

About PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements

What are Psychosocial Factors?

Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers).

What is PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements?

GM@W defines PF5: Psychological Competencies & Requirements as present in a work environment where there is a good fit between employees' interpersonal and emotional competencies and the requirements of the position they hold. This means that employees not only possess the technical skills and knowledge for a particular position, but they also have the psychological skills and emotional intelligence to do the job. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, impulse control, persistence, self-motivation, empathy and social deftness. Of note is the fact that a subjective job fit has been found to be more important than an objective job fit, meaning it is more important for employees to feel they fit their job, rather than being assessed and matched to the job.

Why is Psychological Competencies & Requirements important?

A fit between employees' psychological competencies and the requirements of the position they hold is associated with fewer somatic health complaints, lower levels of depression, greater self-esteem and a more positive self-concept. It is also associated with enhanced performance, job satisfaction and employee retention.

What happens when there is a misfit between employees' psychological competencies and the requirements of the position they hold?

A misfit between employees' psychological competencies and the requirements of the position they hold may result in job strain. This strain can be expressed as emotional distress and arousal, excessive cognitive rumination, defensiveness, energy depletion and lower mood levels. Organizationally, competencies and requirements misfit is linked to a reduction of applicants in the recruitment and training process, lack of enjoyment and engagement, poor productivity, conflict, and greater voluntary turnover.

How can Psychological Competencies & Requirements be improved?

Start by conducting the GM@W Organizational Review and/or the GM@W Survey and reviewing the results. If Psychological Competencies & Requirements is identified as an area of concern or relative strength, refer to the GM@W Action Resources for a practical strategy and evidence-based and effective suggested actions that can improve Psychological Competencies & Requirements. It is also important to discuss the findings with employees to gain a further understanding of the results and to obtain input into possible interventions. Furthermore, it is important to evaluate the undertaken interventions over time to ensure they are effective and to take corrective action where needed. Consider reviewing the resources below. Finally, refer back to the GM@W website on occasion for new ideas about how Psychological Competencies & Requirements can be enhanced.

Further information about Psychological Competencies & Requirements:

- Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario. (2012). *Mental health works*. Retrieved from <http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca>
- Carless, S. (2005). Person-job fit versus person-organization fit as predictors of organizational attraction and job acceptance intentions: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 78(3), 411-429. doi: 10.1348/096317905X25995
- Gilbert, M. & Bilsker, D. (2012). *Psychological Health and Safety: An Action Guide for Employers*. Retrieved from http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Workforce/Workforce_Employers_Guide_ENG.pdf
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Scroggins, W. (2008). The relationship between employee fit perceptions, job performance, and retention: Implications of perceived fit. *Employee Responsibilities & Rights Journal*, 20(1), 57-71. doi: 10.1007/s10672-007-9060-0
- Shaw, J., & Gupta, N. (2004). Job complexity, performance and well-being: When does supplies-values fit matter? *Personnel Psychology*, 57(4), 847-879. doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6570.2004.00008.x
- The Great-West Life Assurance Company. (2012). PF5: Psychological Competencies and Requirements. In *Centre Resources by GM@W Factor and On the Agenda*. Retrieved from <http://www.workplacestrategiesformentalhealth.com>

www.guardingmindsatwork.ca