

Capability Profiling in an Organisation

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Functional job profiling

Profiling of individuals within organisations has reflected traditional management principles, that is jobs and components of jobs have been seen as functionally specific. Jobs therefore have been described in terms of the functions or tasks they fill without reference to the cultural or communications environment of the organisation.

While treating jobs as cogs in the machine does produce structural efficiencies, it does not recognise the truly productive aspects of individuals, that is the ability to adapt to changing circumstances and the individual ability to innovate and find solutions to problems. Having individuals fit into clearly defined roles reduces capabilities for performance and inhibits innovation.

Profiling knowledge

Existing business profiling provides an identification of the skills gap in performing current jobs within the organisation. Skills based needs analysis have identified functional expectations of positions. These are most successful where specific functional positions composed from job activities within processes that achieved defined process outcomes. A skill based profiling of jobs has been limited in identifying knowledge components of jobs.

Psychological testing of knowledge of non-skills components of jobs has been limited to general traits of existing office holders and those performing in current positions and not in an individual's capability or capacity to perform.

Traits have been measured to determine behavioural compatibility between individuals and job roles, these have been retrospective judgements in terms of individual traits that in the past have been seen to cause performance in particular jobs.

The identification and delivery of knowledge components of jobs at least at the management level has been provided through educational streams, universities have provided functional job related vocational education through postgraduate study. Management competencies have at least indirectly been identified in relation to general educational qualifications.

Capability inventories are a dynamic business tool; it is the embodiment of the competencies, cognitive factors and experience required to achieve competitiveness; and the basis for framing training and development, career development and organisational development.

The following table identifies some of the differences between capabilities and current skills profiling within organisations.

Table 1 Comparison between skills-based audits and capability inventories

Skills-based Approach	Capability Approach
One way to can be defined to 'properly' complete tasks	Tasks vary with time and situations and interpretation of data must consider these variables
Information is based on current performance data and projections	Peoples perceptions are important variable to measure
Reality can be quantified	Actions define current reality
Logic based	Value based
Performance is real and can be quantified if the correct instruments are used	Individual can adapt to context to complete task
Training embedded behaviour	Training continually redefines culture
Tasks define jobs	Tasks may define multiple purposes and futures
Individuals need job descriptions to define performance expectations	Job descriptions rarely reflect current performance reality but assist describe expectations and career pathways
Skills analysis define the portability of individual competencies between jobs	Capabilities define multiple futures
Defines current job roles within organisations	Identifies organisational performance needs
Provides efficiency	Provides adaptability
Focus is on job performance	Focus is on organisational outcomes

Skills based profiling focus on functional processes and as such produce task efficiencies they are however one step removed from organisational outcomes and as such there is a focus on the processes involved and not the outcomes needed to be achieved, they do reduce the ability of the organisation to adapt to changes in the operating environment.

Capability profiling is linked to strategic result areas for the organisation and therefore stimulates organisational agility. Participant's roles are directly related to key result areas for the organisation. Functional efficiency is reduced but innovation and agility are increased.

Linking individual and organisational capabilities

Within the organisation, individual and organisational performance must be aligned to ensure that energy and effort are not wasted. As has been identified one problem associated with using capabilities rather than functionally specific job roles is that efficiency is sacrificed for effectiveness or a focus on outcomes. The key to the process is the ability to develop a 'shared vision' or 'shared frame of reference' that can drive activity within groups or within the organisation to provide a focus for individual efforts.

The table below identifies the alignment that needs to take place between organisational and individual capability management.

Table 2 Capabilities and the Three Levels of Enterprise Application

Performance variables	Organisational level	Process level	Individual level
Strategic - Mission/ Goals	Does the organisation mission/ goals fit the reality of the economic, political, and cultural forces?	Do the process goals enable the enterprise to meet the corporate and individual mission/ goals	Are the professional and personal mission/ goals of individuals' consistent with the enterprise?
Cognitive	Does the enterprise system provide structure, policy and creative frameworks supporting innovation and performance?	Are processes designed to permit individuals' and groups to modify systems to ensure they meet anticipated contingencies?	Does the individual contribute to performance systems and creative processes?
Expertise	Does the enterprise establish and maintain selection and training policies and resources?	Does the process of developing expertise assist responsiveness of systems to changes?	Does the individual have the applied competencies to achieve required performance?
Future Capacity	Does the enterprise have the leadership, capital, and infrastructure to achieve its mission/ goals?	Does the process have the capacity to perform to current and future customer requirements?	Does the individual want to perform and to learn?
Cultural Awareness	Do the policies, culture and reward systems support and encourage diversity while developing convergence towards desired performance?	Does the process provide the information and human factors required for individuals and groups to maintain it?	Does the individual want to work towards agreed outcomes while respecting divergent views and attitudes?

(Derived from on Ruona & Lyford-Nojima, 1997:791)

Building a capability inventory

The figure below depicts how a capability inventory is an integral component of an enterprise's strategic system. The shaded boxes indicate the strategic level activities (cross-functional and collective), and the non-shaded boxes indicate more process or operationally based activities.

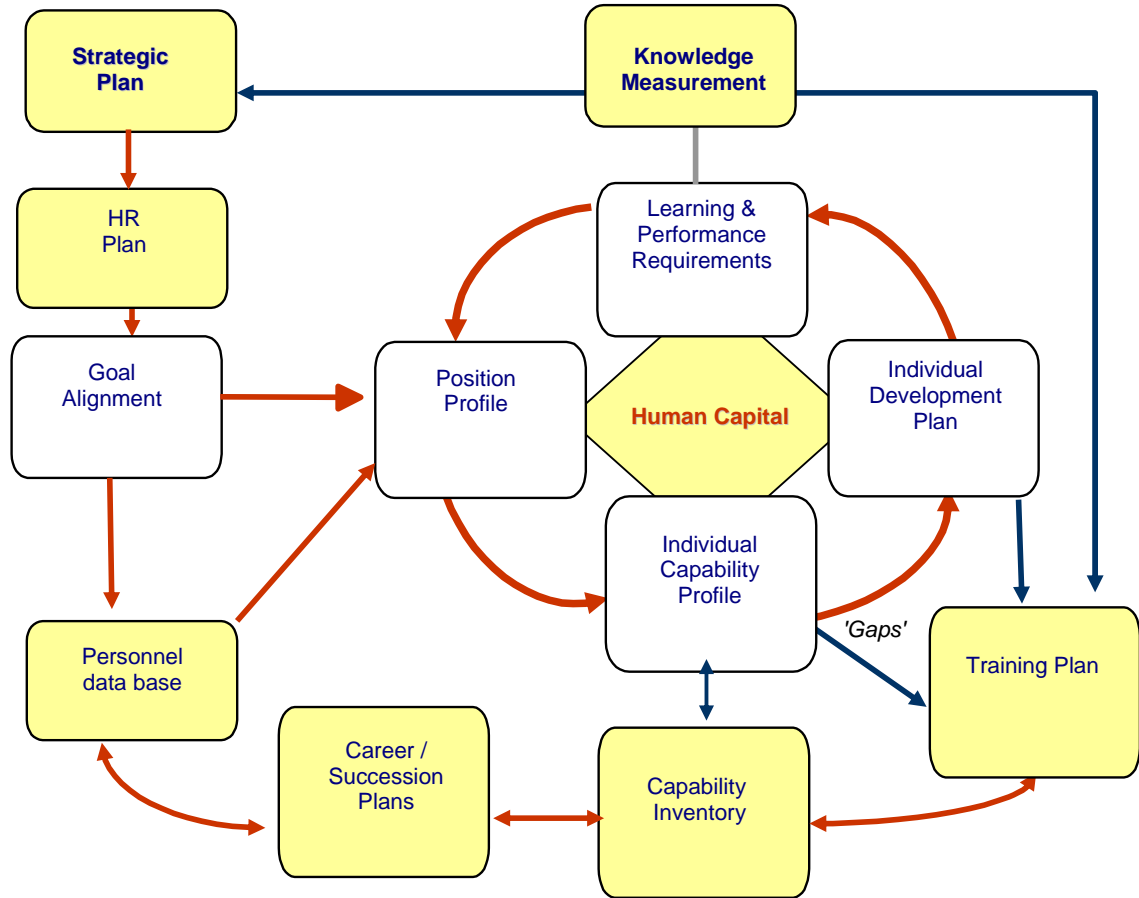


Figure 1 Positioning a capability inventory within an organisation's knowledge and learning systems

Building a capability inventory to serve such a function is not easy. It presupposes management acknowledges learning as a strategic activity, and the contribution of learning can be measured in terms of current and future enterprise competitiveness (capacity).

Measurement Systems

Capabilities can be mapped by building on existing measurement systems. Many of the existing measurement systems are generic across organisations and functionally specific for individual jobs and roles within the organisation. Customisation to an organisations specific conditions or circumstances can provide a picture of possible individual contributions towards organisational performance. As has been identified in the previous topic all individual traits and skills must be mapped back to organisational goals or key result areas. The key is that rather than relate an individual to a job, there is an identification of the individuals ability to contribute to organisational performance.

Table 3 Traditional points that can be used to collect data for a capability inventory

Capability Area	Examples of Information Collection Points
Competencies (skills, knowledge & Attitude/ values)	Skills & knowledge - Productivity sheets, down time, checklists, procedures manuals, diagnostic ratings, training programs, job descriptions, job analysis forms, skills audits, occupational analysis data, industrial awards, occupational and industry classification data, performance improvement targets. Attitudes and values - Attitude surveys, value and climate audits, individual job satisfaction indexes, educational programs, job weighting scales
Identity	Cultural Identity - cultural audits, climate audits, job satisfaction surveys. Experience - Job selection frameworks, personnel records, job weighting scales, performance appraisal data. Levels of interaction and communication - Organisational structures, span of control documentation, work flow systems, quality system work procedures, job sampling, information system audits.

Mapping activities using a data-driven capability inventory

Management information systems provide the focus for capability management. Developing data collection systems that are able to map the development of skills, educational qualifications, experience and expertise gained externally to provide information on individual and group capability to reach outcomes within the organisation provides an analytical framework to decide upon future capacity to meet organisational performance outcomes and a data base for sourcing skills and building capability profiles.

Solutions came in the form of a database able to collect relevant training and education information but translate this data into management reports is essential. In effect a **data bureau** under the control of the enterprise, or managed on its behalf, can become the hub of an HRD system. This system can not only deliver the entire national reporting and recording requirements for the enterprise, but also will streamline and integrate all the related data driving capability reporting for the individual, business units, the region and for business partners (Eg suppliers, training providers, contractors, etc.).

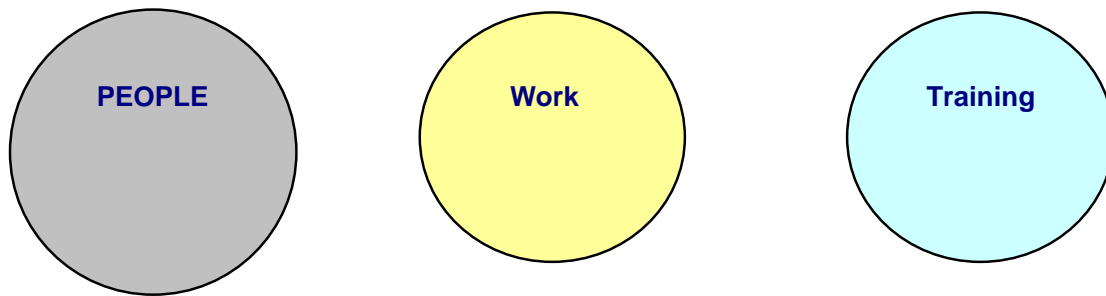
The use of a capability-based reporting system permits the enterprise to ensure all training, education and assessment activities can be:

- On the job where ever possible;
- Recognises a individuals current capabilities;
- Map learning requirements against potential work placements;
- Maximise the placement of an individual in work to fulfil the employer's job performance requirements (when, where, how, etc.)
- Generate cost profiles for workplace development activities;
- Maintain a resource schedule (physical, human and time based);
- Generate capability profiles for any mix of individual, group, enterprise or strategic partners;
- Manage suitably qualified training and education providers, assessors, coaches, and mentors; and
- Integrating existing tools and procedures used in the workplace.

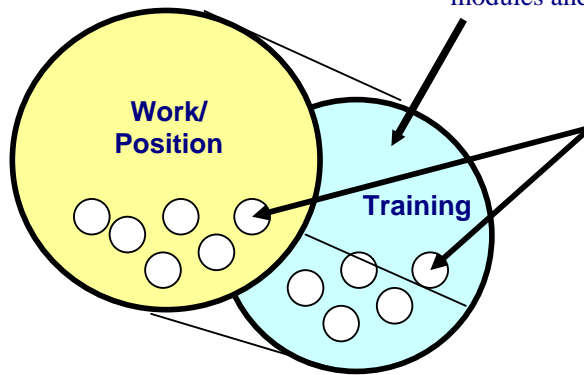
Value in such a system must be maintained for the individual, a component of such a capability development performance management and mapping system is that not only does internal recognition of individuals skills occur but that individuals development provides linkages to external education and training programs. Irrespective of how the enterprise conducts education and training programs all curricula can be designed or customised to deliver national recognition (qualifications or credits towards qualifications) for any individual/ employee. The linkages between organisationally specific capabilities and general training and educational principles must be maintained if individual's development is to be solid and to be meaningful to participants.

Mapping Person - Work - Training

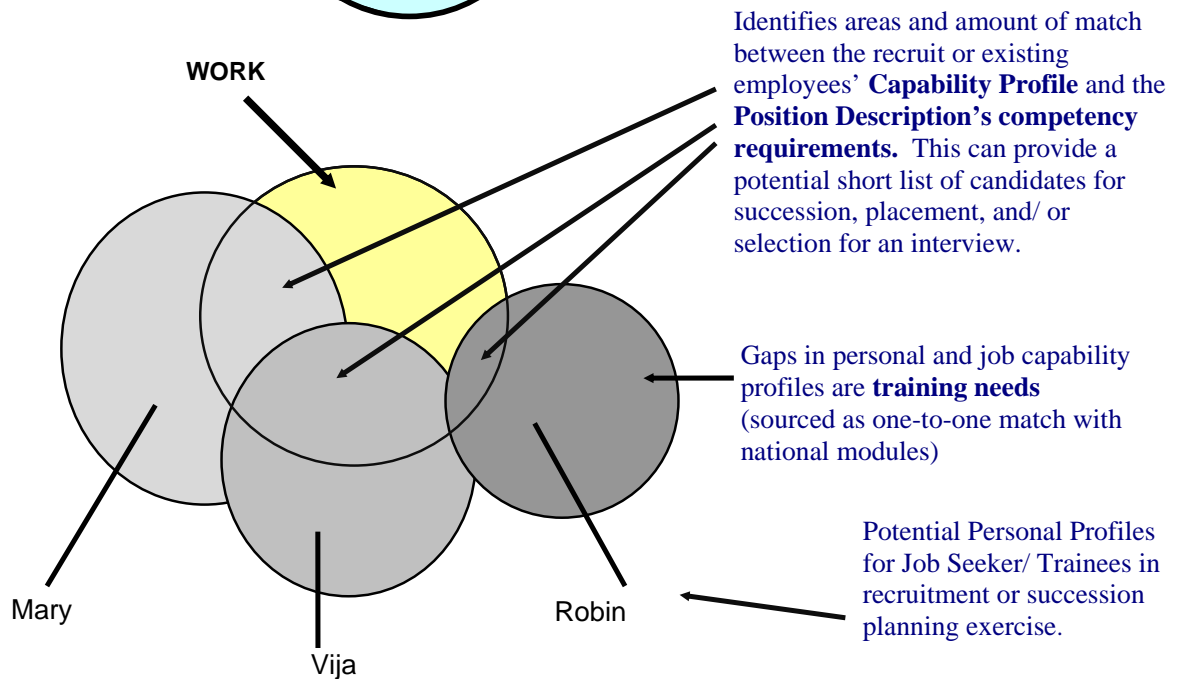
Matching capability profiles can integrate individual, job and business outcomes. This is managed by a data base permitting managers and nominated individuals to ensure people in work are both aware of job requirements and are focussed onto completing training that also meets either immediate job needs or career development requirements.



All team position profiles are supported by capabilities that in turn have attached training modules and qualifications



Each unit of competency and cognitive capability in a job maps against a module of learning.



Capability profiles provide for an integrated HRD system, in the grafting of knowledge into the organisation through recruitment of personnel, the management of individual training and development, the assessment of performance against organisational objectives, and utilisation of individual knowledge and intellectual capital more effectively

Table 4 Relationship between capability mapping and HRD functions

Match this	Profiled using these for		Value Adds to Existing Functions
<p>Work Match Relates capabilities required for performance in a specific job, job family (ie. occupation or team), or sector.</p>	<p>Individual's Profile An individual's ability to work in a specific job and ability to progress into a career area and current capability to fill a vacant job can be 'matched'.</p>	<p>Training Profile Learning required for a job can be 'Matched'.</p>	<p>Recruitment, selection, succession planning, training needs analysis; profiling job seekers, promoting links with employment/ recruitment agencies.</p>
<p>People Match Enables individual's to be profiled through a database against learning that they have (recognised) completed and may have recognised through qualifications.</p>	<p>Job Profile An individual may choose future job or career moves and confirm competencies and learning required for a position.</p>	<p>Training Profile Individual's existing qualification or current capacity may be recorded.</p>	<p>Coordinating where, when and how training should occur to meet work and individual's needs. Training records, current competency profiles, succession planning, and skills audits and analysis.</p>
<p>Training Match Relates learning and sources of learning required to satisfy the capabilities for an individual choosing a career path or a specific qualification.</p>	<p>Individual's Profile Training & education can be packaged for an individual seeking to fill capability gaps required for a job or career path.</p>	<p>Job Profile Training can be packaged for a job and all individuals seeking the position/ job</p>	<p>Ensures all training programs deliver the required capabilities when, where and how the enterprise specify while suiting the individuals immediate job or career development situation. Selection, recruitment and training management plans.</p>

The development of a capability bureau

Data driven capability management information systems can be developed within organisations or as external bureaus that provide capability profiling and management systems that can be benchmarked across organisations. It is sensible in our discussion to talk about a learning organisation that focuses on the development of capabilities in capability profiling and mapping. A capability bureau that would initially provide vocational and educationally identified qualifications and standards.

The bureau would provide selected access based on agreed security parameters and facilitate the:

- Maintenance of a central database holding data related to relevant industry, cross-industry and enterprise standards and Training Packages.
- Establishment and management of quality assured, accessible and consistent competency reporting and recognition frameworks.
- Transfer of competency attainment by individuals into further training and/or career pathways.
- Tracking and reporting of competency acquisition by individuals, industry area, jobs/occupations, courses/ modules, workplaces, regions, etc (skills passport).
- Tracking and administration of registered workplace assessors.
- Reporting and trend analysis of competency counts, usage and coverage, training provision, expenditure, etc.
- Mapping and monitoring of actual enterprise-wide competency levels (by position, groups, occupations - ANZSIC or ASCO).
- Surveying special capability needs or projects (Eg. OH&S).
- Provide streaming from vocational qualifications into educational courses.

Managing a capability inventory

The development of a capability inventories within organisations or external to organisations may provide the following uses.

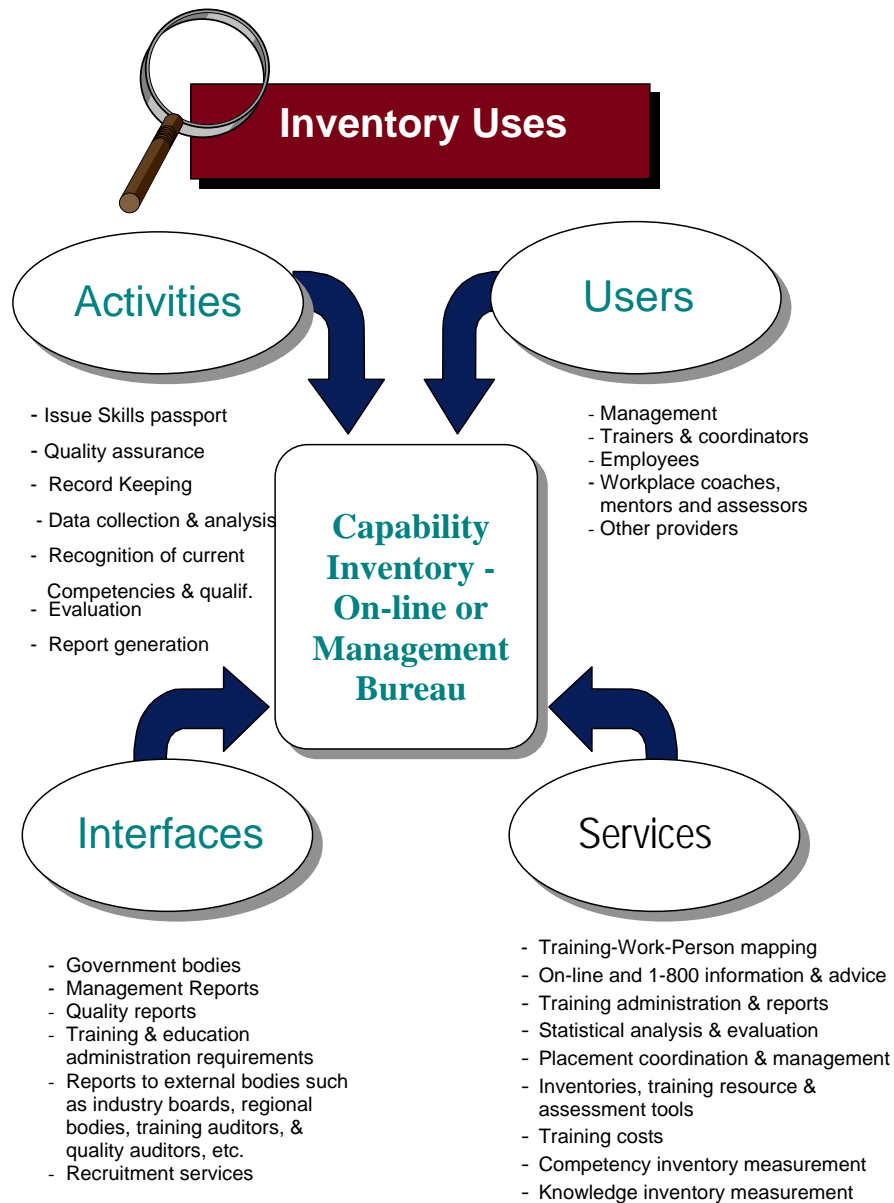


Figure 2 Managing a Capability Inventory

Manipulating inventory data

By storing and/or interfacing to information the Bureau can:

- Maintain and disseminate:
 - Capability profiles of individuals;
 - Registers of competency based training and general education courses relevant to a company;
 - Registers of preferred vocational training and education providers relevant to courses;
 - Registers of Training Packages and Australian Qualification Framework alignment; and
 - Registers of competency assessors.

- Maintain, map and link (by matching) the availability of competency assessment required to complete the programs, by workplace, region and course.
- Maintain, map and link (by matching) available courses/ competency outcomes by course.
- Analyse and report on the acquisition of competencies of individuals by location, by course, by date, etc.
- Analyse and report on the provision of course by providers, by region, by workplace, rural/ remote, etc.
- Analyse and report on the activity of competency assessors by type (on the job, teachers, etc).
- Monitor customer satisfaction by obtaining user feedback on the scope and efficiency of its services.

Integration of capability/ competency job profiles and recruitment and selection

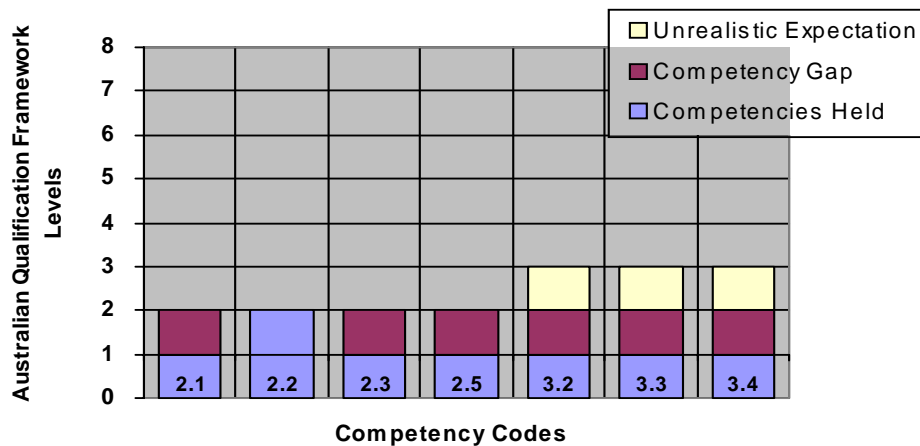


Figure 3 Standards Profile for a Job

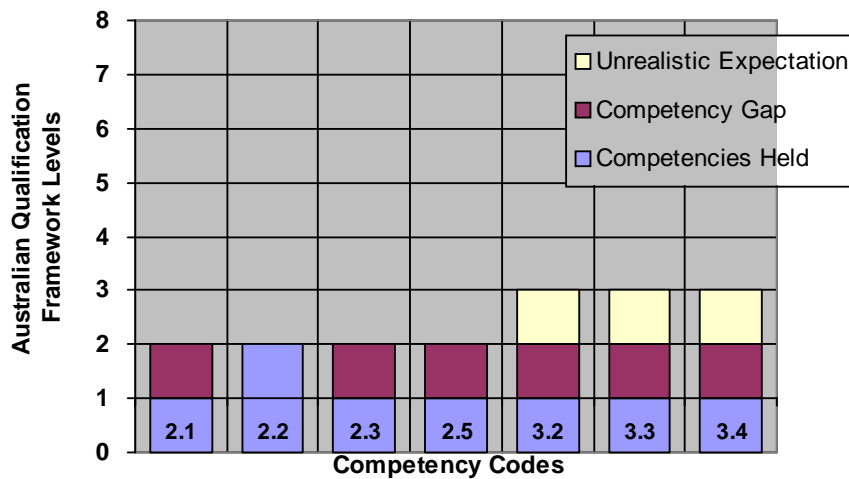


Figure 4 Matching an Individual's Profile Against a Position's Profile to Determine Job Training Needs

NB: All identifying numbers for the units of competency are listed and derived from the Standards Profile for the company. The above process will also target recruitment, selection and succession planning activities. The competencies could equally be capabilities and be details using exactly the same sort of coding system.

Nationally recognised qualifications for employees attaining capability/ competency profiles

Attainment of individual competence and specific workplace performance can be linked to formal qualifications for all employees in the company. (i.e. beyond traineeships/ apprenticeships and integrating existing employees up to the highest management in post-graduate university courses). As capability profiles move up the employment levels managers could increasingly have vocational, competency-based qualifications augmented, or replaced by educational qualifications.

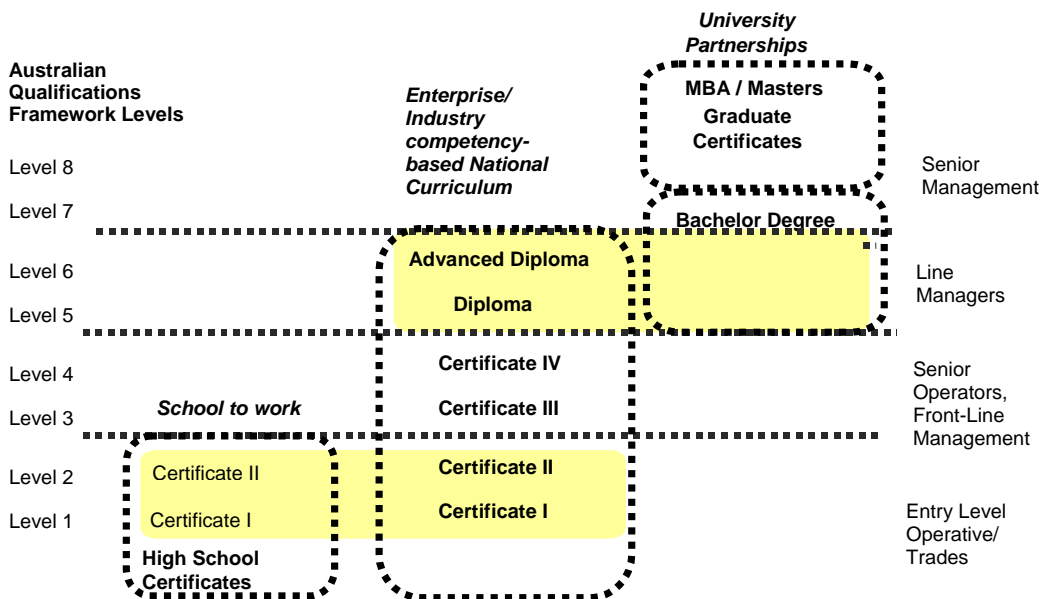


Figure 5 - National Qualifications & Enterprise Levels of Capability

Standards promote the integration of recruitment, selection and job design activities. This also affected job design, the formation of teams, and training within a quality service environment.

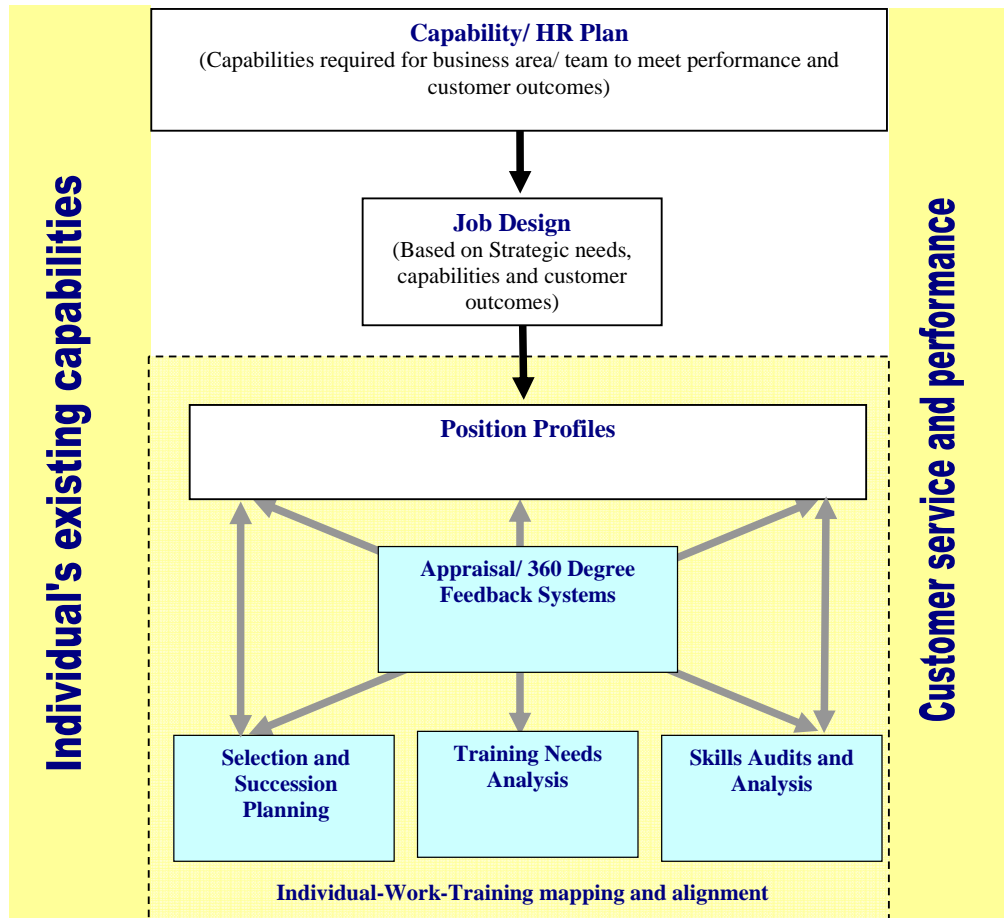
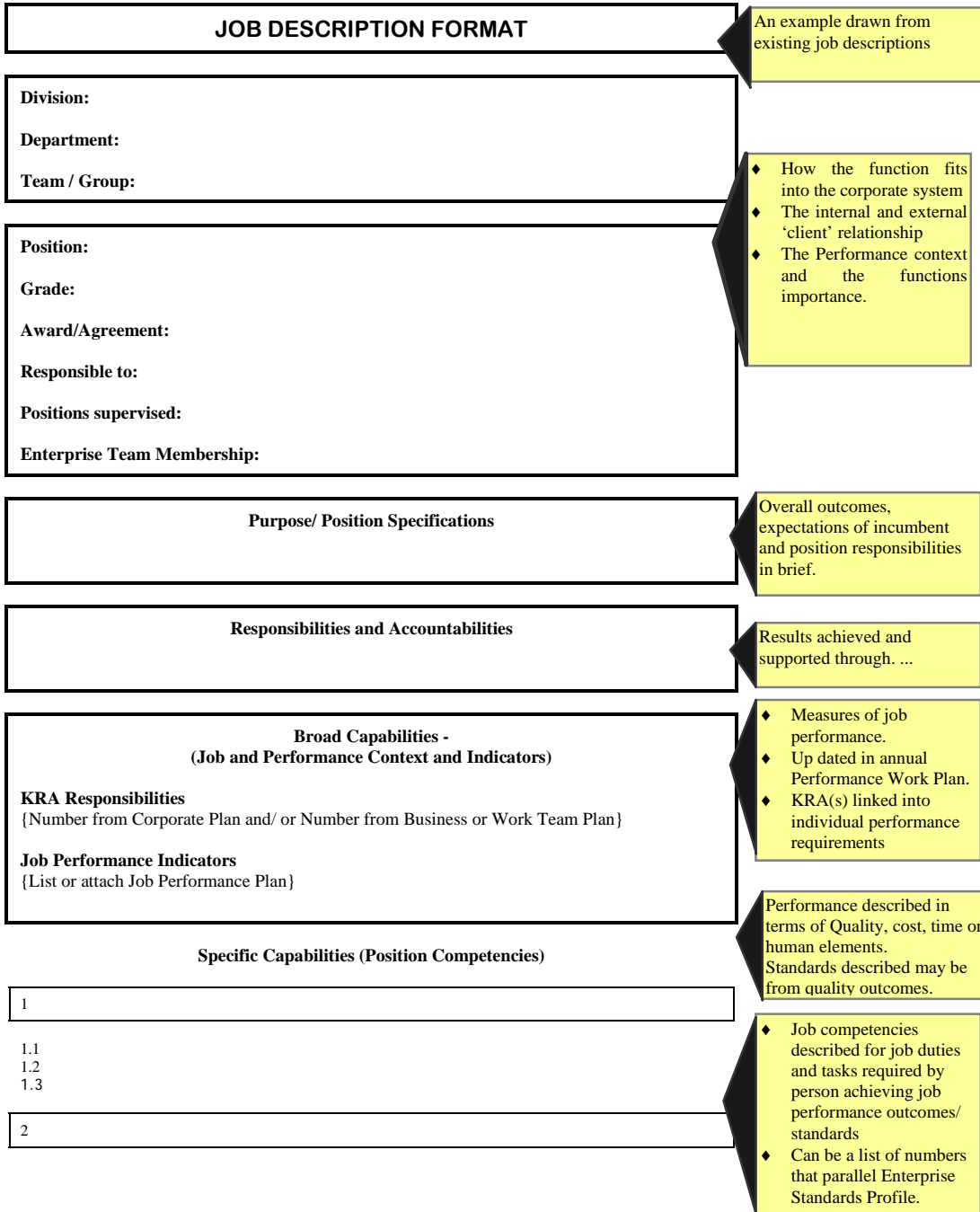


Figure 6 - Company Competency Standards Enhance Existing Strategic Activities

Shaded areas represent the alignment of individual learning to process and corporate learning required to deliver performance outcomes.

Position Descriptions

The following position description was introduced in the chapter on job design. This example is based on a version used by the maritime Services Board (NSW Government) and Woolworths. Both companies merge capability systems with competency standards.



2.1