Core Competencies and Why They Matter
How do you add value to any team?
Introduce your professional self

Highlight your education, work experience, and skills

Articulate how your training, experience and skills transfer to the potential role

Demonstrate the impact and outcomes of your work

Secure an Interview

Secure an Offer

Develop Professionally
What do employers want most from any candidate?
Core Competencies

Clemson University’s core competencies and proficiency levels are rooted in research conducted by The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), and Clemson faculty and staff.

**Engagement**
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Leadership

**Innovation**
- Adaptability
- Analytical Skills
- Technology

**Professionalism**
- Self-Awareness
- Integrity & Ethics
- Brand
What is a competency?

Knowledge, skills, and behaviors align to create competencies that contribute to enhancing performance.

Source: Modified from the National Institutes of Health and the Society for Human Resource Management
Proficiency Levels

Awareness. Theoretical knowledge

Basic. Limited experience

Intermediate. Practical application

Advanced. Extensive experience and application

Expert. Recognized for mastery and attainment in all areas
Employer Rated Proficiency vs. Student-Rated Proficiency in NACE Career Readiness Competencies

- Communication: Employers 54.3%, Students 79.7%
- Critical Thinking: Employers 55.8%, Students 82.3%
- Teamwork: Employers 77.5%, Students 84.7%
- Equity & Inclusion: Employers 72.1%, Students 79.3%
- Professionalism: Employers 44.2%, Students 83.4%
- Technology: Employers 68.5%, Students 79.8%
- Career & Self-Development: Employers 35.7%, Students 62.4%
- Leadership: Employers 33.3%, Students 69.7%

Percentage indicating Very or Extremely Proficient

Source: 2022 NACE Job Outlook and 2022 NACE Student Survey Report
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Communication

Engaging in dialogue that leads to productive outcomes and points of connection by effectively articulating oneself to individuals within and outside of one’s industry or area of expertise.

Sample Behaviors

• Perceives non-verbal cues
• Utilizes various methods including persuading, instructing, listening, etc.
• Adjusts style and content for audience and format
• Anticipates others’ reactions and prepares for questions
• Fosters dialogue and productive outcomes
• Provides and receives feedback
Collaboration

Developing authentic and mutually beneficial relationships by valuing everyone and taking responsibility for one’s role within a team.

Sample Behaviors

- Contributes to authentic and mutually beneficial relationships
- Establishes a network across a broad spectrum
- Encourages others to contribute
- Seeks to learn from others
- Navigates conflict
- Shares responsibility of team goals and projects
- Upholds commitments
Leadership

Being able to recognize, respect, develop, and capitalize on the unique strengths of individuals from all backgrounds and being an active member in a group that achieves a shared vision.

Sample Behaviors

• Develops and capitalizes on the unique strengths of individuals from all backgrounds
• Encourages discussion where individuals can express different points of view
• Empowers others to achieve a shared vision and shares credit
• Plans, initiates, manages, completes, and evaluates meetings and/or projects
• Establishes priorities
Reflection

Reflect on your academic, work, and volunteer experiences.

Think about a time when you received feedback that your contribution was valuable to the team.

Questions to Consider

• How did you contribute to the project?
• Who shared the feedback with you?
• How did you feel after that conversation?
• How did that encouragement inform future projects or decisions?
Adaptability

Taking the initiative to further enhance one’s skill set and being creative with ways of thinking or approaches that allow for action, reflection, failure, and resilience in an ever-changing world.

Sample Behaviors

- Considers new approaches to problems and/or projects
- Seeks to enhance skills
- Anticipates changes in industries and disciplines
- Recognizes that challenges and failure are a part of the learning experience
- Acknowledges new approaches and ways of thinking can be beneficial
Analytical Skills

Seizing the opportunity for organizational improvement that prompts critical thinking and problem solving by obtaining, processing, and synthesizing information.

Sample Behaviors

• Utilizes information to critically examine problems and develop solutions
• Employs different methods of obtaining, processing, and synthesizing information
• Weighs options by considering the impact
• Makes recommendations
• Promotes a culture where others are empowered to identify and solve problems
Technology

Employing current and emerging software and tools to solve general and industry-specific challenges.

Sample Behaviors

• Utilizes current and emerging software and tools
• Compares and articulates the potential of different software and tools to solve complex challenges
• Troubleshoots independently before seeking assistance
• Serves as a resource for training others to use technology to achieve strategic goals
Reflection

Reflect on your academic, work, and volunteer experiences.

Think about a time when you needed to adjust your priorities.

Questions to Consider

• How did you know that something needed to change?
• How did you decide what to prioritize?
• What did you do to help others understand the change in priorities?
• What feedback did you receive as a result of your decision and actions?
Self-Awareness

Understanding one’s strengths, limitations, emotions, and biases in a variety of situations and articulating how one’s interests, skills, and values align with educational goals.

Sample Behaviors

- Recognizes and articulates how interests, skills, and work values inform goals
- Establishes goals, reflects on progress, and adjusts behaviors
- Reevaluates goals
- Manages stress and emotions and interprets emotions of others
- Recognizes and works to overcome biases
- Manages time and parallel projects
Integrity & Ethics

Making choices and consistently acting in a manner that displays integrity (following internal principles, morals, and values) and ethics (following external laws, rules, and norms) in personal and professional settings.

Sample Behaviors

- Demonstrates dependability
- Articulates and acts in alignment with principles, morals, and values
- Acts equitably with integrity and accountability to self, others, and the organization
- Demonstrates a high level of dedication toward doing a good job and exceeding goals
Brand

Demonstrating the continual development of a positive impression or image in every facet of life while seeking feedback from others to ensure congruence between one’s intended and perceived reputation.

Sample Behaviors

- Meets deadlines
- Accepts responsibility
- Reflects on reputation in personal, educational, professional, and online settings and adjusts to achieve congruence with values and ethics
- Responds and manages others’ concerns and/or complaints in a sensitive way
- Solicits feedback and redirects actions as needed
Reflection

Reflect on your academic, work, and volunteer experiences.

Think about a time when you played a role in a successful task, project, or decision.

Questions to Consider

• What type of work were you doing?
• When contributing to a project, when do you feel most like yourself?
• What would people who worked with you say about you?
• How did you know things went well?
Introduce your professional self

Highlight your education, work experience, and skills

Articulate how your training, experience and skills transfer to the potential role

Demonstrate the impact and outcomes of your work
Articulate Your Competencies on a Resume

- **Review the job description** to look for keywords for the potential role.
- **Use bullet statements** (not sentences or paragraphs) to describe a skill, responsibility, or experience related to a position.
- **Start each bullet statement with a precise action verb** that accurately reflects the action you took within the project/role.
- Provide the context of your role to help **communicate the scope and outcome of your work**.
Articulate Your Competencies in an Interview

The STAR Technique

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>Detail the background. Provide a context. Where? When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>TASK</td>
<td>Describe the challenge and expectation. What needed to be done? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>ACTION</td>
<td>Elaborate your specific action. What did you do? How? What tools did you use?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>RESULTS</td>
<td>Explain the results: accomplishments, recognition, savings, etc. Quantify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Career Counseling Services

- Resume critiques
- Cover letter critiques
- Job searching
- Major Change
- Mock Interviews
- Personal statements

Drop-ins and appointments are available. Students can use CCPD Services and attend workshops and career fairs up to a year after graduation.