



Education Community of Interest Newsletter

MAY 2013

COI MISSION

To foster the organization professional growth, and success of the 1700 Community that provides the highest quality training and education within the Marine Corps.

COI VISION

To provide a professional training and education workforce that supports the United States Marine Corps.

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A Message from the Community Leader



Education Community of Interest:

As your Community Leader, and in my hat as Executive Deputy of TECOM, I've been heavily engaged in working issues related to resources, civilian furloughs and sequestration the past year. This effort has been, frankly, all over the page in terms of what we are planning for and what we can expect to actually happen with no final resolution yet in sight. That's the bad news.

The good news is the Corps has a solid story and has shown, again, that we are efficient and effective not just as a fighting organization but as a "business" capable of producing the right products even with ever more limited resources.

I'd encourage you to focus on your part of the Corps – where you can and do make a difference every day. To that end, the COI is implementing efforts to support your professional growth. If each of us is more capable, the Corps is more capable. Some bullets below talk about what you can do, and what's available to support you:

Managing Your Professional Growth:

- The pursuit of consecutive, progressive achievement, especially in professional growth, is an individual choice that necessitates commitment, perseverance, and a plan.
- Professional growth requires the continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills through study, instruction, investigation, and practice.

- Professional development planning involves understanding what you want to do in the future within your profession.
- Professional development planning enables you to set goals and define specific tasks that you need to accomplish in order to reach those goals.
- Professional Development planning considers options, and alternatives - flexibility is key as we cannot know the future.

Expectations and Responsibilities:

I have two expectations for the professional development across the Education Community of Interest-

- Education Community of Interest members will grow in their professional state of knowledge including both technical and leader/manager knowledge and skills. each member is expected and responsible for having a professional development plan.
- The organization will offer guidance, growth opportunities, time, and some financial support, when available, for our community's professional development.

Growth Opportunities Available through your Community of Interest:

- Journals, Books and Periodicals:
 - o Most Education community professionals have developed their own personal libraries of professional journals, books and periodicals in keeping with their professional interests and job assignments.
 - o To this end, we have set out on a quest to purchase professional books for each of our series closely aligned with our occupational competencies.
- Web-based training:
 - o Web-based training is available from some of the best known commercial vendors
 - o American Society for Training and Development
 - o New Horizons
 - o The Bob Pike Group
- Marine Net provides opportunities for Civilian Workforce Training.
- The Civilian Workforce Development Application (CWDA) is a useful tool for both supervisors and employees to complete competency assessments enabling an alignment between organizational mission requirements and professional

J. W. BEAROR
 Executive Deputy
 Training and Education Command
 Community Leader
 Education Community Of Interest

Manager's Corner

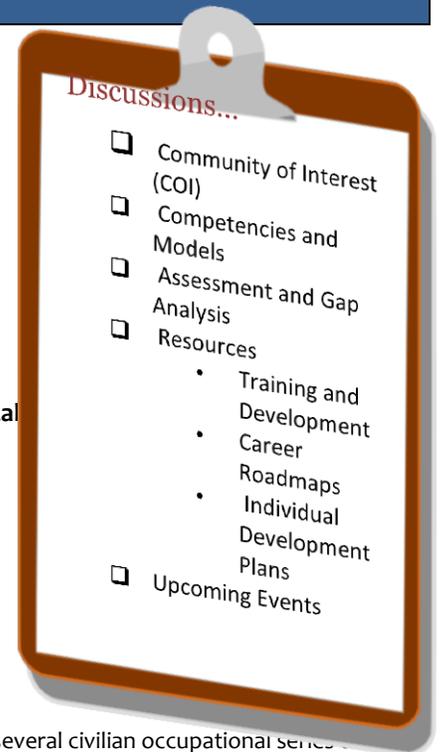
Competency Management

By Ms. Sabrina Webb, Competency Manager

Civilian Workforce Development (MPC-30), Manpower & Reserve Affairs



As civilian employees we get to witness how Marines navigate through their careers. Each Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) has a prescribed path of educational, experiential and technical milestones to help guide military members. Wouldn't it be great if civilian employees had the same type of resource? Fortunately, Marine corps civilians have the Communities of Interest (COI) to help with this and it starts with competencies.



Community of interest

To get started, let's talk about what a COI is. A COI consists of several civilian occupational series that have a common relationship to a particular functional area of expertise. There is a Leader, which is typically a senior executive within the functional area, who is supported by a top manager. Together they provide strategic guidance, oversight and operational development of series-based skills and training requirements needed for each occupational series they represent. You might think of a COI as a professional association, kind of like SHRM for Human Resources or PMI for Project Management.

So, what are competencies?

Competencies are integrated sets of skills, knowledge, attributes and behaviors required to perform effectively in a given job, role or situation. In simple terms, competencies are characteristics that we use to achieve success. These characteristics or traits can include things like knowledge, aspects of leadership, self-esteem, skills or relationship building.

Competencies are divided into three categories:

- Core. A fundamental knowledge, ability, or expertise in a specific subject area or skill set.
- Functional. They are often technical or operational in nature (e.g., "backing up an Oracle database" is a functional competency).
- Leadership. These are used to assess an individual's ability and skills to be a leader or manager.

And a Competency Model?

When you put a series of competencies together, it is called a competency model and shows you the difference between outstanding and average performance of that competency. We measure the performance of a competency by what we call proficiency.

USMC Competency Components



Proficiency Level... what?

Can you play a piano? I could answer this as “Yes.” However, if you ask me to play, I’ll crack my knuckles, raise up my two index fingers and pound out an ear-splitting rendition of “Chop-Sticks.” Proficiency levels help define how well you perform a competency, such as “Play a Piano.”

Great! Where’d They Come From?

Beginning in September 2001, the Civilian Workforce Development (MPC-30) section of Civilian Workforce Management Branch, Manpower and Reserve Affairs, along with the COIs began collecting and developing competencies for the workforce. Subject Matter Experts from around the Marine Corps provided their input, along with market and industry research to define competencies for the civilian workforce.

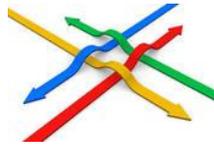


Assessment and Gap Analysis, What’s That?

Once competencies have been identified, an individual then needs to assess their competencies to see where their weak areas, or gaps may be. The assessment process asks a participant to rate their level of proficiency, or how well they perform, the competency. Each COI sets a benchmark for the competency proficiency. A rating below the benchmark means there is a gap and the gap means there is an opportunity to increase the level of individual proficiency through training and development. Marine Corps civilians have the Civilian Workforce Development Application, CWDA, to assess their competencies. Once an assessment is complete, CWDA produces a Gap Analysis report, which details the areas where there are opportunities to improve proficiency.

Finding Training And Development Options

The CWDA provides not only competency assessments but also identifies COI identified training and development options. Using a Gap Analysis report, a user can lookup competencies in the Gap Analysis report to help address competency gaps.



Career Road Maps

Users can also find Career Road Maps in CWDA. These road maps detail the educational, experiential and competency requirements for civilian career series. This is a great resource to help civilians “map out” their journey through their career.

Individual Development Plans (IDP)

An individual development plan (IDP) is a tool to assist employees in career and personal development. Its primary purpose is to help employees reach short and long-term career goals, as well as improve current job performance. An IDP is not a performance evaluation tool or a one-time activity. It should be looked at like a partnership between the employee and the supervisor. It involves preparation and continuous feedback. Assessment results, Gap Analysis, training and development options found in CWDA and career road maps are all resources to assist civilian employees and supervisors in building an IDP.

Ok, So What Does All This Mean To Me?

Competency management is a tool not just for supervisors. It is a process that empowers employees to manage their own careers through the knowledge and insight competencies provide .

<https://cwda.manpower.usmc.mil>

RESOURCES at your fingertips...

[Department of Defense Civilian Careers](#)

Here you will find a plethora of information about career opportunities in a variety of fields from entry, mid-career and executive level.

- Careers in DOD
- DOD Components and Agencies
- RAD Programs (Student Training and Academic Recruitment Program – STAR)
- DOD Hiring Heroes program
- DOD Centralized Intern Program
- College Recruitment & more

Technical books – coming soon!

It is important to improve and maintain technical skills. One of the best ways to improve technical skills is to read technical books and articles. Consistent with our mission, The Education Community of Interest is a catalyst for developing our 1700 community members. We're creating a continuum of educational opportunities through the use of professional technical books related to your competencies.

The purpose of the technical books:

- To promote quality career and technical education based on 1700 competencies
- To improve lapses in between training and application, self-development and to learn new skills
- To support professional growth and community development and participation
- To foster informal learning collaboration and reading discussions between fellow colleagues

How were the books selected?

Each career series competencies were reviewed in [Civilian Workforce Development Application \(CWDA\)](#) and selected based on this criterion. To review your own career roadmaps and competencies please visit the CWDA link. Also, it is good business practice for your professional career development to link and align your training opportunities with the prescribed competencies in CWDA. This can be a really useful resource and if you need a CWDA quick need guide- let us know and we'll gladly provide you with one.

When will the books arrive?

The books will be sent individually to each of the Appropriated Funds 1700 community members. You should receive the books around the third and fourth quarters to your command address. Please be advised that the we have no control of the mailing system once shipped. If you are not on our email distribution list – simply send an email to: usmc_ed&trng_coi@usmc.mil and you will be added, respectively.

How many books per community member?

Due to funding, the books per community member range between one or two books.

What is the Education Community of Interest end state?

Our goal- essentially- is to provide another way of building your technical strength. Some of the technical books will bridge your organization and individual development for your present position and lifelong learning. Within the scope of professional development, improving skills and abilities also prepares you for possible future advancement – it's worth a try. Please note that you are not at liberty to tell us what you think about the book(s). However, we look forward to feedback and assessment of the technical books and how it may relate to your current career position. Or simply any other suggestions or comments about future technical book recommendations. Enjoy at your own leisure.

[The Purdue Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#)

OWL offers over 200 free resources including:

-Writing and Teaching Writing

-Research

-Grammar and Mechanics

-Style Guides

_ESL (English as a Second Language)

_Job Search and Professional Writing

***Ideal for those writing competencies or a refresher course plus there's info on Developing a Resume*

[PublicLibraries.com](#)

Here is a government resource where you can search for books or eBooks using the title, author or keyword in any of the United States. It expands to public libraries, colleges, presidential libraries, state libraries and more! This is an excellent resource.

SELF MADE SCHOLAR—LEARN FREE.



What do Abigail Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Richard Branson, James Cameron and Michael Dell have in common?

These are self-educators that have made a tremendous difference in the world. I mean –most educators know that people learn differently though more emphasis has always been focused on more formal education. Today, there is a plethora of readily available resources. You the innate ability to self-educate at the privacy of your own home versus a classroom. It's your choice and your choice alone –we're all different and have various learning style. Now, here's more about this wonderful website.

Self Made Scholar- Learn Free offers:

- Free online classes
- Blogs and you can join the conversation
- Free library –that offers thousands of books that can be downloaded
- Free Downloadable Audio Books and more

According to the Self Made Scholar website, "self-education is learning in its purest form. You decide what you want to learn, when you're going to learn it, and how you're going to master the subject. There are no formal teachers, no essays, no exams, no group projects, and no grades".

You're not too old to learn something new...try it today!

****Just click on the title to learn more information about *Self Made Scholar*.
Enjoy!**