

## 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 VI: Links to resources, services, and supports

This category of competencies assists peer workers to help other peers acquire the resources, services, and supports they need to enhance their recovery. Peer workers apply these competencies to assist other peers to link to resources or services both within behavioral health settings and in the community. It is critical that peer workers have knowledge of resources within their communities as well as online resources.

#### 1) Develops and maintains up-to-date information about community resources and services

*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) Assists peers to investigate, select, and use needed and desired resources and services** [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) Helps peers to find and use health services and supports** [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) Accompanies peers to community activities and appointments when requested [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:

#### 5) Participates in community activities with peers when requested [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 VI Competencies

In this category, you assessed your competencies in the area of *Links to Resources, Services, and Support*. 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 VI: Links to resources, services, and supports

1. [Develops and maintains up-to-date information about community resources and services](#) You make sure that the services you suggest to peers are still around and available—for example, you don't suggest peers visit a wellness center that moved locations without giving the new address.
2. [Assists peers to investigate, select, and use needed and desired resources and services](#) You help peers learn about services that could help them in recovery—help them learn about where they should go, when they should go, and how to get there.
3. [Helps peers to find and use health services and supports](#) You help peers get the health services or medication they need—like which health center to go to, and how to get there.
4. [Accompanies peers to community activities and appointments when requested](#)  
You join your peer at a social event, doctor visit, or other appointment when asked.
5. [Participates in community activities with peers when requested](#)  
You join in with peers during social events and community activities when asked.

### 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

### [Click to Return to Top](#)

*This document was supported by contract number HHSS2832012000351/HHSS28342002T from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The views, opinions, and content of the document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of SAMHSA or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).*

*C4 Innovations developed this resource with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). It was built under the Bringing Recovery Supports to Scale Technical Assistance Center Strategy (BRSS TACS) project, contract number HHSS2832012000351/HHSS28342002T. CAPT Wanda Finch and Amy Smith served as the Contracting Officer Representatives. This resource was prepared by Cheryl Gagne and Orla Kennedy.*

*Please share your thoughts, feedback, and questions about this publication by emailing [BRSSSTACS@c4innovates.com](mailto:BRSSSTACS@c4innovates.com). Your feedback will help SAMHSA develop future products.*