

BUILDING FUTURE-READY LEADERS

A case study on leveraging a Competency Framework to strengthen leadership capability in a GCC



About the Case

A leading Global Capability Centre (GCC) supporting the operations of a UK-based entity was established in India three years ago to enable cost efficiency, operational excellence, and innovation. While the GCC has grown at a rapid pace and successfully delivered cost arbitrage and supported innovation, there are challenges on competencies around collaboration and leadership effectiveness that the company wants to address to support long term sustainable growth.

OBJECTIVES

Create Leadership Competency Framework

Design competencies that can help drive long term growth

Leadership Assessment

Assessment of the leadership team to highlight areas of development and areas of strength

Support Talent Management

Integrate the competency assessment framework into the talent management processes

KEY COMPETENCY GAPS IN GCC'S

Key Insights gathered as pre-work from our primary and secondary research:

Talent Issues are at the center of Growth challenges

Across industries, GCC leaders agree that talent quality is the biggest enabler or constraint of growth. As cost arbitrage becomes a hygiene factor, it's the capability and leadership bench strength that drive the shift to higher-value work

Developing Middle-level leadership

GCCs are looking to improve the leadership capabilities of their middle-level managers, including their ability to negotiate with global leaders, manage diverse workforces, and make high-impact business decisions

Collaboration with Global team

While GCCs are deeply integrated into delivery, their participation in global decision-making and innovation projects remains limited. The surveyed data—showing 76% emphasis on integrating GCC talent into global innovation teams.

GCCs leading innovation

Focus on developing ER&D and Innovation teams out of GCC's. The shift from operational excellence to innovation leadership requires a fundamentally different competency profile—one that blends technical expertise with forward-thinking creativity.

OUR APPROACH

Our approach spanned the complete cycle: competency framework development, assessment, and deployment.

DESIGN

A competency framework designed to support company's vision and deliver on Organisation's objectives

ASSESS

Assess top and mid leadership to baseline the competency framework and create proficiency expectations

DEPLOY

Socialise the competency framework, cascade the proficiency matrix and train the managers on assessment

FROM CHALLENGES TO TRIUMPH

The Competency Framework



Inputs from the Industry level challenges and discussions with the leadership and employees indicated that to be successful in the given business environment the competency model should rest on five core pillars that define leadership success within a GCC context - Execution, Ambition, Leadership, Business Partnership, and Innovation.

Takeaways from Assessment

The GCC leadership is strong on execution and business partnership, maturing in ambition, but requires targeted development on strategic leadership and innovation agility to fully enable its shift from an operational cost base to a value-creating global capability hub.

The data reinforced a sector-wide GCC pattern: strong execution and delivery capability, but comparatively weaker leadership and innovation competencies.



Cohort Scores on the Competency Model

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Deployment of the Competency Framework



Defining Role wise Competency Proficiency expectations - Define the rating scale and expected behavior from each role/level.



Socializing the competency framework and baking this in the HR templates from recruitment to appraisal



Training the people managers on the competencies and how to assess those

Grade	Designation	Competencies	
		Ambition	Innovation
M1	CEO/VP	5 (Expected Competency)	4
M2	GM	5	4
M3	DGM/Team Lead	4	3
M4	AGM/SM	3	3
M5	Manager	3	3

Example of Grade and role wise Competency Proficiency Expectations (On a rating scale of 1-5)

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Competency-Led Transformation Enables a Shift from Cost Centre to Capability Hub

Embedding a competency-based system allows GCCs to move up the value chain, from being seen as execution partners to being trusted as strategic contributors. By integrating competency assessment and development, the organization establishes a foundation for sustainable capability building and stronger global integration

GCCs Require Differentiated and Contextual Competencies

Traditional corporate competency models often fail to capture the unique context of a Global Capability Centre, where leaders operate in a dual ecosystem: delivering operational excellence while collaborating with global headquarters. GCCs cannot simply adopt the parent organization's leadership model. They must adapt it to emphasize "value creation through expertise," "virtual collaboration," and "innovation at scale."

Strong Execution Foundation, But Leadership and Innovation Need Acceleration

While the GCC leadership demonstrated consistent strength in execution excellence, the next stage of maturity demands more than delivery discipline. Strategic leadership, innovation agility, and the ability to influence global priorities are now critical differentiators. This signals a need to build leaders who can think beyond function, shape business outcomes, and foster innovation-led problem-solving rather than purely operational excellence.

Competency Frameworks Are the Start; Deployment Drives Real Impact

Designing a robust competency model creates a shared language for talent and performance – but embedding it across HR systems is what creates sustained value. The transformation begins when the framework informs role design, recruitment, performance management, learning pathways, and leadership development.