

ARABIAN HORSE ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE COMPETENCY MODEL

VISION STATEMENT

Arabian Horse Association exists for growth in the number of people having a passion to own and enjoy the Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horse.

MISSION STATEMENT

To promote:

- Growth in the interest in, and demand for the Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horse.
- Preservation of the integrity of the breed.
- Increased participation in activities involving the Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horse.
- Recognition by the equine industry and general public about the value and attributes of the Arabian, Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian horse; and
- Ensure services and benefits that are valuable and convenient for the AHA members.

About the Competency Model

- A competency model is intended to lend structure, consistency, transparency and credibility to the NC'S ongoing efforts. This common HR tool, widely used in varying forms by leading professional organizations around the world, aligns employees' performance and development with a company's objectives and priorities.
- Competencies and board nominations are not the same. The norms for our board vary (as it should), and can range from "sets a strategic vision for the organization" to "responds to e-mails promptly." By using the competency model, we aim to promote coherence across leadership without compromising the norms that the board has outlined.
- A competency model:
 - Provides us with a framework for board development and evaluation, as well as to strategically cultivate future leaders over time.
 - Helps the NC identify strengths and gaps in our leadership candidate pool.
 - Highlights leaders' unique talents and skills.
 - Ensures that the overall composition of our board is more balanced.
 - Helps us strategically decide who is well-suited to lead the Arabian Horse Association.
 - Does all of this in support of AHA's purpose, values and strategic plan.

DEFINING COMPETENCIES, BEHAVIORS AND PROFICIENCIES

- Simply put, competence is "the ability of an individual to do a job properly." A **competency** is "a set of defined behaviors that provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviors in individuals".

- Many different **behaviors** make up a given competency. Individual interpretations of a competency can be very different, so behaviors create a common language about what that competency looks like when it's brought to life. To help AHA focus its evaluation and development efforts, each competency encompasses about 4-7 behaviors.
- Finally, people demonstrate different **levels of proficiency** for each competency or behavior. Levels of proficiency range from "Aware" to "Lead," and depending on their unique experiences and skills, individuals can fall anywhere along that continuum.
- The competency dictionary shows a particular competency and the various behaviors that support it. Next, we show the scale of proficiencies that apply to all competencies and help us measure performance.
- Below is an example that demonstrates the difference between competencies, behaviors and proficiencies.

Example – Superman

Competency: Heroism – Demonstrates bravery, valor and a commitment to the common good in the face of adversity and danger.

BEHAVIOR	PROFICIENCY				
	Aware	Support	Apply	Guide	Lead
Saves innocent citizens from burning buildings.			XX		
Halts runaway trains.				XX	
Rescues stranded kittens from treetops.			XX		
Puts the villain in his place.					XX

Proficiency Scale

While no leader can perform at the leading/expert level for *all* competencies, this scale helps gauge where she/he may be performing at a particular point in time – and how she/he can further develop. For leadership-level roles, candidates should be at or above an "Apply" level for most competencies.

LEVEL	INDICATORS
Aware – Basic level: focus is on learning.	Common knowledge or understanding of basic techniques and concepts.
Support – Novice level: focus is on gaining experiences.	Limited experience; expected to need support or guidance. Understands and can discuss terminology, concepts, principles or issues.
Apply – Intermediate level: focus is on developing knowledge or skills.	Successfully carries out responsibilities; occasional help may be needed, but usually performs independently. Understands and can discuss the implications of changes to processes, policies and procedures.

<p>Guide – Advanced level: focus is on addressing broad organizational issues.</p>	<p>Performs without assistance and is recognized as a “person to ask” when difficult questions arise. Consistently provides practical/relevant ideas and perspectives which can be easily implemented. Capable of coaching others by translating complex nuances into easily digestible words and actions. Participates in leadership-level discussions. May assist in the development of resources, materials, processes, etc.</p>
<p>Lead – Expert level: focus is on furthering the organizational strategy.</p>	<p>Can provide guidance and answer questions related to this area of expertise. Demonstrates consistent excellence in applying this competency across multiple projects or organizations. Considered a “go-to” person in this area within AHA and/or outside organizations. Creates new applications for and/or leads the development of reference and resource materials. Able to explain the important issues and to foster a greater understanding among various stakeholders.</p>

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE COMPETENCIES – What our Executive Committee members need to lead effectively.

While EC members should have relevant experience and skills for their positions (President/Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) the EC competencies speak more to the leadership behaviors **consistently required for EC service** (e.g., strategic visioning, inspiring and motivating others).

Essentially, the competencies speak to what it means to be a leader in AHA, while a candidate's skills and experiences will help the NC determine **where** she/he is best suited to lead.

By having one set of competencies that applies to the EC we put weight behind the desirable leadership behaviors – and we ensure that we are developing current and future leaders in a way that maximizes their options for service in a number of roles. This supports our leaders’ ongoing growth and development – they can “flow” in different directions or assume different roles as their lives, interests and experiences change.

Business acumen – applies knowledge of management and financial concepts to achieve success.	Collaboration – partners with others to accomplish goals.	Developing others – coaches and guides others to support their performance and growth.
Innovation – develops or facilitates the development of new ideas, products, programs or solutions that provide for opportunities for growth.	Inspiring and motivating others – inspires passion and enthusiasm in others to engage and excel.	Integrity and ethics – leads in accordance with the highest ethical, legal and social standards.
Results orientation – focuses on desired results and sees goals through to completion.	Stakeholder management – champions the interests of various stakeholders in a balanced manner (owners, breeders, trainers, judges, youth, volunteers, staff, donors, external).	Strategic visioning – defines and articulates the purpose, direction and future of the organization for all stakeholders.

PRESIDENT COMPETENCIES – What does an AHA president need to lead effectively?

The president assumes a different role than the other EC officers. She/he guides, mediates, facilitates, delegates, and decides – to name just a few – so the competencies should reflect that unique leadership position.

These president competencies especially should help structure development discussions – on any given board, do we have multiple candidates who are viable candidates to assume the presidency?

These competencies also will support the NC when it comes time for them to slate a new president for AHA.

Ambassadorship – promotes organization through personal actions and spokesperson role.	Communication – delivers clear, effective oral and written communication; takes responsibility for understanding others through active listening.	Conflict management – manages and resolves concerns or disagreements in a fair and respectful manner.
Decision – making – makes timely, informed decisions to create optimal outcomes.	Delegating – appropriately assigns responsibility and authority to others, providing support and direction.	Diplomacy – navigates formal and informal networks, relationships and cultural norms to achieve results.
Influence and persuasion – shapes the actions, behaviors or opinions of others in service of the organization.	Prioritizing – assesses importance of issues and tasks to take action.	Team development – builds highly effective and collaborative teams.

COMPETENCY DICTIONARY

Ambassadorship – Promotes organization through personal actions and spokesperson role (President).

1. Represents the organization as its spokesperson, promoting a positive image of AHA to both internal and external stakeholders.
2. Leads by example, modeling AHA Vision and Mission even when situations are not personally agreeable.
3. Communicates the organization's brand and direction in a compelling way.
4. Demonstrates personal investment in AHA's signature projects and partnerships (e.g., Arabian Horse Foundation, Arabian Horseman's Distress Fund, etc.), supporting special initiatives and events as needed.

Business Acumen – Applies knowledge of management and financial concepts to achieve success (Executive Committee).

1. Shows understanding of operational and financial factors that contributes to AHA's performance and success.
2. Demonstrates knowledge of all facets and areas of the organization, including how they intersect.
3. Seeks out relevant information to identify trends and inform decisions.
4. Applies financial knowledge and makes fiscally responsible decisions regarding budgets, fundraising and investments.
5. Sets organizational priorities by aligning resources with AHA's strategic plan.
6. Identifies potential risks, implementing measures to avoid or minimize them.

Collaboration – Partners with others to accomplish goals (Executive Committee).

1. Acts in the best interest of the organization, serving others rather than promoting personal agendas or interests.
2. Cooperates and builds mutually beneficial relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
3. Volunteers to assist others in every possible way.
4. Fosters a trusting environment that emphasizes knowledge-sharing in a transparent and timely manner.
5. Participates actively in meetings, proving opinions, offering ideas and building consensus.
6. Recognizes and celebrates others' contributions, and shares credit.

Communication – Delivers clear, effective oral and written communication; takes responsibility for understanding others through active listening (President).

1. Considers and understands an audience's specific needs to determine appropriate delivery methods and messages.
2. Conveys information clearly and confidently in both group and one-on-one settings.
3. Demonstrates flexibility, adjusting style (body language, intonation, word choice) to clarify and to put others at ease.

4. Demonstrates a high caliber of writing, using appropriate style, tone and mechanics to engage the reader.
5. Listens attentively to others, allowing people to complete their thoughts before drawing conclusions.
6. Checks understanding of message content and underlying emotions by restating information and asking questions.

Conflict Management – Manages and resolves concerns or disagreements in a fair and respectful manner (President).

1. Takes proactive steps to prevent situations that could result in conflict or confrontation.
2. Recognizes when it is beneficial – or not beneficial – to bring conflicts into the open and address them.
3. Willingly and directly addresses conflict.
4. Works collaboratively to expand areas of agreement and narrow areas of disagreement.
5. Strives to recognize and address conflict impartially, without letting personal views or feelings interfere.
6. Uses appropriate techniques to facilitate the development and implementation of mutually beneficial outcomes.
7. Knows when to compromise and when to remain firm.

Decision Making – Makes timely, informed decisions to create optimal outcomes (President).

1. Gathers information and uses a logical, informed approach to choose a course of action.
2. Thinks creatively and considers multiple options before deciding.
3. Considers short- and long-term implications and how they will affect AHA's overall well-being.
4. Makes timely decisions, even when in high-pressure or high-stakes situations.
5. Knows when to make decisions independently and when to include others.
6. Makes difficult or unpopular decisions that are in the best interests of AHA and/or its members.
7. Uses AHA's vision, mission and strategic plan as a guide.

Delegating – Appropriately assigns responsibility and authority to others, providing support and direction (President).

1. Assigns tasks, decisions, and/or relationship to others, as appropriate.
2. Outlines clear objectives and standards.
3. Clarifies roles and responsibilities, resolving overlaps or confusion.
4. Trusts others to perform and deliver, providing the appropriate level of support and communication.
5. Empowers others to make independent decisions and judgments.

Developing Others – Coaches and guides others to support their performance and growth (Executive Committee).

1. Views others' growth as a priority and invests time and effort in their learning and development.
2. Helps others assess skills, strengths, and development areas.
3. Provides specific, behavior-based feedback in a respectful and timely way.
4. Encourages others to assume challenges that will support their growth.
5. Creates a safe, learning-based environment where people can practice and demonstrate new capabilities and behaviors.
6. Advocates for others, promoting their skills, talents, experiences and achievements.

Diplomacy – Navigates formal and informal networks, relationships and cultural norms to achieve results (President).

1. Applies knowledge of organizational history, culture and relationships to guide interactions and decisions.
2. Demonstrates tact and discretion, maintaining relationships with various stakeholders.
3. Uses good judgment to determine whom to include when seeking support or resources to achieve the best possible outcome.
4. Identifies key influencers and engages them to help achieve desired outcomes.
5. Understands various stakeholders' agendas and addresses them, as needed.
6. Distinguishes what information should be shared and what should remain confidential or anonymous.
7. Meets obstacles with courage and resolve; is not deterred by challenges or difficult circumstances.

Influence and Persuasion – Shapes the actions, behaviors or opinions of others in service of the organization (President).

1. Creates buy-in with stakeholders by demonstrating expertise and a compelling rationale.
2. Seeks to understand stakeholders' concerns and motivations, and speaks to these needs.
3. Adjusts emotion and content of message to the audience, appealing to others' needs and interests.
4. Articulates outcomes of an interaction, reaching agreement or consensus, and ensuring that the conversation can move forward.
5. Persuades with integrity and a strong ethical commitment.

Innovation – Develops or facilitates the development of new ideas, products, programs or solutions that provide opportunities for growth. (Executive Committee).

1. Encourages others to openly share and build on ideas, products, programs or solutions.
2. Approaches problem-solving in a creative manner, questioning assumptions to redefine challenges and generate new options.
3. Asks questions and listens attentively to stimulate thinking and discussion.
4. Seeks additional information to make better decisions and ensure the organization's relevancy.
5. Tries new approaches and similarly encourages others to take risks and learn from mistakes.

Inspiring and Motivating Others – Inspires passion and enthusiasm in others to engage and excel (Executive Committee).

1. Translates vision into reality and communicates what is possible (“Here’s where we’re going, and why”).
2. Describes how stakeholders can support the vision (“Here’s how all of you can help us get there”).
3. Creates buy-in and commitment by connecting individuals to opportunities (“Here’s how you, personally, can help us get there”).
4. Communicates how individual contributions link to organizational goals (“Here’s why what you do is important”).
5. Learns how others prefer to be motivated and tailors approach to those needs.
6. Demonstrates personal investment in the organization and takes initiative to advocate and educate on its behalf.

Integrity and Ethics – Leads in accordance with the highest ethical, legal and social standards (Executive Committee).

1. Behaves honestly and practices ethical behavior in interactions.
2. Accepts personal responsibility.
3. Is consistent and clear about ethical standards.
4. Speaking up even when it may be risky to do so – standing up for what you believe in.
5. Is a role model for living the organization’s values.
6. Makes and keeps promises and commitments. Achieves results.
7. Builds effective relationships based on mutual respect and trust.
8. Offers open and honest feedback to peers and colleagues.

Prioritizing – Assesses importance of issues and tasks to take action (President).

1. Determines the relative urgency and impact of projects or tasks.
2. Helps others clarify priorities, including what should be focused on first.
3. Manages competing demands, stakeholders and timelines.
4. Applies judgment to make tradeoffs on time and resources, as needed.
5. Uses AHA’s vision, mission and strategic plan as a guide.

Results Orientation – Focuses on desired results and sees goals through to completion (Executive Committee).

1. Sets challenging goals for individuals and/or teams.
2. Assumes tasks with confidence and openness.
3. Conducts periodic reviews to track progress.
4. Strives to finish what is started, overcoming obstacles to stay on course.
5. Displays appropriate urgency in accomplishing goals and reprioritizes as needed.
6. Reviews processes and results to identify successes and opportunities for improvement.

Stakeholder Management – Champions the interests of various stakeholders in a balanced manner (owners, breeders, trainers, judges, youth, volunteers, staff, donors, external) (Executive Committee).

1. Understands stakeholders' needs, and applies this understanding in communications and decisions.
2. Establishes common ground and promotes mutually beneficial outcomes for as many parties as possible.
3. Engages appropriate stakeholders in making critical decisions, and communicates outcomes/follow-up.
4. Maintains trust and confidence by understanding the impact of actions and decisions on stakeholders, and responding appropriately.
5. Hears, considers and assumes different roles and/or points of view.

Strategic Visioning – Defines and articulates the purpose, direction and future of the organization for all stakeholders (Executive Committee).

1. Creates a shared vision of the organization's purpose and direction.
2. Translates the organization's vision into clear, specific and achievable objectives.
3. Considers different scenarios, opportunities and threats to generate short- and long-term strategies and plans.
4. Determines what changes are necessary to achieve the new vision and develops strategies to support the transition.
5. Uses relevant information to anticipate and respond to trends that will affect the organization.
6. Challenges assumptions and thinks creatively to uncover new opportunities.
7. Operates at a governance level of leadership, defining the vision and mobilizing appropriate resources to achieve it.

Team Development – Builds highly effective and collaborative teams (President).

1. Creates a team identity and a shared purpose to drive toward a common goal.
2. Defines each person's role, including responsibilities, performance expectations, and contributions to the team.
3. Monitors and manages team dynamics, addressing conflicts and differences in a productive, respectful manner.
4. Empowers team members to collaboratively produce results, providing guidance and support when required.
5. Encourages team performance by recognizing and rewarding collaborative behaviors or team wins.
6. Enables team to succeed by advocating for it in the organization and assessing performance so it can continuously improve.

Footnote: In 2014, the AHA President charged the Nominating Committee (NC) to develop a set of competencies representative of strategically what is needed to serve on the Executive Committee (EC) of the AHA. The NC was also charged with redesigning the self-nomination form to reflect the application of the competency model.

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