

BRSS TACS

Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER STRATEGY

Core Competencies

for Peer Workers in Behavioral Health Services

Peer Worker Self-Assessment

Category III: Shares lived experiences of recovery

What Are Core Competencies?

A competency is the ability to do something successfully. Competencies are comprised of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for performing specific tasks well. Core competencies are the basic or foundational competencies needed to do a specific job well. SAMHSA and BRSS TACS developed these core competencies recommended for peer workers in behavioral health services, including peer recovery coaches, peer recovery specialists, and dozens of other job titles that work in a variety of settings. In addition to these core competencies, some peer workers will go on to develop specialized competencies (for example, working in criminal justice settings, doing supported employment) or advanced competencies (for example, supervision, group facilitation).

What is the Purpose of this Self-Assessment?

This self-assessment is a tool to assist you in reflecting on your own peer worker competencies. Here are the possible outcomes of using the Peer Worker Self-Assessment:

- Identify your strengths as a peer worker
- Identify competencies that need to be developed
- Make a plan to develop your competencies
- Use the information to build a career development plan
- Use the information in supervision
- Become an objective observer of yourself at work

Because this assessment is only to help you improve in your work and advance your career, feel free to complete this assessment as honestly as you can to get the most benefit. There are no wrong answers.

What Happens Next?

After you complete the self-assessment, you can decide what you want to do with the information. Here are some recommended activities:

- Review your own assessment. See if you can find any themes or areas that you are interested in developing
- Work with your supervisor or mentor to process the self-assessment
- Work with your supervisor, mentors, and others to identify trainings or experiences you need to develop your competencies
- Complete one of the 12 self-assessments available. See a [list](#) of competency assessments

Competency development activities might include:

- In-person trainings/courses
- Online training/courses
- Job shadowing (working side-by-side with someone doing tasks you want to learn)
- On-the-job training
- Internships or other work “practice” opportunities
- Working with your supervisor
- Skill development courses (leadership skills, interpersonal skills, conflict resolution etc.)
- A new job

Complete the Self-Assessment

If you need help completing this self-assessment, ask your supervisor.

Peer Worker Information

1. Date _____

2. Name _____

3. How long have you worked here _____

4. Is this your first time completing this self-assessment?

Yes No

5. If no, when was your last self-assessment? _____

6. What are your professional goals? (Type them in the box below)

7. What do you think you do well at work?

8. What do you think you need to improve on?

Self-Assessment of Core Competency

Rate yourself on how well you currently demonstrate these competencies. In addition to self-assessment rating, you can note examples that show why you rated yourself this way, what gets in the way of doing some competencies well, and what types of training would be helpful to improve where needed.

Category III: Shares lived experiences of recovery

This category of competencies is unique to peer support, as most roles in behavioral health services do not emphasize or even prohibit the sharing of lived experiences. Peer workers need to be skillful in telling their recovery stories and using their lived experiences as a way of inspiring and supporting a person living with behavioral health conditions. Family peer support workers likewise share their personal experiences of self-care and supporting a family member who is living with behavioral health conditions.

1) Relates their own recovery stories, and with permission, the recovery stories of others to inspire hope

What does this mean?

I do this very well all of the time	I do this well most of the time	I can do this well under the right circumstances	I cannot do this well yet	I do not know how to do this	This is not applicable to my work

Explain why you rated yourself this way using an example or a scenario from your work:

What do you think gets in the way of doing this competency well? (Check all that apply)

N/A—I already do this well
I don't know how to do this

I've never seen anyone do it
I don't have opportunities to practice this
I don't have the confidence to do this

Other Comments:

2) Discusses ongoing personal efforts to enhance health, wellness, and recovery [What does this mean?](#)

I do this very well all of the time	I do this well most of the time	I can do this well under the right circumstances	I cannot do this well yet	I do not know how to do this	This is not applicable to my work

Explain why you rated yourself this way using an example or a scenario from your work:

What do you think gets in the way of doing this competency well? (Check all that apply)

N/A—I already do this well
I don't know how to do this

I've never seen anyone do it
I don't have opportunities to practice this
I don't have the confidence to do this

Other Comments:

3) Recognizes when to share experiences and when to listen [What does this mean?](#)

I do this very well all of the time	I do this well most of the time	I can do this well under the right circumstances	I cannot do this well yet	I do not know how to do this	This is not applicable to my work

Explain why you rated yourself this way using an example or a scenario from your work:

What do you think gets in the way of doing this competency well? (Check all that apply)

N/A—I already do this well
I don't know how to do this

I've never seen anyone do it
I don't have opportunities to practice this
I don't have the confidence to do this

Other Comments:

4) Describes personal recovery practices and helps peers discover recovery practices that work for them

What does this mean?

I do this very well all of the time	I do this well most of the time	I can do this well under the right circumstances	I cannot do this well yet	I do not know how to do this	This is not applicable to my work

Explain why you rated yourself this way using an example or a scenario from your work:

What do you think gets in the way of doing this competency well? (Check all that apply)

N/A—I already do this well
I don't know how to do this

I've never seen anyone do it
I don't have opportunities to practice this
I don't have the confidence to do this

Other Comments:

Improving Category III Competencies

In this category, you assessed your competencies in the area of *Shares Lived Experiences of Recovery*. What additional help or training would be beneficial to you to strengthen these competencies? Check all that apply.

N/A—I don't need help
More help from supervisor
Read more about this on my own
Watch someone else do this at work
Attend a webinar
Participate in training

Core Competency Examples

Category III: Shares lived experiences of recovery

1. [Relates their own recovery stories, and with permission, the recovery stories of others to inspire hope](#) You share information about what has helped you and others in a way that helps peers stay motivated in their recovery.
2. [Discusses ongoing personal efforts to enhance health, wellness, and recovery](#) You share about what you do for yourself to stay in recovery and what helps you.
3. [Recognizes when to share experiences and when to listen](#) You know when you should be quiet and give peers a chance to speak, and when you should speak up and share your own experiences.
4. [Describes personal recovery practices and helps peers discover recovery practices that work for them](#) You share about what is working well for you in your recovery, and provide suggestions for peers.

Self-assessments are available for each of the core competency categories:

Category I: Engages peers in collaborative and caring relationships

Category II: Provides support

Category III: Shares lived experiences of recovery

Category IV: Personalizes peer support

Category V: Supports recovery planning

Category VI: Links to resources, services, and supports

Category VII: Provides information about skills related to health, wellness, and recovery

Category VIII: Helps peers to manage crises

Category IX: Values communication

Category X: Supports collaboration and teamwork

Category XI: Promotes leadership and advocacy

Category XII: Promotes growth and development

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