

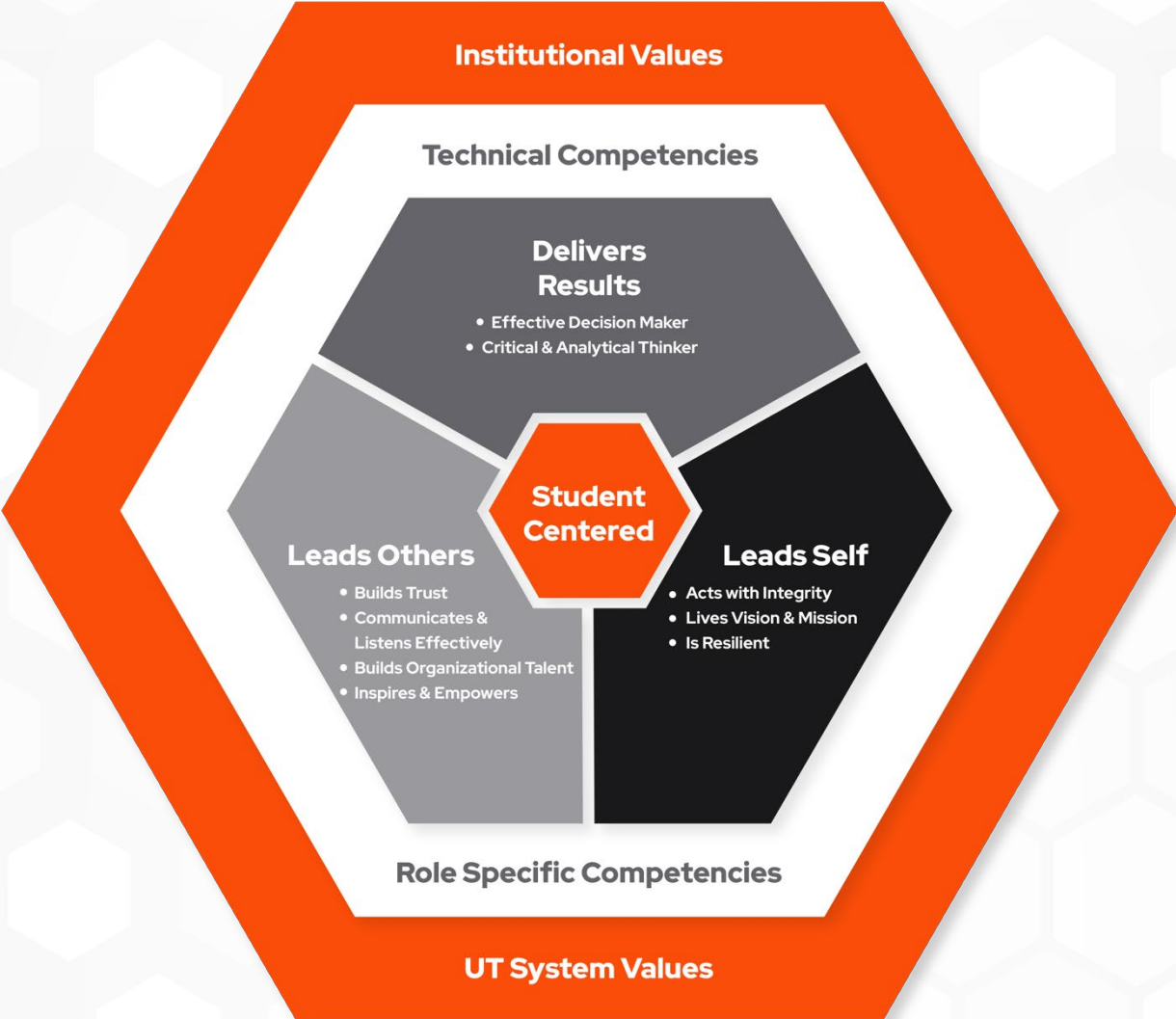
# UTRGV LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES



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# UTRGV LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES MODEL



# Introduction

The UTRGV Leadership Competency Model was collaboratively designed and developed with the mission, vision, values, and strategic plan of UTRGV and UT System in mind to create a framework that outlines knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed and continuously practiced to be a successful leader at UTRGV.

## Who is this model for?

This model focuses on broad leadership competencies that apply to all leaders, no matter the level or specific role - everyone supervising others is a people leader.

Please note that the handbook is not meant to be a comprehensive list of every possible developmental opportunity for the competencies, nor are the competencies the only things that need to be developed in order to be a successful leader. Technical competencies, as well as role-specific competencies are vital to every leader's success and will need to be developed continuously. In addition, being student-centered, keeping student success in mind, and reminding ourselves why we are here and who we serve should be a guiding and important part when making decisions as leaders.

This handbook is organized around each competency, grouped into the three main categories of:

- Leads Self
- Leads Others
- Delivers Results

In each section, you will find context as to why a competency is important, corresponding skills and behaviors that we expect to see from leaders, examples of tools and techniques how to improve in a certain competency, derailers, and how you can coach your team and develop their competencies. Based on your role or level at the institution, behavior examples may vary and may be scaled to accurately describe specific circumstances and expectations. However, the broad competencies shown in the model will apply to all leaders.

For a list of recommended trainings and resources aligned with each competency, please visit the "Development Resources" tab on the Leadership Competency website. We hope that you will take advantage of the various leadership development offerings that will assist you in mastering these competencies.

# Introduction

How else will this model be used?

We will see the leadership competency model have an impact on the following areas and beyond:

- **Recruitment & Selection**  
Identify candidates who already align well with our competencies.  
Behavior based example interview questions.
- **Performance Management**  
Competency based evaluations. Helps supervisors identify strengths and areas for development, create improved development plans that align with desired skills and behaviors
- **Leadership Development**  
Impacts our internal professional development offerings. Gives employees a chance to prepare better for a leadership role.
- **Succession Planning**  
Creates more transparency about leadership succession planning. Allows to better prepare leaders for their future roles.



# LEADS SELF

To be a great leader, start by leading yourself. For ongoing leadership success, devote some time and energy to develop advanced self-awareness and self-leadership skills which will enable you to better navigate complex, important, and relational situations. We are striving to hire and develop leaders who:

- Act with Integrity
- Live UTRGV's Vision and Mission
- Model Resilient Leadership

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Acts with Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gains confidence and trust of others through honesty, integrity, and authenticity</li> <li>• Demonstrates humility and self-awareness by recognizing own limitations and allowing others to contribute or lead</li> <li>• Aware of their own perception biases</li> <li>• Considers personal values as well as institutional values when taking action</li> <li>• Actively tries to understand diverse worldviews</li> <li>• Tries to understand unique situations before making assessments about individuals or situations</li> <li>• Avoids and interferes with gossiping</li> </ul>

### Ideas to master this competency:

- Take assessments to improve self-awareness and learn how others may perceive you (examples: DISC, Emotional Intelligence Assessments, 360 Degree Feedback, E-colors, StrengthsFinder, Myers-Briggs)
- Get a leadership coach
- Implicit/Unconscious Bias Training
- Read up on, understand, and apply applicable policies, regulations, laws consistently
- Reach out to the UTRGV Office of Compliance for guidance
- Keep your agreements
- Surround yourself with people with integrity
- Practice integrity tests (Ask yourself: Who is the most ethical person I know? What would he/she do in this situation? How would I respond if the other person was my friend? What would I want others to do to me in this situation?)
- Be vulnerable





# LEADS SELF

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Lives Vision & Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands context and embraces the history and culture of UTRGV</li> <li>• Knows what the vision, mission, and values are and references them in everyday terms</li> <li>• Explains how the team/department aligns</li> <li>• Aligns department/team goals and decisions</li> <li>• Shows the team the fruit of their labor</li> <li>• Shows enthusiasm to be part of UTRGV</li> <li>• Actively sets goals for ongoing own improvement</li> </ul>

## Ideas to master this competency:

- Read [UTRGV's strategic plan](#) (with your team)
- See how your work and goals align
- Create a strategic plan for your area (with your team) and align it
- Ask questions about our institution's history – embrace it, validate your employee's feelings about it, don't neglect or ignore it
- Share highlights and how your team makes an impact
- Practice and embody [UTRGV's values](#)



# LEADS SELF

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Models Resilient Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses energy productively to emerge from adversity stronger</li> <li>• Acts with courage</li> <li>• Professional under pressure</li> <li>• Optimistic</li> <li>• Has a tolerance for uncertainty</li> <li>• Guides team through change and challenges</li> <li>• Adapts well to change</li> <li>• Demonstrates resilience and resourcefulness when faced with challenges and obstacles</li> <li>• Critically evaluates and reflects on own behaviors from previous actions to gain insight to adapt for future challenges</li> <li>• Creates clear plans for overcoming recurring challenges</li> <li>• Pauses and regains balance before reacting, when faced with difficult conversations or negative emotions</li> </ul>

### Ideas to master this competency:

- Learn about change management and responses to change
- Reframe how you think about situations
  - keep things in perspective
  - see challenges or disruptions as opportunities
- Explore the power of positivity
- Practice self care – invest in your own well-being (take breaks, use your vacation time, setting boundaries, work-life balance, engage with your support system, get adequate sleep, nutritious diet) – Recharge your batteries. You can't help and lead others through challenges when you are not at your best.
- Reflect and assess – periodically review your past decisions and where they have taken you
- Celebrate accomplishments & practice gratitude
- Try mindfulness & meditation practices to be in touch with yourself and increase your ability to be present in the moment





# LEADS OTHERS

Leadership involves working with and influencing others to achieve common goals and foster a positive workplace climate. No great work is ever accomplished within an organization without the involvement of others. As a leader at UTRGV, you set the tone and environment for your team to succeed and flourish.

Instilling a sense of value and empowerment in all members of the university community is a fundamental responsibility of leaders at all levels and involves facilitating professional, intellectual, cultural, and personal growth. – **UTRGV Code of Conduct**

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Builds Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interacts with others in a way that instills a sense of comfort and confidence regarding personal intentions, credibility, and competence</li> <li>• Finds time to get to know their team</li> <li>• Trusts their team</li> <li>• Willingness to be vulnerable and admits when wrong</li> <li>• Keeps commitments, doesn't over-promise</li> <li>• Listens to concerns with appropriate follow-up/reaction</li> <li>• Responsibly handles sensitive information</li> <li>• Has their team's back</li> <li>• Actively works to restore trust when necessary</li> <li>• Creates a culture of civility &amp; kindness</li> </ul>

### Ideas to master this competency:

- Trust first
- Assume best intent
- Stop the blame game and see mistakes as learning opportunities
- Celebrate wins with your team
- Be present and available to your team
- Value your team as people
- Role model
- Use a human voice in your communications
- Ask your team how they are doing, what they think, and what they'd like to see at work
- Be honest but "unbrutally" honest



# LEADS OTHERS

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Communicates & Listens Effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully concentrates on what is being communicated, asks questions to ensure understanding, and responds in a way that conveys interest</li> <li>• Responds in a timely manner</li> <li>• Keeps relevant stakeholders in the loop</li> <li>• Chooses right medium and time of communication and adjusts to their audience</li> <li>• Respects other people’s point of view and disagrees respectfully</li> <li>• Creates an environment that fosters respectful and constructive dialogue</li> <li>• Initiates and participates in tough discussions in a way that protects self-esteem, enhances mutual understanding, and assists in conflict resolution</li> <li>• Shares relevant information prior to changes</li> <li>• Establishes purpose and importance and conveys instructions in a logical manner</li> <li>• Presents ideas clearly and concisely</li> </ul>

## Ideas to master this competency:

- Open different lines of communication
- Give undivided attention, maintain eye contact
- Monitor for non-verbal communications
- Encourage two-way feedback
- Have one-on-one interactions
- 7 principles of communication: Concrete, Coherent, Clarity, Commitment, Consistency, Completeness, Courteous
- Observe and learn from others



# LEADS OTHERS

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Builds Organizational Talent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes sound hiring decisions</li> <li>• Hires based on skill &amp; ability to grow</li> <li>• Puts the right people on the bus, in the right seat</li> <li>• Provides ongoing, timely, constructive, clear, and honest feedback</li> <li>• Promotes a culture of active learning</li> <li>• Mentors and coaches next leaders</li> <li>• Realizes the importance of having a talent pipeline</li> <li>• Advocates for professional development resources</li> <li>• Actively works on talent retention</li> <li>• Creates an inclusive environment</li> <li>• Acts decisively and with fairness when dealing with performance or conduct issues</li> </ul>

## Ideas to master this competency:

- Actively invest time in your own professional development and promote the same with your employees
- Reflect on new learnings with your team
- Read books with your team
- Perform stay interviews
- Leader as Coach mindset
- Encourage employee wellness and well-being activities
- Reach out to HR for help with performance and conduct issues (timely)
- Succession Planning
- Make new employee on-boarding a priority and involve your team
- Encourage mentorship, coaching, joining a professional organization, community service, join a community board
- Development in Place (adding relevant developmental assignments to current jobs)
  - let someone lead a project or work on a strategic assignment



# LEADS OTHERS

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
<b>Inspires &amp; Empowers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows a passion for what they do</li> <li>• Proud of their work</li> <li>• Shares vision and how the team’s work aligns</li> <li>• Shares strategic plan and goals</li> <li>• Positively affects the behavior of others, motivating them to achieve high performance through a sense of purpose and spirit of cooperation</li> <li>• Stimulates others to act and accomplish goals</li> <li>• Helps people develop a sense of ownership</li> <li>• Equips others to succeed</li> <li>• Inspires confidence in leadership and achievability of goals</li> </ul>

### Ideas to master this competency:

- Set clear goals, work toward a common goal, but not a singular path
- Explain why their work matters
- Encourage teamwork
- Celebrate successes, show appreciation
- Allow your team direct involvement in decision making
- Learn how to delegate properly
- Give your team ownership
- Reward creativity and challenge your team to think outside of the box
- Give autonomy
- Allow them to use their strengths



# DELIVERS RESULTS

A drive for results is an important competency of a successful leader. We expect leaders at UTRGV to be motivated by success and excellence and passionate about working in Higher Education to deliver the best results possible for our students. Results driven leaders display a strong commitment to making service/process improvements, focusing their own and others' energy on what makes a difference and setting and achieving ambitious goals. Driving for results also means to show determination and taking necessary actions to meet objectives set by self and others, while identifying and applying measures to track and quantify achievement.

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Effective Decision Maker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly communicates the reasons/rationale/why for the decision</li> <li>• Informs those impacted by the decision</li> <li>• Reads others accurately and addresses their unstated concerns, interests, and levels of commitment</li> <li>• Makes data-informed decisions</li> <li>• Gathers all needed information and evaluates options carefully</li> <li>• Seeks input from people with relevant knowledge and expertise to make timely and well-informed decisions</li> <li>• Gets buy-in from stakeholders</li> <li>• Makes fact- and data-based decisions that balance analytic insights with personal experience</li> <li>• Takes appropriate risk and shifts courses of action when necessary</li> <li>• Allows for flexibility to revisit decisions</li> <li>• Supports stakeholders dealing with effects of decisions</li> <li>• Can make quick decisions if necessary</li> <li>• Takes ownership &amp; responsibility</li> </ul>

## Ideas to master this competency:

- Learn about different decision-making models
- Reflect on previous decisions and the impact they had
- Have a communication plan/roadmap
- “What is the cost of no decision?”
- Check your biases
- Balance urgency and thoughtfulness
- Clear your mind and rest up before big decisions
- Avoid decision fatigue



# DELIVERS RESULTS

Critical thinking at work helps improve decision making and evaluating an argument's validity and potential impact.

Competency	Performance Indicator/Behavior Examples
Critical & Analytical Thinker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asks the right questions to get to the root cause to define problems before moving to solutions</li> <li>• Able to examine information rationally and make a reasoned judgment based on the analysis</li> <li>• Aware of own biases and can set them aside</li> <li>• Innovates and finds more efficient ways to solve problems</li> <li>• Involves and creates synergies with others whose input and collaboration are critical to achieving targeted outcomes</li> <li>• Able to adopt or create new processes</li> <li>• Reflects on their own thinking process and look for ways to improve it</li> <li>• Takes calculated risks, based on learning and expertise</li> </ul>

## Ideas to master this competency:

- Formulate your question – know exactly what you are looking for
- Gather your information – practice active listening
- Become more self-aware – consider your own thought process, values, beliefs
- Question assumptions
- Develop foresight – consider how others might feel about a situation/decision. Consider how your actions will produce reactions.
- When not sure, ask more questions
- Team-building exercises
- Seek out diversity of thought and collaboration

When asking your team for their solutions/ideas: Withhold your own preference and ask them to email you their ideas or thoughts. This helps prevent groupthink.



The strategies, tools, recommendations, and techniques offered in this handbook are grounded in best practices and research across the field of OD&T. Following is a list of resources used to inspire and contribute to this handbook:

- McCauley, C. (2006). *Developmental assignments: Creating learning experiences without changing jobs*. Greensboro, N.C.: Center for Creative Leadership Press. Permission granted from the Center for Creative Leadership to republish CCL's Model of Leader Competencies.
- <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/most-important-leadership-competencies/>
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/tonygambill/2021/04/08/why-self-leadership-is-the-most-important-leadership/?sh=340cf44c1ca4>
- Lombardo, M. & Eichinger, R. (2000). *FYI: For your Improvement*. Lombardo, M. & Eichinger, R. (1989). *Eighty-Eight Assignments for Development in Place*. Greensboro, N.C.: Center for Creative Leadership Press.

Please visit our available professional development platforms such as E-Learn and LinkedIn Learning to further develop your leadership skills and visit the [training portal](#) for upcoming sessions.



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For more information visit, **[UTRGV.edu/HR](http://UTRGV.edu/HR)**.