



21st Century Extension

Competencies

Introduction

In Fall, 2002, Dean Elbert Dickey described eight characteristics of successful Extension professionals for the 21st Century. These characteristics included:

- Successful Teacher
- Subject Matter Competent
- Skilled Communicator
- Leader
- Strong Collaborator/Team Player
- Entrepreneurial
- Inclusive
- Change Manager

In Fall, 2003, Dean Dickey assigned a committee that included Extension Educators, a District Director and the CED Human Resource Officer to identify the competencies needed to demonstrate proficiency in each of these areas. This committee added **Balance** and **Citizenship** to the list of competencies. **Professionalism** was added as the final competency. Subsequent to their work, competencies were described for Extension Assistants and Specialists with input from members of these groups.

What are competencies?

Competencies describe the skills or practices that should help Extension professionals be successful in their work. These competencies are described at two levels:

Core Competencies are skills either present at hiring or are skills that the new Extension professional has the capacity to develop soon after hiring.

Transformational Skills are competencies that could be developed by individuals who wish to enhance their effectiveness in teaching or organizational roles.

How can the competencies concept be used?

The Competencies documents can be useful to us and our organization to help us enhance our effectiveness:

1. A discussion of Core Competencies with new hires can undergird a powerful orientation program. If a variety of Extension professionals help facilitate this discussion, the new hire can gain an understanding of the wealth of knowledge of our Extension professionals and also begins to develop an important resource network.
2. Extension professionals who use this document as a guide for their educational programming and personal conduct should position their program accomplishments for strong performance evaluations and rapid promotion.
3. Regular (at least annual) reviews of this document by Extension professionals can contribute to the development of a targeted professional development strategy focused on personal and professional growth.
4. When extension education programs are not reaching the level of excellence expected by the Extension professional or the District Director, this document could serve as a diagnostic tool to help identify key areas for professional development.
5. For seasoned Extension professionals, a review of the Transformational Skills section should help define strategies to enhance their programmatic and organizational effectiveness
6. Disclaimer - These documents are not intended to be used as a 'score sheet' for annual performance evaluation ratings. Evaluation ratings are based on educational outputs. It is likely, however, that Extension professionals skilled in Core Competencies and/or Transformational Skills will enhance their opportunity to demonstrate excellence in extension program outputs.

Notes



