wherever possible to gain their ideas, support and buy-in
- Regularly reviewing and evaluating changes to make further improvements

How do we develop?
- When you encounter change how do you respond? In what ways have you supported change? How do you demonstrate your openness and support?
- In what ways have you created positive change in your area? How is your area better for you being there?
- What opportunities to change and/or improve things have you identified and actioned? What impact did they have?
- How do you deal with obstacles and barriers? How have you overcome them?
- When have you been resilient and kept going despite resistance from other people? What support did you need to do this?