

Assignment on
Competency Based Training Module

TOPIC

‘Attention to Detail’

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1. Introduction

Civil Servant plays a vital role in the formulation of the policy and execution of the policy. They are the interface between the citizen and the Government. In recent times, there has been accelerated change globally brought about by technological advances, greater decentralization and social activism. The ramifications of these changes are being felt by government in the form of increasing expectations for better governance through effective service delivery, transparency, accountability and rule of law. The civil service, as the primary arm of government, must keep pace with the changing times in order to meet the aspirations of the people. There is a need to enhance the capacity and capability of Civil Servants into a dynamic, efficient and accountable apparatus for public service delivery built on the ethos and values of integrity, impartiality and neutrality.

This has led to the need for a competency-driven training and human resource management for officers, marking a shift from a 'rules-based' system to a 'role-based' system. The concept of competency has been applied extensively both to individual civil servants and to the planning and implementation of policies and programmes of the government. The prime objective of the CBTs is to stimulate the inner strength and capabilities and also to improve the functional competencies of individual officers. The competency based governance model may contains 30 competencies which have been categorized under five broad areas namely Ethos, Ethics, Equity, Efficiency and Productivity.

Attention to detail is one of the components under the ethics. Attention to details by the employee is very important to any organization. Attention to detail refers to a person's behavioural propensity towards thoroughness, accuracy, and consistency when accomplishing tasks.. When someone cares little for the details, they will likely rush through their work, spending little time and effort to ensure accuracy or precision in their deliverables.

2. Background

Capacity of Civil Services plays a vital role in rendering a wide variety of services, implementing welfare programs and performing core governance functions. The present civil services capacity building landscape has been marred by various challenges like:

- Existing training policy interventions were sporadic and largely confined to individual and intermittent innovations.
- Stereotype type working in silos or compartments, rather than overall unifying vision and understanding national priorities.
- Lack of lifelong and continuous learning environment for civil servants.
- Barrier to exchange of knowledge preventing collaborative working.

To meet the dynamic changes and technological developments, there is a need of competency based learning for the civil servants. The concept of competency can be applied extensively both to individual civil servants and to the planning and implementation of policies and programmes of the government. Competencies have been defined in many ways. However, a practical and easy to understand definition of competencies has been provided by Boyatzis (of Hay Group, 1982). It states that competencies are those underlying characteristics of an employee – motive, trait, skill, aspects of one's social image, social role or a body of knowledge, which can result in effective and/or superior performance in a job or role.

The definition of competencies has been explained beautifully by L.M. Spencer and S.M. Spencer through Iceberg model. In this model, they talk about five types of competencies' characteristics of an individual in different circumstances. As seen in the ice-berg (which has just one-ninth of its volume above water and the rest remains beneath the surface in the sea), some of the competencies components of an individual are visible like knowledge and skills but other behavioural components like attitude, traits, thinking styles, self-image, organizational fit etc are hidden or beneath the surface.

In the traditional method of governance, most of the Government Organisations looked simply at the visible competencies of their civil servants- knowledge and skills. However, in more complex jobs, the aspects of competencies which lie below the surface like

attitude, traits, thinking styles etc, directly influence the usage of knowledge and skills; therefore, are more vital and indispensable to complete a job effectively.

For Government organisations, improving and scaling up of the visible competencies like knowledge and skills can be easily done through training and skill building exercises. However the behavioural competencies are rather difficult to assess and develop. It takes more time and effort intensive exercises which include intensive training, coaching and mentoring, developmental experiences etc. Therefore, capacity building of civil servants needs to be changed and more emphasis shall be put on improving the masked behavioural aspects of Civil servants. For that a comprehensive capacity building programme for every civil servant primarily focusing on accountability, transparency, equity and inclusiveness, participatory, consensus orientation, rule of law, effectiveness and efficiency is essential.

To strengthen the Human Resource Management of Civil Service, the Department of Personnel and Training launched the Mission Karamayogi. The mission focuses on role based capacity building of civil servants and aims for strengthening the enabling environment in view of a more effective, efficient, transparent and accountable Public Administration at National and State level. It envisages achieving the Government of India objective of inclusion through an enhanced delivery of services to the marginalised and vulnerable. This mission is supporting the Government of India (GoI) in the shift towards Competency-based Human Resource Management (HRM) for the Indian Civil Services.

The new competency based governance model have been categorized under five broad areas namely Ethos, Ethics, Equity, Efficiency and Productivity as follows:

- I. **Ethos:** This component will focus on the importance of citizen centricity and inclusiveness, promote public good and long-term interests of the Nation.
- II. **Ethics:** It will highlight the importance of integrity, transparency, openness and fairness.
- III. **Equity:** This constituent will motivate the participants to treat all citizens alike, ensures justice to all, with empathy for the weaker sections.

- IV. **Efficiency:** This component will promote operational excellence and value for money in managing human capital and nurtures capability.
- V. **Productivity:** This component will provide an opportunity to learn about human resource management, office management and how to deal with audit and parliament matters

The prime objective of the CBTs is to stimulate the inner strength and capabilities and also to improve the functional competencies of individual officers. These five broad categories contains 30 competencies as followings. :

I. Ethos

- 1. People First
- 2. Strategic Thinking
- 3. Organisational Awareness
- 4. Commitment to the Organisation
- 5. Leading Others

II. Ethics

- 6. Integrity
- 7. Self Confidence
- 8. Attention to Detail
- 9. Taking Accountability

III. Equity

- 10. Consultation and Consensus Building
- 11. Decision Making
- 12. Empathy
- 13. Delegation

IV. Efficiency

- 14. Results Orientation
- 15. Conceptual Thinking
- 16. Initiative and Drive
- 17. Seeking Information
- 18. Planning and Coordination

19. Desire for Knowledge
20. Innovative Thinking
21. Problem Solving
22. Developing Others
23. Self-Awareness and Self-Control
24. Communication Skills
25. Team-Working

V. **Productivity**

26. Office Management (Parichay)
27. Human Resource Management (Disciplinary Work)
28. Information Management (Court Matters)
29. Compliance Management (Audit)
30. Parliamentary Matters (Questions & Committee)

Each competency has a definition and its proficiency levels. Each competency has a definition and its proficiency levels. Further, each proficiency level has behavioural indicators which are objective, observable and measurable.

3. Discussion on ‘Attention to details’:

(i) What is Attention to detail

Attention to detail competency refers to having an underlying drive to being thorough and meticulous and to comply with procedures, rules, guidelines, and standards. Digs deeper and strives to reduce uncertainties and errors.

It is person’s behavioural propensity towards thoroughness, accuracy, and consistency when accomplishing tasks. For example, when drafting policy, employees with exceptional attention to detail will do their best to avoid inconsistencies, and relay all important details that the document requires. The antithesis of attention to detail is carelessness, which implies a lack of appreciation or interest in the finer details. When someone cares little for the details, they will likely rush through their work, spending little time and effort to ensure accuracy or precision in their deliverables. Naturally,

employees that are careless will require extra supervision, and their work will need to be thoroughly checked by multiple officials before completion.

Followings are the few levels and indicators of the ‘attention to detail’ competency.

Level 1: Pays Attention to details

- Pays attention to detail to obtain comprehensive information
- Is knowledgeable of the policies and standards of his/her own department and adheres to them while working
- Willingness to consult superiors and peers in order to validate or reconfirm the details
- Respects confidential information

Level 2: Plans and Double Checks

- Holds self accountable for delivery of high standard outcomes
- Double checks own work to ensure standards and guidelines are adhered to and re-work is avoided/ minimised
- Devotes sufficient time to complete tasks, review documents, and prepare for meetings
- Plans own work thoroughly and meticulously by using planning tools such as work plans, checklists, etc and supports the introduction of better ways of working

Level 3: Monitors Own and Other’s Work

- Holds self and others accountable for delivery of high standard outcomes and adherence to policies and procedures
- Monitors quality of others’ work and provides them support/guidance to perform better by paying more attention to detail

- Keeps detailed records of discussions and agreed actions to ensure that information is accurate and prompt follow-up occurs where applicable
- Digs deeper by asking questions, examining literature or consulting the experts when not satisfied with the level of detail

Level 4: Proactively Manages Standards

- Monitors compliance to procedures and regulatory requirements and takes action in case of any deviation
- Ensures that breaches of regulatory requirements are treated with appropriate procedures
- Builds systemic checks and balances and is proactive and quick in resolving grievances and issues
- Conducts overall reviews and spot checks to ensure that procedures and standards are being maintained

Level 5: Contributes to Overall Monitoring of Quality and Standards

- Resolves broader issues about risk and compliance, and about quality of work and service delivery
- Identifies loopholes and takes corrective measures to ensure unnecessary risks are avoided.

(ii) Why attention to details is important

Attention to detail is essential to performance in any role where in the organisation. For example while framing policy if civil servant overlook the vital facts it may be disastrous for the citizen or if a finance administrator accidentally lists the wrong figure on a large invoice, this could result in tangible financial losses for the organisation. As a competency, attention to detail is a very common ~~performance criterion for highly procedural work, or roles with a significant qualitative focus.~~

4. Take Away Points:

Attention to detail is a combination of various sub-skills. Developing these skills will improve your attention to detail. These skills include:

Time management skills: It is the ability to split time between different projects or tasks for maximum productivity. Excellent time management skills will increase efficiency and allow a civil servant to contribute more meaningfully to the organization.

Analytical skills: Analytical skills help employee to collate and analyze the information about a problem to provide a solution. With good analytical skills, it becomes easy to proffer solutions to issues that arise while working on projects. Analytical skills include research skills, creativity, hypothesis formation, and problem-solving.

Active listening: Active listening is the ability to focus on what someone says during a conversation for improved understanding. An active listener processes a speaker's words carefully before formulating a response. Being an active listener is important for effective communication. It can also improve interpersonal relationships because it gives the person speaking to you the feeling that you value their ideas.

Organizational skills: Organizational skill is related to ability to use the physical space, energy, and mental power to achieve desired results. These skills range include the ability to keep track of projects, maintaining an uncluttered workspace, and efficient prioritization.

Observational skills: Observation is the ability to direct employee to focus to an object or individual to gather information. Powerful observational skills allow one to identify unique qualities and details about people and improve interactions and inter personnel relationships.

5. Conclusions

Recently, there are accelerated changes globally brought about by technological advances, greater decentralization and social activism. The ramifications of these changes are being felt by government in the form of increasing expectations for better governance through effective service delivery, transparency, accountability and rule of law. The civil service, as the primary arm of government, must keep pace with the changing times in order to meet the aspirations of the people. Mission Karmayogi - National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB) – is meant to reform Indian bureaucracy and prepare civil servants for the future. The programme aims “comprehensive reform of the capacity building apparatus at individual, institutional and process levels for efficient public service delivery. The mission supported competency-driven training and human resource management for officers, marking a shift from a 'rules-based' system to a 'role-based' system.

The new competency based governance model has been categorized under five broad areas namely Ethos, Ethics, Equity, Efficiency and Productivity. The attention to detail competency is very vital for the successful performance of any civil servant and thus the organization. Attention to detail enables one to allocate his cognitive abilities efficiently and accurately to focus on a specific task(s) and lead to better service delivery to citizen.

6. Reference

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