

# CVM Core Competencies Resource Guide



A Guide For CVM Staff

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## Introduction

CVM's core competencies<sup>1</sup> define the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by *all* of our employees to successfully perform within our organization. Our core competencies make CVM unique and are fundamental to our ongoing, effective organizational growth; therefore, it is vital for our staff to develop them. The *CVM Core Competencies Resource Guide* is intended to serve as a tool to help our staff develop their capabilities in these core competencies.

Specifically, the guide contains descriptions and hyperlinks to the following resources supporting CVM core competency<sup>2</sup> development:

- Training offered internally at CVM
- Online training available through the Learning Management System
- External training (e.g., OPM)
- Books<sup>3</sup>

Although these resources may relate to multiple core competencies, each resource in this guide is listed only once and matched to the most relevant competency. We recommend that employees discuss these resources and other learning opportunities with their supervisors so they can create a clear strategy for achieving their developmental goals.

Remember, your professional development is meant to stretch you beyond your current capacity. Have fun, be challenged and engaged...and enjoy your journey!

– The Talent Development Staff

### Disclaimer

**Neither the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), nor its employees are responsible for the content of any resources that are referenced in this guide. Links to resources do not constitute or imply endorsement, favoring, or recommendation by the FDA or CVM. These links are for convenience only. It is the responsibility of the user to evaluate the content and usefulness of information contained in these resource pages.**

**If purchasing any resources, all applicable acquisition laws, regulations, policy and procedures must be followed. Contact your acquisitions specialist or your management officer for guidance on acquisitions.**

<sup>1</sup> Previously defined and validated by the Human Capital Management Staff. For more information see:

<http://inside.fda.gov:9003/CVM/OfficeofManagement/HumanCapitalStaff/ucm205145.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Technical Proficiency is not listed as training and books are occupation-specific.

<sup>3</sup> For free copies of books, check Books 24/7 in the Learning Management System, the FDA Library, the Public Library, the Center's Executive Coach, and the CVM Leadership Library.

## CVM Core Competency 1: Professional and Effective Communication

### Competency Definition

Communicates in a clear, concise, informed, and courteous manner; tailors message and delivery method as necessary.

### Internal Training

#### Oral Communication

- [Communication Styles](#) (4 hours) - Helps participants recognize how their actions and behaviors come across to others, and how they can adapt by being flexible.
- [Crucial Confrontations](#) (2 days) - Teaches a straightforward step-by-step process for identifying and resolving performance gaps, strengthening accountability, eliminating inconsistency, and reducing resentment.
- [Crucial Conversations](#) (2 days) - Assists participants with how to best achieve spirited dialogue, which produces innovative ideas and high-quality decisions, as well as how to act on those decisions with unity and commitment.
- [Facilitation Skills](#) (2 days) - Teaches how to achieve spirited dialogue at all levels in CVM by introducing tools that build alignment, agreement, and interpersonal communication.
- [Feedback Skills](#) (4 hours) - Teaches a straightforward process for providing specific feedback to coworkers about their current behavior to either help them continue or modify their behavior.

#### Written Communication

- [Technical Writing](#) (2 days) - Demonstrates how to write long, complex documents (e.g., reports), how to write for multiple audiences, organize complex subject matter, and edit writing for clarity.

### Online Training

#### Oral Communication

- [Interpersonal Communication: Communicating Assertively](#) (1 hour) - Explains the benefits of assertive behavior, the requirements for assertive communication, and how to increase the power of assertive communication when first attempts do not produce the intended results.
- [Interpersonal Communication: Communicating with Confidence](#) (1 hour) - Examines how the essential elements of trust, credibility, and specific communication behaviors bring about confident communication and enhance influence.

- [Interpersonal Communication: Listening Essentials](#) (1 hour) - Explores the benefits and challenges of effective listening and demonstrates how active listening techniques enhance the effectiveness of listening skills.
- [Interpersonal Communication: Targeting Your Message](#) (1 hour) - Teaches participants the key considerations for planning and delivering targeted messages.

## **Written Communication**

- [Business Grammar: Editing and Proofreading](#) (1 hour) - Helps participants learn how to edit and proofread business documents by considering tone, structure, clarity, and accuracy.
- [Business Writing: How to Write Clearly and Concisely](#) (1 hour) - Covers the importance of using concise, familiar words, fitting connotations, concrete and specific language, and transitional words and phrases in written communication.
- [Business Writing: Know Your Readers and Your Purpose](#) (1 hour) - Teaches participants how to identify the purpose of their writing, who(m) their audience is, and how to focus their message so readers fully understand the intent of their communication.

## **External Training**

### **Oral Communication**

- [Communicating Face-to-Face](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 4 days) - Teaches one-on-one communication skills such as listening, inquiring, and conveying through small group activities, video feedback, public sector case studies, and individual consultation.
- [Communication Skills](#) (Graduate School USA; 5 days) - Helps participants master fundamental communication skills such as how to analyze verbal and nonverbal communications, write clearly and concisely, organize and deliver an oral presentation, and break down communication barriers to work better with others.

### **Written Communication**

- [Clear Writing Through Critical Thinking](#) (Graduate School USA; 3 days) - Demonstrates to participants how to improve the clarity of their business writing by organizing information, anticipating questions, drawing sound conclusions, and logically communicating their message.
- [Effective Writing in the Federal Government](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 4 days) - Teaches participants how to write an assortment of Federal documents (e.g., budget justifications, testimony, performance plans) targeted toward particular audiences.
- [Fundamentals of Writing](#) (Graduate School USA; 3 days) - Explains how to prepare correct, concise, and organized written documents by following standard grammar and usage rules; constructing simple, compound, and complex sentences; and using transitional words, phrases, and strategies to link sentences into coherent paragraphs.

- [Writing for Results](#) (Graduate School USA; 2 days) - Assists participants with ensuring their writing achieves its purpose by choosing appropriate words, optimal word placement, intentional sentence structures, and appropriate document format.

## Books

### *Oral Communication*

- [Change Your Questions, Change Your Life: 10 Powerful Tools for Life and Work](#), by Marilee G. Adams (2009) - Shows readers how to consistently choose the questions that can lead them to success, both personally and professionally.
- [Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High](#), by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler, and Stephen R. Covey (2002) - Gives readers the tools they need to step up to life's most difficult and important conversations, say what's on their mind, and achieve the positive resolutions they want.
- [Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most](#), by Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton, Sheila Heen, and Roger Fisher (2010) - Helps readers decipher the underlying structure of difficult conversations, start a conversation without defensiveness, listen for the meaning of what is not said, stay balanced in the face of attacks and accusations, and move from emotion to productive problem solving.
- [Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work and in Life, One Conversation at a Time](#), by Susan Scott (2004) - Instructs readers on how to overcome barriers to meaningful communication as well as expand and enrich conversations with colleagues, friends, and family. Readers are given insight on how to increase clarity, improve understanding, and handle strong emotions.
- [Language and the Pursuit of Happiness](#), by Chalmers Brothers (2004) - Teaches a new way of understanding language to help achieve happiness at home and at work.
- [Oral Communication: Skills, Choices, and Consequences Resource](#), by Kathryn Sue Young and Howard Paul Travis (2008) - Demonstrates oral communication skills that enable readers to think about the choices and consequences of their communication and use critical thinking as a key component throughout discussions.
- [The Art of Dialogue: Exploring Personality Differences for More Effective Communication](#), by Carolyn Zeisset (2006) - Elaborates on the nuances and key phrases that differentiate diverse styles of communication based on the Meyers Briggs Typology Indicator (MBTI).
- [“What Did You Say?: The Art of Giving and Receiving Feedback](#), by Charles N. Seashore, Edith Whitfield Seashore, and Gerald M. Weinberg (1997) - Explains to readers how to provide effective feedback, why feedback tells more about the giver than the receiver, how feedback is distorted or resisted by the receiver's point of view, and how to identify and understand defense mechanisms.

## ***Written Communication***

- [Business Communication](#), by A.C. “Buddy” Krizan and Patricia Merrier (2010) - Illustrates the basic forms of business communication – from letters to email, business plans to presentations, listening skills to nonverbal messages, visual aids to Web blogs, and interpersonal communication to Twitter.
- [Business Communication Today](#), by Courtland L. Bovee and John V. Thill (2011) - Explains to readers how to write business messages quickly, easily, and effectively with a three-step process—(1) planning, (2) writing, and (3) completing business messages—that provides a solid foundation for solving communication problems and creating well-crafted business messages.
- [Effective Business Writing for Success: How To Convey Written Messages Clearly and Make a Positive Impact On Your Readers](#), by Jane Smith (2011) - Demonstrates how to effectively write reports, emails, business plans, meeting minutes, journal articles, reviews, speeches, and presentations.
- [Effective Writing](#), by Claire B. May and Gordon S. May (2011) - Provides guidance on all the stages of the writing process: planning, critical thinking, generating and organizing ideas, writing the draft, revising, and designing for presentation.
- [Essentials of Business Communication](#), by Mary Elley Guffey (2012) - Helps readers build confidence by reviewing grammar, punctuation, and writing guidelines; and by applying these skills to a variety of e-mails, memos, letters, reports, and résumés.

## CVM Core Competency 2: Integrity

### Competency Definition

Contributes to a culture of trust and high ethical standards.

### Online Training

- [Integrity In the Workplace](#) (1 hour) - Discusses various aspects of corporate ethics, including fraud and abuse associated with financial, safety, health, environmental, and other workplace issues, and the regulatory agencies, laws, and regulations that govern them.

### External Training

- [Leading People](#) (Graduate School USA; 3 days) - Teaches participants critical leadership behaviors and how to adapt them to the needs of their organization by exploring fundamental leadership competencies, examining trust and integrity, exploring the dynamics of team leadership, and creating a "Culture of Greatness" through coaching and empowerment.
- [Leadership Skills for Non-Supervisors](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 4 days) - Teaches informal leadership skills to influence positive organizational success without positional authority.

### Books

- [Combating Corruption, Encouraging Ethics: A Practical Guide to Management Ethics](#) by William Richter and Frances Burke (2007) - Outlines and promotes understanding of the philosophical basis of ethics and explains how to best deal with ethical dilemmas associated with corruption, deception, evasion of accountability, and the abuse of authority.
- [How: Why How We Do Anything Means Everything...in Business \(and in Life\)](#), by Dov L. Seidman (2007) - Outlines the qualities once considered as "soft" and how such qualities are now the hard currency of business success and the ultimate drivers of efficiency, productivity, and profitability.
- [Public Integrity](#), by J. Patrick Dobel (1999) - Discusses the preservation of character and integrity in public service by focusing on the dilemmas and conflicts plaguing civil servants.
- [Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness](#), by Robert K. Greenleaf, Larry C. Spears, and Stephen R. Covey (2002) - Explains the idea of servant leadership – a holistic, ethical approach to leadership – which will help any reader find their true power and moral authority to lead.
- [The SPEED of Trust: The One Thing that Changes Everything](#), by Stephen R. Covey (2006) - Teaches that trust is integral to relationships and how it is often taken for granted.

## CVM Core Competency 3: Adaptability

Competency Definition
Ability to respond to change and consider new approaches.

### Internal Training

- [Time Management](#) (1 day) - Highlights tools, tips, and techniques for increasing personal productivity and assists participants in gaining new insights into their time management styles.

### Online Training

- [Embracing Organizational Change](#) (1 hour) - Communicates best practices to help participants accept a new reality when things change, reframing as a coping method for accepting organizational change, and the importance of recognizing and capitalizing on the career opportunities presented by organizational change.
- [Managing Change: Building Positive Support For Change](#) (1 hour) - Explains the importance of building a motivating atmosphere that supports organizational change and the value of creating short-term wins and vision.

### External Training

- [Crisis Leadership Workshop](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 4 days) - Educates participants on how to identify a crisis, assess their own biases in high-pressure situations, manage the overwhelming amounts of information that crises generate, organize for effective decisions, and create and lead an effective crisis team.
- [Leading Change](#) (Graduate School USA; 5 days) - Outlines tools for understanding and facilitating change, as well as strategies for managing and shaping change.
- [Resiliency Advantage](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 3 days) - Demonstrates to participants how to develop resiliency and instructs them how to be flexible, thrive during times of constant change, and increase the adaptability of their workforce.

### Books

- [AdaptAbility](#), by M. J. Ryan (2009) - Teaches readers to see past today's turmoil and spot the opportunities that lie within unasked-for change, helping them to thrive when change is required.
- [Adaptability: Responding Effectively to Change](#), by Center for Creative Leadership (2007) - Teaches readers how to develop their adaptability so that they become more effective responding to change.

- [Change is Your Competitive Advantage](#), by Karl G. Schoemer (2009) - Provides practical tools to help readers adapt to change, identify productive and obstructive behaviors, and create a culture focused on the needs of the customer and consumer.
- [Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change](#), by William and Susan Bridges (2007) - Illustrates useful, step-by-step strategies for minimizing the disruptions caused by workplace change.
- [Reframing Change: How to Deal with Workplace Dynamics, Influence Others, and Bring People Together to Initiate Positive Change](#), by V. Jean Kantambu Latting and Jean Ramsey (2009) - Teaches the premise that if people act with integrity and learn to develop positive workplace relationships, a ripple effect can engender similar changes in the organization as a whole.

## CVM Core Competency 4: Customer Service

### Competency Definition

Demonstrates commitment to providing quality service to all internal and external stakeholders (e.g., the public, regulated industries).

### Online Training

- [Customer Service Fundamentals: Building Rapport in Customer Relationships](#) (1 hour) - Illustrates how to build rapport with customers by being customer-focused.
- [Internal Customer Service](#) (1 hour) - Assists participants with identifying internal customers, managing expectations while providing customer service, and treating internal customers the same as external customers.

### External Training

- [Customer Service Excellence](#) (Graduate School USA; 2 days) - Helps participants gain proficiency in identifying internal and external customers, enhancing customer service, and handling problems.
- [Developing Customer-Focused Organizations](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 1 week) - Teaches participants how to help their group, agency, and workforce cultivate a relationship with "customers" that goes beyond mere satisfaction.
- [Effective Communication with Customers](#) (Graduate School USA; 2 days) - Establishes effective communication skills to successfully interact with internal and external customers, including recognizing and anticipating the needs of others, being flexible when handling requests and complaints, and spotting and responding to important verbal and nonverbal messages.

### Books

- [Serving Internal and External Customers](#), by Anne Swartzlander (2003) - Teaches a customer-oriented model that emphasizes an organization's service philosophy and strategy, its systems, and the people-management policies that allow it to succeed in the 21st century.
- [Unleashing Excellence: The Complete Guide to Ultimate Customer Service](#), by Dennis Snow and Teri Yanovitch (2009) - Provides practical tools and step-by-step guidance that illustrates how to navigate teams to achieve true customer service excellence.
- [Uplifting Service: The Proven Path to Delighting Your Customers, Colleagues, and Everyone Else You Meet](#), by Ron Kaufman (2012) - Provides case studies and best practice examples on how to uplift customer service within an organization.

## CVM Core Competency 5: Organizational Commitment

### Competency Definition

Displays a commitment to promoting a positive work environment consistent with the Center's vision, mission, and values.

### Internal Training

- [Foundations of CVM HPO](#) (3 days) - Provides an overview of CVM's High Performance Organization philosophy, which is based on its operations, staff, and culture.

### Books

- [Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Application](#), by John P. Meyer and Natalie J. Allen (1997) - Provides an overview of academic and popular perspectives on commitment in employees, including what organizations can do to manage commitment effectively under difficult circumstances.
- [The Trusted Leader \(Ch. 6 – The Tools of Building Organizational Trust\)](#), by Robert M. Galford and Anne Seibold Drapeau (2011) - Explains how to build trust within an organization by describing different kinds of trust; ways to determine whether trust is missing and where it needs to be supplemented, and different ways to restore trust once it has been damaged.

## CVM Core Competency 6: Problem Solving

### Competency Definition

Uses a logical, systematic approach to solving problems while considering available resources.

### Online Training

- [Problem Solving: Determining and Building Your Strengths](#) (1 hour) - Shows participants how to assess and develop problem solving skills, and recognize and overcome several types of bias.
- [Problem Solving: Digging Deeper](#) (1 hour) - Demonstrates how to recognize the value of honest, fact-based analysis and reveals how the application of a few tools (e.g., Cause-and-Effect Diagram) greatly assists in determining the root cause of a problem.
- [Problem Solving: The Fundamentals](#) (1 hour) - Illustrates the essentials of problem solving and explores some of its challenges.

### External Training

- [Problem Solving](#) (Graduate School USA; 2 days) - Teaches participants critical- and creative-thinking strategies to enhance problem solving abilities.

### Books

- [How to Solve Just About Any Problem: Timeless Practices for Solving Problems Better](#), by Greg Fainberg (2010) - Instructs readers on how to structure thinking and gain the necessary confidence to use critical- and creative-thinking skills for effective problem solving.
- [The Thinker's Toolkit: 14 Powerful Techniques for Problem Solving](#), by Morgan D. Jones (1998) - Provides readers with a collection of proven, practical methods for simplifying any problem and making faster, better decisions.

## CVM Core Competency 7: Creative and Innovative Thinking

### Competency Definition

Pursues innovative opportunities to improve the program, Center, and Agency.

### Online Training

- [Generating Creative and Innovative Ideas: Enhancing Your Creativity](#) (1 hour) - Teaches participants the essential attributes of a creative person, describes barriers to creativity and how to overcome them, and demonstrates how to enhance creativity in the workplace.
- [Generating Creative and Innovative Ideas: Maximizing Team Creativity](#) (1 hour) - Provides an overview on how to maximize team creativity by exploring the conditions at work that foster a creative, productive environment.

### External Training

- [Innovation: Tools and Technologies](#) (Office of Personnel Management; 2 days) - Explores how to foster a culture of innovation, embrace creative solutions, and navigate complex systems.
- [Inspiring Creativity in Organizations](#) (Brookings Institute; 2 days) - Teaches creative thinking skills and how to foster those skills in others.

### Books

- [Cracking Creativity: The Secrets of Creative Genius](#), by Michael Michalko (2001) - Teaches readers how creative people think and how to put their secrets to work.
- [Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention](#), by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1997) - Provides readers with an understanding of what leads to creative moments – be it the excitement of the artist at the easel or the scientist in the lab – so that knowledge can be used to enrich people's lives.
- [Look At More: A Proven Approach to Innovation, Growth, and Change](#), by Andy Stefanovich (2011) - Illustrates how to harness inspiration by thinking differently and addresses how to encourage others to do the same.



**Department of Health and Human Services  
Food and Drug Administration  
Center for Veterinary Medicine**