

The Choice Connection

~ COMPETENCIES... The Ability To... ~

Constructive Choices, Inc.
Discover and acknowledge your strengths...



In This Issue

*Competencies...
The Ability to...*

Jean's Latest Choices

Jean Recommends

Quotable Quotes

Additional Tips For Partnerships

Administrivia

CHOOSE TO... BE COMPETENT

CHOOSE to know your competencies and define them clearly to others.

Demonstrate excellence rather than mediocre...

Identify one other competency that supports those you already have...

Enhance your knowledge...

Learn a new skill...

Share your talents with others.

Quick Links

Newsletter [Archives](#)

CCI Web Site

About Jean and CCI

The Choice Store

Articles & Workshops

Complimentary Coaching Intro

Contact Jean

Competencies... Our Ability To...

Sometimes in our lives we find ourselves immersed in a field of interest and not surprisingly, wondering how we got there. For the last couple of years I have been working with colleagues and learning to relanguage my work with a myriad of distinctions as to what "competencies" are. Simply defined... competencies speak to a person's "ability to...". The most surprising discovery for me was the stronger connection competencies have to the theories and concepts of an individual's strengths. At times it seems my world does a full 360 to keep bringing me back to a connection with new learning for the topic of personal and professional strengths.



On one hand, I am not too surprised about the connection for competencies and strengths. These are in fact core to the performance of any individual. The "ability to listen for..." for example supports a core competency for the professional coach.

Each work-related specialty has a fundamental set of competencies. And typically there is a mix of technical and "soft" or interpersonal competencies. I think we all know we can be the best subject matter expert for a technical field and yet if we are unable to share our knowledge or establish supportive relationships for our work, we are perceived by others as being ineffective.



Jean's Latest Choices

- Expand my knowledge, strengthen my learning, consider a competency needed to strengthen one of my talents.
- Consider a competency I believe I do not own and choose to use the talents I do have to demonstrate a level of proficiency that supports achievement.
- Complete my three year term as an Alumni Board member volunteer for Blackburn College (www.blackburn.edu)

Quotable Quotes

"To each of us, at certain points of our lives, there come opportunities to rearrange our formulas and assumptions - not necessarily to be rid of the old, but more to profit from adding something new."
~ Leo Buscaglia

"If you want a quality, act as if you already had it."
~ James Williams

"When you are competent, you can do your work at high standards. When you are a master, you invent the next level of your work, craft, or business, which is a lot more attractive, especially to better clients and customers."
~ Thomas Leonard

"We cannot do everything at once, but we can do something at once."
~ Calvin Coolidge

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That speaks then to competencies possibly meaning more than just "an ability to..." - may be there IS something more in the mix. Knowledge, skills and ability go hand in hand. Knowledge along with skills can both be learned. The 'ability' speaks to being able to blend your learning and skills with a natural component. The latter, this natural component is the piece of you that begins to reflect a picture of your strengths. Sometimes, these are not so easily named. When combined with your knowledge and skills it is these strengths that create a picture of uniqueness and a showing off of your special qualities or talents - what others declare to be your competencies.

It begins to explain how each of us is so very different in our approach to work and our relationships. You and I may have followed the same path in our education, even gone to the same schools and had the same curriculum, and even now as we work in the same industry we can be so very different in our operational approach to our work. And yes, there are more pieces of what can make us different and those demonstrate what we have grown naturally in our lives - what we can add to this mix as innate capabilities.

There is more to understanding your competencies than knowing what you know and continuously practicing your skills or even learning new skills. To fully understand your competencies and then be able to language these so that others can understand who you are in what you do, requires you to think beyond the technical side of competencies. What truly is innate for you and exemplifies the best of who you are?

Knowing our competencies - having an understanding this mix of our knowledge, skills and abilities does provide us with a clarity of how to speak and show what we do well, and also how we can become effective. There is one important lesson I have learned in all of my work around competencies these last years and that is that competencies do not guarantee performance. I may truly be competent - have the knowledge, the skills, and abilities and yet I also have the choice of whether to perform or not. So... one may actually be competent and choose not to perform. For more on this, stay tuned to next month's newsletter.

I invite you in the next week or two to consider the technical and 'softer' competencies you own. Can you list them? Can you share them for others' appreciation? Can you name one additional competency you want to develop that will demonstrate excellence for who you are and what you do? Negotiation, writing, teaming, public speaking - and what would you add to the list?

Warm Regards,
Jean

Jean Strosinski, MA, PCC, CPT
Constructive Choices, Inc.



Jean Recommends

Understanding Careers, The Metaphors of Working Lives

by Kerr Inkson

Knowing why, knowing how and knowing whom - an interesting approach to career competencies.

Developing Great Managers

by Lisa Haneberg

20 'Power Hour' conversations that build skills fast, including a year long management training curriculum.

Competency-Based Human Resource Management

by David D. DuBois and William J. Rothwell with D.J. King Stern and L.K. Kemp.

Discover a new system for unleashing the productive power of exemplary performers

Skills and Competencies Needed to Succeed in Today's Workplace

A clear list and defined skills and competencies needed to excel in today's workplace. Tables excerpted from What Work Requires of Schools: A SCANS Report for America 2000, U.S. Department of Labor, June 1991, pp. xvii-xviii.

Albuquerque ISPI Fall Conference 2008



Administrivia

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work
- New Managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities
- Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, lift their voices, and...
- Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - *YES, it IS all about YOU!*