

COMPETENCY MODEL FOR
CITY PLANNING ASSOCIATE
CLASS CODE 7941

The following competencies have been identified as those that best separate superior from satisfactory job performance in the class of **CITY PLANNING ASSOCIATE**. (Numbers refer to the order of competencies in the Competency Bank.)

- 3. Judgment and Decision Making
- 6. Attention to Detail
- 7. Self Management
- 20. Job Knowledge
- 34. Customer Service
- 36. Emotional Maturity
- 45. Oral Communication
- 47. Written Communication

On the following pages are descriptions of each competency, including a definition, the level of the competency required for the class (*italicized and underlined*), examples of behavioral indicators, and satisfactory and superior performance levels.

3. JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING – Accurately assesses situations, seeks new information if necessary, and applies all available information to reach sound conclusions/formulate effective response.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Training and guidelines needed to respond to immediate situations within very specific function are provided (or supervisor available to assist).
- Level 2: General information and guidance to assist in responding to a variety of situations across a range of circumstances are provided.
- Level 3: Little guidance available for responding to a wide range of complex situations with far-reaching and/or enduring consequences.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Effectively responds to atypical situations.
- Asks questions or otherwise obtains additional relevant information to make a decision.
- Formulates a decision and necessary actions based on available facts.
- Correctly infers appropriate response based on information provided and existing policies, personal experience, and/or consultation with others.
- Discusses conclusions/possible responses with others before taking action as necessary.
- Considers impact of decisions on all affected parties.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Correctly assesses routine and unusual situations and reaches appropriate conclusions for actions needed. Obtains additional information and/or consults with others as necessary.

Superior

Evaluates new situations accurately to establish an appropriate response or plan of action. Recognizes the impact on all affected parties, as well as the possible ramifications and/or repercussions of setting a precedent.

6. ATTENTION TO DETAIL – Extremely careful in addressing all aspects of each work assignment in order to produce “completed staff work” and/or avoid any negative outcomes.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Ensure all aspects of work assignment are completed as directed.
- Level 2: Verify that each aspect of work assignment is properly completed; make logical inference regarding additional activities that may need to be performed to produce “completed staff work.”
- Level 3: Include evaluation of final work/work product in its accomplishment; make adjustments as possible to improve.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Carefully checks all aspects of work for completion and accuracy before submitting.
- Identifies errors (for example, typo's, computations, measurements, application of laws/rules/policies) and corrects them prior to submitting.
- Cross-checks work against available resources.
- Sets up a means of checks and balances to ensure work accuracy.
- Considers changes in final work product to ensure usability by recipient.
- Completes all revisions upon request.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Ensures that each task accomplished represents “completed staff work.” No remaining details/inconsistencies for others to address.

Superior

All aspects of each task completed are verified to be correct. Identifies any foreseeable consequences of work that may need to be addressed and does so.

7. SELF MANAGEMENT – Organizes and plans for task accomplishment; manages time and works diligently to complete assigned work/fulfill responsibilities.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Order tasks for efficient performance; maintain awareness of time allotted and deadlines in order to ensure they are met.
- Level 2: Plan and perform work in a way that maximizes efficient performance; establish and adjust priorities to ensure timely completion of most critical assignments.
- Level 3: Allot time to responsibilities proportional to their prominence, priority, and impact.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Performs only work activities during work hours.
- Alters means of performing work when original approach proves to waste time.
- Keeps a “to do” list (with indication of priority and deadlines, if necessary).
- Requests assistance as necessary when it becomes clear that work will not be completed on time.
- Demonstrates a record of progress with respect to all assignments/responsibilities.
- Uses optimal means of communication for efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Conducts self while at work in a manner that ensures work will be completed as scheduled, or provides explanation or secures assistance or adjustment of schedule if it will not be.

Superior

Seeks efficiencies in doing work to maximize productivity. Plans work carefully and follows the plan or makes adjustments if it is disrupted. Maintains personal responsibility for all work accomplishment.

20. JOB KNOWLEDGE – Knows information required to perform a specific job. Includes both widely available courses of study (for example, chemistry, human resources management, graphic arts) and City-specific information (parking regulation and ticketing practices; purchasing procedures; provisions of the City Charter).

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Knowledge acquired after hire in a brief orientation, short training program, or through on-the-job training.
- Level 2: Knowledge acquired through an apprenticeship or extensive training program, or long duration of job performance.
- Level 3: Knowledge acquired through a prolonged external course of study and/or extensive training and experience within the City.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Performs work correctly/avoids technical (job content related) errors.
- Answers technical questions about work accurately.
- Asks few technical questions about the performance of routine work activities.
- Offers advice (“coaching”) to new employees regarding their work.
- Develops training programs for other employees.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Sufficient job knowledge to perform work correctly independently. Answers technical questions about work correctly.

Superior

Expertise in technical job information sufficient to serve as a resource to others. May develop training manuals/programs and/or give internal and/or external presentations related to work.

Job Knowledge Areas

1. Knowledge of the organization, functions, and responsibilities of the divisions, sections, and units within the Planning Department and/or Los Angeles World Airports and their relationship to their respective Commissions, the City Council, the Mayor's Office, and other City departments.
2. Knowledge of the objectives and policies of the Department of City Planning and/or the Los Angeles World Airports and their respective Commissions sufficient to know their scope and limitations.
3. Knowledge of the content and organization of the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles and its elements and their relationship to State guidelines and City Charter requirements.
4. Knowledge of the general organization, content, and requirements of the Planning and Zoning Code Sections of the Los Angeles Municipal Code.
5. Knowledge of urban planning concepts including urban design, sustainability, walkability, green building, mass transit, and the impact of urban renewal/ gentrification or other major development on air quality, traffic patterns, housing, recreation areas, historic preservation, zoning and other planning issues.
6. Knowledge of ordinances relating to land use such as the Planning and Zoning Code, the Building and Safety Code, the Community Plan, and Specific Plans.
7. Knowledge of map reading including radius, site-plan, topographic, land-use, general plan, on-line zoning and aerial maps, and noise contour maps sufficient to use them in project planning.
8. Knowledge of acts such as CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act), Coastal Acts, and the Subdivision Map Act sufficient to make recommendations regarding planning matters.

34. CUSTOMER SERVICE – Interacts with recipients of services (internal or external customers) in a way that provides accurate, timely, and effective information and service.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Interact with customers in person, over the telephone, or through e-mail (and/or other electronic media) in order to provide information or assistance. Listen to customer concerns; explain/reconcile information and provide alternatives if possible; facilitate resolution by making referral and/or following-up as necessary.
- Level 2: Promotes positive customer service. Serves as a model of providing exemplary customer service.
- Level 3: Develop customer-oriented procedures; identifies changes in procedures to enhance customer service and ensures they are implemented.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Carefully listens to (or reads) customer statement of the issue.
- Provides direct, informative, accurate responses to customer.
- Suggests options if available.
- Maintains a positive attitude in the face of customer complaint or frustration.
- Remains focused on the issue presented by the customer and directs the customer back to the issue if necessary.
- Asks the customer if their concerns have been fully addressed.
- Ensures organizational policies and practices are customer-focused.
- Ensures all employees recognize their responsibility for customer service and are properly trained for it.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Displays knowledge as well as courtesy and patience when interacting with customers. Ensures customers' issue is correctly identified and remains focused on it until it is resolved.

Superior

Seeks further information or advice to resolve difficult issues. Solicits feedback on the effectiveness of service. Makes suggestions for improving service and facilitates changes needed to implement.

36. EMOTIONAL MATURITY – Maintains a calm and task-oriented approach to work even under circumstances of conflict or hostility.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Remain focused on the task at hand when interacting with unpleasant or uncooperative people, circumstances are frustrating, the workload is high, or other conditions of the work environment are less than optimal.
- Level 2: Seek effective resolution to complaints/criticisms; recognize that most are not personal, but a reflection of frustration or disagreement on the part of others.
- Level 3: Maintain neutrality and effective performance even in the face of unjustified challenge or direct criticism in a public forum.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Maintains a calm and focused demeanor.
- Continues to listen to others with whom conflict or disagreement has occurred.
- Does not display excessive emotionality: yell, shout, scream, cry, or use profanity.
- Does not “act out:” slam doors, throw things, threaten, or assault others.
- Does not engage in inappropriate acts such as telling off-color jokes, name-calling, horseplay, or bullying.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Demonstrates emotional stability and mature behavior appropriate to the workplace even in circumstances of discord or duress.

Superior

Maintains businesslike demeanor and continues to attempt to address the issue at hand even when faced with personal attacks, unjustified accusations, or other inappropriate behavior from others.

45. ORAL COMMUNICATION – Communicates orally in a clear, concise, and effective manner.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Exchange specific, job-related information orally with others in the immediate work environment or via telephone and/or radio.
- Level 2: Obtain/provide/present general and/or job-specific information orally to a variety of others in various situations.
- Level 3: Obtain/provide/present a diverse array of information orally at varying levels of complexity to a wide range of others across many different situations and circumstances.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Audience clearly understands the intended message.
- Rarely must repeat information in response to questions.
- Refrains from use of unnecessary words, phrases, or jargon.
- Provides a level of detail appropriate to the situation (avoids too much or too little detail).
- Speaks at a level appropriate to the audience in terms of terminology, sentence structure, and simplicity/complexity of ideas expressed.
- Uses words with precision (vocabulary) to convey exact information.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Speaks clearly and audibly, providing the appropriate information and level of detail. Typically conveys the message on the first attempt. Answers questions accurately and directly.

Superior

Speech is direct and to the point. Speaks convincingly and with authority when appropriate. Maintains sensitivity to the audience while providing thorough information with the appropriate level of detail through the use of precise language.

47. WRITTEN COMMUNICATION – Communicates effectively in writing.

Level of Competency Required by Job:

- Level 1: Write notes/e-mails. Completes forms with some open-ended responses (sentences).
- Level 2: Write letters, articles/reports, and/or detailed descriptions of activities/occurrences.
- Level 3: Write lengthy reports, instruction manuals, in-depth analyses/reviews of complex issues and/or articles for publication. Reviews the written work of others.

Examples of Behavioral Indicators:

- Writing includes the necessary information to convey the intended message.
- Sufficiently few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar to not interfere with the intended message or distract the reader.
- Little editing or re-writing needed to produce a final product.
- Composes materials efficiently.
- Information is presented in a well organized manner.
- Tone and degree of formality are appropriate to the purpose and audience.

Performance Levels:

Satisfactory

Writes material that clearly communicates the necessary information; needs little editing.

Superior

Precisely uses words and organizes information in a way that enhances presentation of the message. Virtually no editing needed.