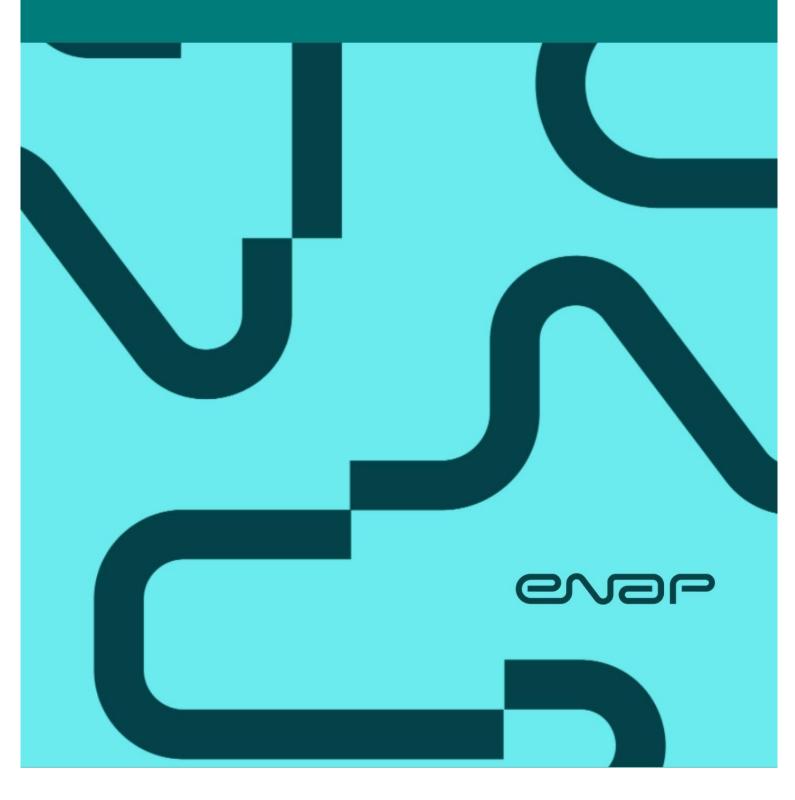
CORE COMPETENCIES FOR A HIGH PERFORMING PUBLIC SECTOR



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1-Introduction

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The relevance of the qualification of civil servants through training and continuing education is recognized within and outside the public sector. The awareness of such relevance, in recent decades, has become more evident since the 1980s, especially in Brazil, with citizens' higher political protagonism and greater demand for effective and high-quality public services.

In Brazil, the importance of civil servants training is so expressive that the 1988 Brazilian Federal Constitution established the obligation for the Union, States, and Federal District to maintain **schools of government** (art. 39). These schools must provide civil servant training and focus on their capacities since their participation in its courses is one of the requirements for career promotion¹.

Professionals who work in the public sector worldwide face the challenge of dealing with more pluralistic societies and more complex problems.

As the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has highlighted in its studies about the public sector, the challenge is the added to the impact of technology, which progressively imposes the need of mastering the use of systems and tools for an even more digital and opened in networking² government.

The answers to these challenges involve considering two questions:

- What are the skills needed for a suitable public service for today and tomorrow's purposes?
- How to develop them?

contributions addition to the In provided by studies and proposals from national and international bodies. including OECD. Brazilian the Government established as a starting point the promulgation of the Decree No. 9,991, of August 28, 2019, and the Normative Instruction No. 201, of September 2019. The first 11. document establishes the National Policy of People Development of the Federal Public Administration (direct, autarchic, and foundational) and, the second one sets out the specific criteria and procedures for the implementation of this policy (PNDP).

These legal acts set the rules and procedures for the implementation of the PNDP and highlight as the main instrument of its execution the **People Development Plan (PDP)**.

The PDP is elaborated by each administration body or entity and must observe the alignment between the development training and the institutional strategy. Thus, the process of qualification and training of civil servants becomes an important organizational element their in planning.

¹ Brasil. Constituição da República Federativa do Brasil. Brasília: Senado Federal, 2016.

² Skills for a High Performing Civil Service (Highlights). OECD Public Governance Reviews. Published on September 11,2017.

There are **two fundamental aspects** in developing a PDP:

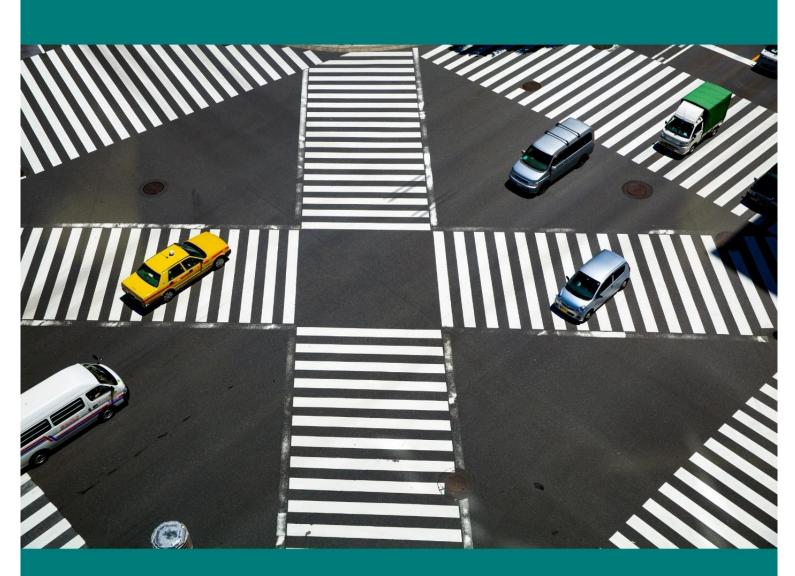
- Its elaboration should be preceded, preferably, by competency diagnosis.
- This diagnosis should be considered as the identification of the set of knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to exercise the position or office.

The Decree highlights the role of schools of government and establishes that the National School of Public Administration (Enap) is responsible for "standardizing guidelines for competencies transversal the in development of people in articulation with other schools of government and competent administrative units of the Federal Executive Branch. The schools of government with the central body of SIPEC elaborate and review actions to develop the **core competencies** of the systems.³ structuring Enap is responsible for articulating the other schools of government of the Federal Executive Power in relation to the development of core competencies of the public sector.

Therefore, we find in the set of these determinations some concepts already appropriated in academy and by organizational experience in the public and private sector. However, a prior reflection on the sense these concepts can assume in the context of the PNDP should not be disregarded.

In this document, some issues related to competencies will be briefly addressed that may help to present the set of core competencies for the Brazilian civil servants.

³ Structuring systems are understood as the support mechanisms (auxiliaries) to the activities performed by the sectorial organs (responsible units in each organ or entity), under the coordination and supervision of a central organ. The processes executed in these systems are centralized in information systems (structuring systems) - that is, in technological platforms (software) - managed by the central agencies. Thus, it is relevant to consider that structuring systems do not have the same meaning as (more structuring systems details at https://www.gov.br/economia/pt-br/assuntos/gesta o/ sistemas-estruturadores).



2- The Concept of Competency

2- The Concept of Competency

The studies on competencies do not constitute, as already mentioned, a theoretical-conceptual body with a scientific status. The occurrence of multiple interpretations on the concept of competency is common. For this reason, many experts recommend, as an initial step, a **self-definition** in building competency glossaries, especially in diagnostic or mapping processes.

Our aim here is to address one of these derivations - the **core competencies** but before, it is necessary to define what we mean by competency. As a basis, the definition by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is used:

> Ability to articulate and mobilize intellectual and emotional conditions terms in of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices, necessary for the performance of a determined function or activity, in an efficient, effective and creative manner, according to the nature of the work. It translates the productive capacity of an individual who defines and measures themselves in terms of real performance, demonstrated in a particular work context and which results not only from the instruction but, largely, from experience in concrete situations of occupational exercise^{4.}

What can we highlight in the definition that approximates and unifies, to a

certain extent, the concept of competency?

These are the three dimensions known in literature as KSA, that is, **k**nowledge, **s**kills, and **a**ttitudes, which are conceptualized by some experts as behaviors.

The definition of these dimensions might be appear with small variations in specialized literature, but mainly they can be expressed in the following terms:

KSA

<u>K</u>nowledge

[dimension of knowledge] It concerns the set of information structured and stored by the individual, which has relevance and impact on the environment and its behavior;

<u>S</u>kills

[dimension of know-how] It refers to the ability to make productive use of knowledge. It is about knowing how to do something or appropriate means to achieve specific purposes;

<u>A</u>ttitudes

[dimension of willing-to-do] It refers to the individual's predisposition towards the action, objects, or situations with which they are confronted. It concerns the judgment of the relevance of the action, ethics of behavior, values, and aspects of coexistence, initiative, and creativity.

⁴ Organização Internacional do Trabalho. Certificação de Competências Profissionais -Glossário de Termos Técnicos - 1^a ed.- Brasília: OIT, 2002.



3- Classification of Competencies

3- Classification of Competencies

The classification or definition of the derivations of competencies is not something simple. It should be seen as a merely didactic exercise, given the synergistic relationship that naturally occurs between knowledge, skills, and attitudes. It should also be considered the variety of what may be essential or accessory in a specialty, professional activity, or undertaking.

It is common to find several and different classifications⁵. The literature on competencies may accentuate the focus on organizations or individuals. depending on the author's perspective, and it establishes distinct categories of competencies. These categories are not necessarily excluding because, in work situations, they converge according to organizational strategies.

The most common classifications found literature and competency in inventories are the following:

- essential competencies: those that characterize the purpose of an organization and occupy a central role in its strategy;
- distinctive competencies: those that give organizations competitive advantages over competitors their and are recognized by customers and users as differentials. They are

also known as core competencies⁶;

- professional competencies: those linked to a certain function, involving technical and management competencies. It is observable in different being companies, measured mainly by results, and they must have a correlation with the organization's core competencies⁷;
- individual competencies: they refer to the combination of knowledge built by the individual in their life history, education, knowledge, skills and values and experiences, including professionals ones. In short, its repertory; and
- collective competencies: refer to the organized set of individual competencies, which converge in the formation of teams. multidisciplinary, generally integrated around the same objective. Collective competencies, when well conducted, are very useful to organizations because they can enhance the confrontation of challenges in a creative and productive⁸ way.

⁵ There are references on this subject in workshops on competencies and proposals for management development carried out in the continuing education area of Enap and, more significantly, records in the booklet of the course Design of Courses and Training Programs, which we will reproduce in this text in the condition of knowledge already appropriated internally and, therefore, established as a theoretical-conceptual reference.

⁶ This concept was adopted by Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahalad to define strategic, unique, and competencies distinctive of business organizations. Consult: Gary Hamel and C.K. Prahalad. The Core Competency of the Corporation. Harvard Business Review, May-June 1990.

⁷ This definition is under the one adopted by the Management Charter Initiative (MCI). MCI is an independent entity, created in 1988 and maintained by the British government, whose mission is to promote the development of skills-based organizations and individuals.

⁸ For the concepts of individual and collective competencies, we take as reference the definitions presented in Roberia César Souto

In which concerns the core competencies, it is not easy to establish a definition without incurring in a high degree of arbitrariness, given the complexity of the concept itself.

On one hand, transversal competencies are not restricted to soft skills, in other words, they are broader and can include cognitive or psychomotor content. On the other hand, they also have a high capacity for the transference between different occupations and can be used in a wide variety of situations and work configurations.

Therefore, transversal competencies establish close relations to other skills and enhance them, besides being fundamental in certain work contexts. An example of such competency is: the ethical conduct in public service.

To reinforce the argument of the complexity of transversal competencies, observe their most **remarkable characteristics**:

- they are generally transferable between domains or contexts different from life and work;
- they have a great capacity to interact with social and interpersonal aspects;
- they are usually multifunctional and interdisciplinary;
- they manifest themselves or are necessarily evident in interactive spaces where they can be explicitly communicated;

- they relate to essential attributes in contexts of significant or accelerated change;
- they involve flexible more attitudinal attributes in approaching and mobilizing. when compared to ingrained character traits. but which highly interactive require а learning process; and
- They maintain, in some of their aspects, symbiotic relationships with a higher degree of self-awareness and self-knowledge.

In public administration. in а comprehensive way, the definition of competencies depends on the government agenda or on the policy that is established specifically for the development of civil servants. There are no universalistic determinations or pre-established responses that can be used in an objective and standardized manner. This definition will require the prospecting of needs at the micro level, through procedures that are often customized, and the formulation of guidelines at the macro level.

Maior. As Pessoas e suas Competências no Desenvolvimento das Organizações in Anais do XVIII Encontro Brasileiro de Administração. Natal, 2004. The text is also available at Sebrae's online library (www.biblioteca. sebrae.com.br).



4- Benchmark Analysis

4- Benchmark Analysis

It is possible to find in international forums suggestions on what should be considered transversal when it comes to public services. In 2017, for example, OECD dedicated an edition of the series "Public Governance Reviews" for the approach of competencies defining high performance in the public sector. The described 15 Review kev **competencies** for professional, а strategic, and innovative public service.

OECD reserved special attention to the dimension of **innovation**, which is considered indispensable for a public sector that is compatible with the challenges of the 21st century. In the same year, it published "Core Skills for Public Sector Innovation." which explores the six fundamental attributes of public innovation. The organization recommended to prepare public officials to act following at least, if not all, some of these attributes:

- Iteration: ability to develop • policies, services, and products incrementally and experimentally.
- **Data literacy:** ability to ensure data-driven and evidence-based decisions.
- User centricity: ability to understand direct and the services it performs as a public officer to the solution of citizens' needs.
- **Curiosity:** ability to seek out and experiment new ideas and ways of working.
- **Storytelling:** ability to establish communication in constantly contexts. changing tell the history of transformations with references to the past, present,

and possibilities for the future, and, at the same time, stimulate people's support and involvement.

Insurgency: ability to challenge status change the quo. standards, and establish unusual partners.

It is necessary to reaffirm that these are not the only essential attributes pointed out by the OECD. There are still those that refer to the professional standard, highlighting the **ethical values guidance**, and to the strategic perspective of public services, such as focus on results.

Brazil's case, the Organization In highlights that the improvement of capacity, productivity, and innovation in public sector is increasingly the necessary to achieve the expectations of the Brazilian citizens and to re-establish trust in the government. However, in order to have a successful improvement, it is necessary to focus on the skills needed by senior Brazilian public management and to analyze the mechanisms that reinforce these skills and the existing incentives to innovate.

In this sense. complementing the analysis above about the core competencies that should be developed in public service, there is a group of relevant competencies for the **leaders** that encourage innovation in the Brazilian public sector that must be highlighted:

• **business insight:** the ability to align processes and resources with innovation priorities. These coalition include building. strategic awareness, financial

management, change management, project and people management, and accountability;

- **innovation capabilities** (identified above); and
- **mindset:** these approaches include courage, empathy, continuous learning, focus on results, digital skills, interpersonal awareness, inspiration, and empowerment.

In Brazil's case, we consider relevant to include some attributes of a more cognitive nature, which we find highly relevant, such as the knowledge regarding: the **constitutional foundations of the Brazilian State**, the **structure and functioning of the public administration** and **the foundations of administrative law**.

Also, it is relevant to highlight that some attributes are attitudinal, they qualities difficult to develop are through training. These attributes are usually built during one's trajectory and often as a result of tacit acquisitions. For this reason, they should be perceived and mobilized through a more elaborate or a more sophisticated process of recruiting and selecting and through **people's management in** daily work (it involves management challenges). It is an aspect that must be considered very carefully when dealing with soft skills, whether they are essential or transversal.

Moreover, for those who deal with the concept of competency in the area of people development, the andragogic perspective is a permanent concern. Andragogy refers to the adult development in terms of learning process.

Therefore, it is pursued more adequate ways to answer demands of adult

learning, mainly concerning the definition of teaching strategies as well as work assignments. To consider all these aspects is fundamental for:

- the effectiveness of recruitment and selection processes;
- the development of new capacities; and
- the identification and mobilization of talents for the occupation of jobs.

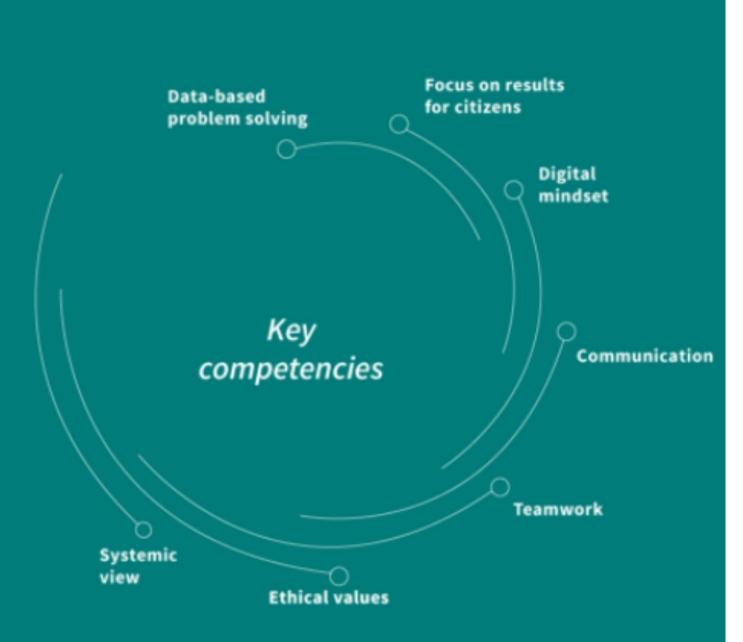
The OECD's recommendations are based on research conducted in 36 member countries and in those that partnerships with the body. have Although the predominant approaches focus on the most developed market economies, information is not limited to this ground. In addition to data collected in countries such as Chile and emerging Mexico or developing countries that make up the organization, the studies generally consider global aspects and trends. The research has been significantly broadened in the case of studies on public administration and the challenges for the services provided by States in the coming decades.

The OECD data and recommendations are used or cited in academic studies and are usually used as benchmarks for comparative analysis with data collected by other international bodies, such as the European Commission and Unesco. At the essay Transversal Competencies Essential for Futures *Proofing the Workforce*, the author, Simon Whittermore, collected data on transversal competencies carried out by the World Economic Forum, European Commission, Unesco, and OECD, in order to identify overlaps, common ground and implied consensus. Although this analysis is not restricted to the public sector and it covers trends in the working world in the digital age or the 21st century, the result may also be useful for the public sector.

The analysis of Whittermore's documents resulted in the identification of a common core with 10 transversal competencies - digital skills, problem-solving, initiative, learning to learn, cultural awareness, resilience, social intelligence, creativity, critical thinking, and adaptability.

Among them, the author selected seven for considering them as conditioning factors of the others: collaborative problem-solving, learning to learn, continuing to learn, digital mentality and independent thinking, resilience, adaptability, awareness and cultural expression.

In addition to these seven competencies, Whittermore adds to the list an eighth competency, which he considers of critical importance **empathy** - an attribute of emotional intelligence, social intelligence, and a determinant element of the ability to learn how to learn.



5- CORE COMPETENCIES

5- Core competencies in the context of the National Plan for Personnel Development (PNDP)

The literature and benchmark analysis shows that there are numerous definitions and possibilities for classifying competencies, depending on the context and the need. The most important thing, however, is to focus on what you want to develop or mobilize according to what is really required in working processes.

In public administration, it is relevant that the concepts are aligned with the government's agenda, particularly concerning the guidelines and priorities regarding the policy established for personnel development.

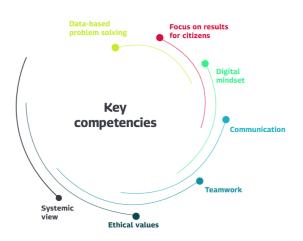
Therefore, based on the empirical knowledge of the Brazilian public administration, on the theoretical-conceptual, methodological and practical contributions of the OECD and other entities, and also after consulting with other Schools of Government in 2020, Enap is proposing:

- the concept of "core competencies" in the context of the PNDP;
- the set of seven competencies that should be considered as transversal to the Brazilian public sector.

Core Competencies [PNDP]

A set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes indispensable to the

exercise of public service, which contribute to the effectiveness of the work processes in different organizational contexts.



For the Brazilian federal public administration (APF), seven core competencies were established. These defined competencies should be the guide for the processes of personnel development and capacity mobilization in the Brazilian federal public administration (APF) bodies. They are also a reference for performance evaluation of civil servants.

Below, we present the concept and examples of knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to each of the 7 competencies. However, it is not intended to be exhaustive concerning the possibilities of development of each one of the competencies.



Data-based problem solving

Data-based problem solving

Ability to plan innovative and effective solutions to problems of low, medium, or high complexity through the use of numerical and non-numerical data, as well as evidence that allows the accuracy and viability of solutions.

Knowledge	Skills
 Identify methods and techniques for the analysis and characterization of problems. Identify methods and techniques to identify and select numerical and non-numerical data. Identify numerical and non-numerical databases. Identify technological and digital resources for data exploration and processing. 	 Analyse and characterize problems. Select data for problem-solving and decision-making. Handle databases. Use technological and digital resources to handle relevant data. Interprets information. Use numerical and non-numerical data to assist in the adequacy and effectiveness of problem-solving and decision-making.
Attitudes	1
 Be adaptable. Be inquiring. Have an investigative spirit. Adopt a posture of continuous learning and the spirit of continuous learning and the spiri	ning.

Adopt a posture of continuous learning.
Be flexible to handle changes in individual and team performance patterns provided by the found evidences.

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Focus on results for citizens

Focus on results for citizens

Ability to exceed standard performance and present solutions aligned with the achievement of goals and strategic objectives of public organizations, ensuring that the needs of users and citizens are met.

Knowledge	Skills
 Identify methods and techniques for satisfaction evaluations and prospection of the needs. Identify methods and techniques for evaluating and improving the standard of quality and effectiveness of the provided services. Examine data and evidence to adapt the provided services to the real needs. Identify planning methods and techniques in the definition and alignment of necessary actions and resources to ensure the achievement of the established goals and objectives. Identify methods oriented to continuous improvement aiming at gaining efficiency and effectiveness of organizational processes. Identify strategies to coordinate the established processes and avoid counterproductive processes in achieving the expected results. 	 Adapt the work processes to the productive achievement of the goals and objectives established by the organization and the needs of public services users. Plan the actions and resources to ensure the achievement of the desired goals and objectives. Periodically monitor and evaluate, using indicators, programs, and projects, to ensure the effectiveness of the established goals and objectives. Integrate digital technologies into organizational and work processes. Develop value-added solutions for clients. Follow up on the commitments with the citizens. Integrate the needs and expectations of citizens in the development and provision of new services or products. Eliminate internal problems that affect the citizens' experience. Share knowledge proactively through business units. Use feedback systems to attend requirements and expectations of citizens of citizens. Propose continuous quality improvement of the services, products, and processes. Undertake active listening practices regarding the needs of citizens, taking on the responsibility of solving and clarifying the issues raised.

Attitudes

- Have initiative.
- Have empathy.
- Be tolerant.
- Be resilient.
- Be comprehensible.
- Have active listening.
- Be able to relativize points of view.
- Be adaptable.
- Maintain an investigative spirit.
- Adopt a continuous learning posture.
- Recognize limitations as the first step to overcoming them.
- Be proactive in seeking to learn new knowledge and experience new situations in the context of work.
- Focus on improving standards of quality, efficiency, and effectiveness.
- Dare whenever necessary to overcome obstacles and improve the conditions of the offered services and products.
- Maintain cognitive and emotional openness to meet the expectations of users and citizens.



Digital Mindset

Digital Mindset

Ability to integrate digital technologies with: management models; decision-making processes, product and service generation; and the means of internal, external, and user relations communication.

Knowledge	Skills
 Explain concepts of digital transformation, such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, big data, and its impact on society. Recognize new learning concepts like the collective construction of knowledge made possible by the use of networks for dialogue and argument development. Be familiar with concepts related to information security, such as the ethical use of public data, data protection, and systems. Identify trends in the field of technologies and the impacts they may have on the area of their professional activity. Be familiar with the new technologies of the digital era, such as last generation robots, chatbots, 3D printers. 	 Apply digital resources to modernize practices and enable greater effectiveness and quality in public services and products. Use technologies to enable greater agility, security, and integrity of data and information. Adapt the management models to the technological and informational alternatives that can enable a decision-making process and the monitoring and evaluation of work processes. Use available digital resources as a way to guarantee the profitable and transparent use of public funds.
 Attitudes Have initiative. Be adaptable. Be inquiring. Be curious and investigative. Adopt a continuous learning postur Recognize limitations as the first st Openness to interact with new tech Proactivity to seek new knowledge context of work. 	ep to overcoming them.

• Remain open to innovation.



Communication

Communication

Ability to listen, inquire, and express concepts and ideas at appropriate times and efficiently, ensuring the productive dynamics of internal and external interactions.

Knowledge	Skills
 Identify techniques, tools, and methodologies to ensure the assertiveness of internal communication and results. Recognize the proper use of the system of signs, linguistic symbols, graphics, visuals, and gestures to ensure the effectiveness of communication. 	 efficiently. Contextualize the expression of ideas and concepts. Express yourself in oral and

Attitudes

- Have initiative.
- Be resilient.
- Be adaptable.
- Be comprehensive and open to divergent points of view.
- Be empathetic and willing to listen to others.
- Be assertive and respectful in interaction and communication with others.
- Be open to receive positive and negative feedback.



Teamwork

Teamwork

Ability to collaborate and cooperate in activities developed collectively, in pursuit of shared goals and understanding the repercussions of their own actions, for the success or achievement of the objectives set by the group.

Knowledge	Skills
 Recognize the particularities of the dynamics of teamwork in terms of defining common goals and maintaining synergy. Learn active and assertive communication techniques. Learn high-performance team management techniques. Learn management concepts and tools to deal with conflict and negotiation processes. Learn management techniques to deal with the emotional factor in interpersonal relationships. Identify strategies for maintaining an inclusive and productive organizational climate. 	 Communicate actively and assertively. Give and receive positive and negative feedback. Manage conflicts. Conduct negotiation processes. Share goals, objectives, and successes.
AttitudesHave initiative.	

- Be resilient.
- Be cooperative.
- Be democratic.
- Know how to relativize in several contexts and perspectives.
- Respect the point of view of others.
- Give up private interests on behalf of the collective.



Ethical values orientation

Ethical values orientation

Ability to act according to the principles and moral values that guide the exercise of the public service such as responsibility, integrity, righteousness, transparency, and equity in the management of the *res publica*.

Knowledge	Skills
 Identify the constitutional principles that govern procedures in the federal public administration. Recognize the principles and values that govern the exercise of the public service. Recognize the principles and determinations of the Brazilian Civil Code and Penal Code that have incidence, directly or indirectly, on the conduct of public servants. Identify the principles, values, rules, and norms of the code of ethics for federal civil servants. 	 Self-indulgence about the principles and values that govern one's conduct. Apply in daily practices the moral principles, values, rules, and norms that are required for the exercise of the public service.
Attitudes	

- Be upright.
- Act conscientiously in the exercise of the public service.
- Maintain integrity as opposed to vilified conduct.
- Act with wisdom, moderation, and respectability in the exercise of the public service.
- Act with responsibility, righteousness, transparency, and equity in the management of the *res publica*.



Systemic View

Systemic View

Ability to identify the main institutional frameworks and social, political, and economic trends in the local, regional, national, and international scenarios. Frameworks that can impact the decision-making processes and management of programs and projects within the public sector.

- Loove methods and techniques to	• Prospect social, political, and
 Learn methods and techniques to prospect social, political, and economic scenarios and trends in the local and international context. Identify the main constitutional frameworks of the structure and functioning of the Brazilian State. Identify the set of norms, rules, and laws that govern procedures in the organizational context. Learn methods and techniques for the conjuncture analysis regarding the understanding of the potentialities and limits in the work context. Identify the power and influence relationships existing within the organization and the impacts they have on processes and procedures in the work context. Identify the informal and formal structure of the organization, the chain of command, and the operational procedures in place. 	 economic scenarios and trends in the local and international context. Evaluate the impact of social, political, economic, cultural, and technological trends in its work context. Analyze conjunctures regarding strategy design and decision-making. Mapp power and influence relationships within the organization and its impacts on processes and procedures in the work context. Apply properly the norms, rules, and laws that guide the work processes. Analyze the organizational culture according to the understanding of values and conduct standards established in the work context.

Attitudes

- Avoid prejudgments.
- Transform the exotic into familiar and the familiar into exotic according to the objective understanding of contexts.
- Relativize one's knowledge and experience base according to the understanding of new trends.



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6- Consulted References

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