**Estonia - Competency development model**

**Context**

In 2003, the Estonian government began a renewal of the whole civil service by focusing more on the skills and competencies inside the civil service, with an emphasis on top civil servants. As a way to start being more systematic with recruitment and development of top civil servants, the government created an experiment within the public administration department that focused on the leadership development of top civil servants. In 2010, the experimental team formally became the Top Civil Service Excellence Centre. Today, the Centre plays a key role in the development of the 94 current top civil servants, building the pipeline of future leader, and providing support to the overall lifecycle of leaders.

**Good example**

In 2016, the Centre again began to re-evaluate its activities. The competency model was determined outdated and a new model was created: Estonia updated their leadership competency framework to set expectations for the kinds of leaders they wish to attract, select and develop. The framework identifies the following aspects:

Each of the elements in the framework also includes activity indicators which are assessed on a scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The framework identifies each of the elements in the diagram below and provides examples of efficient and inefficient behaviour for each. For example, it calls for leaders to be drivers of innovation, and offers the following definitions:

- **A driver of innovation** is a pioneer; he or she promotes thinking outside the box, encourages taking risks and directs the development and implementation of valuable innovations.
- **An efficient top executive** actively looks for innovation opportunities, shapes an organisation culture that supports creativity, learning and experimentation; encourages the team to develop technical competencies and adopt new technologies.
- **An inefficient top executive** sticks only with tried solutions, gets tangled in restrictions, is afraid to be wrong and acts within safe limits, ignores the need for technical competencies as well as the opportunities to adopt innovative technologies.
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