

APCDA Career Services Competencies

April 2020

This list of Career Services Competencies includes competencies commonly used in providing career planning and development services. It is not expected that all competencies will be required by any one position. While the Core Competencies are important in all settings, other competencies may be used more frequently in specific settings.

This list is based on the work of many other professionals in countries throughout the Asia Pacific region and the world. Standing on the shoulders of those who have pursued this task before us allowed us to build a list that is thorough and comprehensive. Reviewing these prior lists of competencies helped us to recognize many competencies that we had not previously considered. We are very grateful to those who have worked so hard to provide us with such valuable tools for our use and we have plagiarized shamelessly. We do not claim originality, but we do all agree that the competencies listed here are important.

There are many ways to use this list.

1. If you are working in this field, it is useful to find those competencies that you feel are strengths for you, and those for which you may wish to find additional training. Lifelong learning is encouraged, and we believe there will always be some competencies on which additional training or updating could be helpful.
2. If you are supervising staff in this field, you may want to review this list to identify those competencies which you believe staff in your setting need. This list can then be used to identify useful training programs or to arrange mentoring relationships.
3. If you are hiring staff, you may find this list useful for screening purposes. Asking applicants to provide examples of times they used some of the most crucial competencies during an interview could enrich the discussion.
4. If you are working on your resume, this list may help you to describe your strengths.
5. If you are designing a training program, this list may help you to identify expected outcomes.

Please also see the APCDA Glossary of Career Development Terms: The definitions of terms will be helpful in understanding these competencies.

These Competencies reference the APCDA Ethical Guidelines, which are available here:

<https://AsiaPacificCDA.org/ethical-guidelines>

This list of competencies was finalized in April 2020 by a taskforce of APCDA Members. Their names and bios are below.

This list will be revised as needed. Suggestions for additions and revisions should be submitted to Ethics@AsiaPacificCDA.org.

References

Appendix a: factsheet on WSG career development framework (cdf). National Archives of Singapore. Retrieved December 2019 from https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=2ahUKEwiw-aqa7vToAhWUmHIEHZiwA9gQFjAAegQIARAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nas.gov.sg%2Farchivesonline%2Fdata%2Fpdfdoc%2F20180827008%2FAppendixA_CareerDevelopmentFramework.pdf&usg=AOvVaw2U0ICJc0b11sAl4hcCclam

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APCDA 2019 - 2020 Standards Taskforce



Raza Abbas, a lifetime APCDA member, has demonstrated strong leadership to enhance professionalism in career education in Pakistan, inspiring hope in countless people. As an impactful social entrepreneur providing inclusive peaceful career reforms in Asia, he was thrice selected for UNESCO's flagship entrepreneurship education annual meeting (2017-2019). In 2018, Mr. Abbas was additionally selected for a UN High Level meeting on Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace at UN Headquarters. He also is the proud recipient of NCDA's International Career Practitioner Award (2019) and APCDA's Outstanding Career

Practitioner Award (2017). Mr. Abbas serves on the Board of ARACD and is an Editorial Board member of IAEVG. He has contributed to the global best-selling book titled: *The World Book of Hope: The Source of Success, Strength and Happiness*.

Julie Doherty is the manager of the Career and Employment Service with over 18 years' experience in the career education and student engagement sector. She leads a team of faculty career development consultants and career advisors. Both Julie and Serene are intrigued by ways to embed career development in higher education, including developing appropriate resources and technologies to support it.



Dr. Vandana Gambhir Chopra is Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology, Keshav Mahavidyalaya, University of Delhi, and the Former Country Director of India for APCDA. She started her professional career as a medical physician, excelled and later received her doctorate in Psychology. Known as an expert in Psychometrics, Organizational Behavior, Human Resource Management and Vocational & Career Counseling, she helps corporations with their employee wellness and productivity through training and assessments. Her field of involvement in psychology research work spans across career

competencies, personality, social psychology, competency mapping, positive psychology, and consumer behavior and geriatrics mental health.

Zhijin Hou, North China Area Representative, Ph. D. is a Professor at the Beijing Normal University. She has expertise in career development and counseling psychology. She has over 40 peer reviewed journal publications, 2 series of textbooks, and 3 translated books and presented over 40 conference presentations in these areas. She has been PI on grants funded by the National Social Science Fund of China to support her research.



Han Kok Kwang, MBA (Distinction), is the First & Only NCDA (US) Master Trainer in Asia for FCD and FCD Instructor Certification. He is also a 3x National award winning professional, Successful author of 6 career management books & Founder of Personal Mastery Resources. With over 25 years' successful experience as a senior corporate manager & career entrepreneur, Mr. Han has empowered more than 60,000 individuals of 21 nationalities through his books, seminars and workshops.

Dr. Marilyn Maze, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Asia Pacific Career Development Association, has organized the annual APCDA Conference since its inception, conducted numerous research projects on hot labor market and career counseling issues, and presented at international conferences. Marilyn received the President's Award from NCDA in 2016, the NCDA Credentialing



Commission Service Award in 2016, and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Maryland Career Development Association in 2010, and she became an NCDA Fellow in 2019. Dr. Maze formerly developed the ACT Profile (previously called DISCOVER).



Izwal Mazlan is the Head of Graduate Employability at Taylor's University, Malaysia. He studied Human Sciences from International Islamic University Malaysia and has worked for ExxonMobil Malaysia. Prior to joining Taylor's University, he was the Graduate Recruitment Manager for HSBC Malaysia, overseeing their Management Development Programme, Undergraduate Internship Programme, Graduate Assessment Centre, and other related graduate recruitment initiatives. He currently holds the dual hats of being the Secretary, and Head of Learning and Professional Development for the Career Development Centre Club (CDCC) Malaysia.

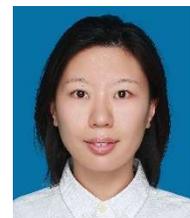
Rahul Nair, South India Country Representative, is a Lifologist, Occupational Psychologist, and an Organizational Development professional with more than 12 years of experience in the Organizational Development industry. He has coached and mentored senior managers and top officials of MNCs. Corporate houses, and Governmental Agencies and has brought about tremendous positive results. Mr. Nair is the Representative – Technology and Academics to Lifology.com, a Guinness World Record Holding organization.



Carla Sison Siojo, Past President (2019-2020) and former Philippines Country Director (2014-2017) of the Asia Pacific Career Development Association is an active career development practitioner, a resource speaker, facilitator, coach, and relationship consultant. She is an internationally certified Job and Career Transition/Career Development Coach (JCTC/JCDC). With a background in Psychology and a post graduate degree in Pastoral Ministry, her expertise and passion are in career coaching, marriage preparation, parenting and grandparenting. She holds the position of Vice President for the

Association of Placement Practitioners of Colleges and Universities (APPCU), a non-profit organization committed to the professional development of career guidance and placement practitioners in the Philippines. She chairs its Program Committee tasked to organize learning sessions, workshops and conventions that aim to address jobs-skills mismatch, underemployment and unemployment.

JiaJia Zhu recently received her Ph. D. degree from Counseling Psychology of Beijing Normal University. Her research interests include parental influence and gender issues in career development. She has authored and co-authored several peer reviewed journal articles and served as a student reviewer for Journal of Career Development since 2018.



Competency Categories

- **Core Competencies**
 1. Communication and Interpersonal
 2. Client Service Delivery
 3. Individual and Group Counseling
- **Career Development Competencies**
 4. Career Development
 5. Career Assessment
 6. Labor Market Information
- **Professional Behavior**
 7. Ethics
 8. Professionalism
 9. Performance Improvement and Lifelong Learning
 10. Supervision
 11. Research
- 12. **Event/Project/Program Delivery**
- 13. **Diversity and Inclusion**
- **Technology in Career Services**
 14. Computerized Career Planning Tools
 15. Technology, Information, and Resources for Service Delivery
- **Adult-Specific Issues**
 16. Career Management Coaching
 17. Employability Skills
 18. Job Search Skills
 19. Employer Liaison

Core Competencies

1. Communication and Interpersonal Skills

1a. Establish and maintain rapport

- Build rapport and relationships with clients
- Create a climate of mutual respect, confidence, openness, trust, confidentiality, positivity and comfort
- Demonstrate empathy through genuine concern for clients' wellbeing, welfare and future
- Ascertain, acknowledge, validate, and respect clients' beliefs, values, opinions, contexts, perceptions, and diverse learning styles
- Promote a cooperative and productive environment
- Mutually determine and evaluate expectations, needs, and goals
- Continuously demonstrate personal integrity, honesty, and sincerity

1b. Use effective verbal and written communication skills

- Use verbal communication skills including reframing, questioning, reflection and active listening skills
- Use communication skills to assess clients' needs
- Allow for the transfer of required information
- Use written and verbal language appropriate to the audience and context
- Use digital communication ethically and effectively
- Model, support and encourage effective communication
- Write and maintain accurate client records
- Produce effective resources

1c. Work effectively in a team environment

- Develop appropriate client, colleague, agency and community relationships
- Work cooperatively and respectfully with team members to create a healthy and productive work environment where team members are kept informed
- Work with the team in the client's best interests
- Be aware of the boundaries of team roles and avoid conflicts of interest
- Promote and market services to clients, employers and other agencies
- Foster links with and gain cooperation of key stakeholders and external communities including employers, professional associations and organizations
- Foster role modeling and/or networking between beginning and more advanced students or workers to help clients envision themselves as successful

2. Client Service Delivery

2a. Conduct needs assessment

- Determine the career needs of clients
- Determine whether clients' needs are within the scope of expertise and practice and, if not, determine appropriate referral
- Negotiate and agree on the services and support to be provided to achieve the outcomes for clients
- Understand and apply appropriate methods to conduct needs assessment e.g. Surveys, interviews, focus group discussions

2b. Follow case management procedures

- Monitor client's situation and progress
- Maintain client confidentiality
- Work in the client/client group/class's best interests
- Ensure accountability
- Coordinate and cooperate at intra- and inter- agency levels

- Fulfill responsibilities to clients, colleagues, employers and self
 - Store information that can be easily retrieved for decisions or future needs
 - Understand the implications of record-keeping, including legal implications
- 2c. Use coaching and consulting skills
- Know and use consultation theories, strategies, and models
 - Establish and maintain a productive consultative relationship with people who can influence a client's career
 - Help the general public and legislators to understand the importance of career counseling, career development, and life-work planning
 - Impact public policy as it relates to career development and workforce planning
- 2d. Use enterprise skills
- Provide innovative responses to the changing political and organizational contexts and emerging career development needs of clients and the community
 - Be adaptable and flexible in a constantly changing world
 - Promote and market services to clients, employers and other organizations
 - Advocate on behalf of the career development profession
 - Apply sound business practices
- 2e. Evaluate the service provided to clients
- Understand and apply a range of evaluation strategies
 - Evaluate cases and/or projects to ensure accountability
 - Measure and improve client satisfaction
 - Use evaluation to identify new client services
 - Provide evidence to assist in service promotion and enhancement

3. Individual and Group Career Counseling Skills

- Demonstrate knowledge of major counseling theories and models
- Apply counseling theory to career counseling
 - Establish and maintain productive personal relationships with individuals
 - Establish and maintain a productive group climate
 - Collaborate with clients in identifying personal goals
 - Identify and select techniques appropriate to client or group goals and client needs, psychological states, and developmental tasks
 - Identify and understand clients' personal characteristics related to career
 - Identify and understand social contextual conditions affecting clients' careers
 - Identify and understand familial, sub-cultural and cultural structures and functions as they are related to clients' careers
 - Identify and understand clients' career decision-making processes
 - Identify and understand clients' attitudes toward work and workers
 - Identify and understand clients' biases toward work and workers based on gender, race, and cultural stereotypes
- Encourage clients to take action to prepare for and initiate role transitions by:
 - locating sources of relevant information and experience
 - obtaining and interpreting information and experiences, and acquiring skills needed to make role transitions

Career Development Competencies

4. Career Development

- 4a. Demonstrate knowledge of major career development theories, concepts, research, and associated models and frameworks

- Understand the constructs of major career development theories and your application
 - Keep up to date with the latest developments in theory, associated models, and research
 - Understand models of career decision-making and your application
- 4b. Apply career development theories, concepts, research, and associated models and frameworks to practice
- Integrate career development theories, concepts, research, and associated models and frameworks into practice
 - Apply a theoretical framework developed from a range of career development theories, associated models, and research to provide a sound context for practice
 - Use a theoretical framework through which to understand client career development
 - Assist clients to understand the career development process
 - Assist clients to understand and balance your multiple life-roles
 - Apply models of career decision-making to practice
 - Use theory to inform program development
 - Incorporate into practice theory and research-informed strategies, resources and processes that reflect the needs of the setting and client group
 - Role relationships which facilitate life-work planning
 - Information, techniques, and models related to career placement

5. Career Assessments

- 5a. Identify appropriate assessments and recognize their strengths and limitations
- Recognize and describe the purpose of assessment in career development work
 - Identify standardized career assessment instruments and informal assessment methods appropriate for clients and for own knowledge and skill level to assess:
 - personal characteristics such as aptitude, achievement, interests, values, and personality traits
 - leisure interests, learning style, life roles, self-concept, career maturity, vocational identity, career indecision, work environment preference (e.g., work satisfaction), and other related lifestyle/development issues
 - conditions of the work environment (such as tasks, expectations, norms, and qualities of the physical and social settings)
 - Determine whether the standardized assessment instruments have been validated for the local version and proceed with caution if they have not
 - Understand the importance of local validation of standardized assessment instruments developed in other cultures
 - Evaluate and select valid and reliable instruments appropriate to the client's gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and physical and mental capacities
- 5b. Use career assessments with clients
- Use only assessments in which you have been properly trained and gain qualifications in assessment processes as needed
 - Use computer-delivered assessment measures effectively and appropriately
 - Select assessment techniques appropriate for group administration and those appropriate for individual administration
 - Administer, score, and report findings from career assessment instruments appropriately
 - Interpret data from assessment instruments and present the results to clients and to others
 - Assist the client and others designated by the client to interpret data from assessment instruments
 - Write an accurate report of assessment results

- Understand the validity, reliability and norm group issues relevant to the assessment tools being used
- Use assessment processes ethically and apply them according to practitioner's own knowledge and skill level

6. Labor Market Information

6a. Find, understand and apply credible, reliable labor market information that is free of bias

- Know where to find information about job tasks, functions, salaries, requirements and future outlook, education, training, and employment trends
- Be able to access local, regional, national and international labor market information
- Keep current about labor market trends and information
- Comprehend local, regional, national and international labor market information and their application to job search and career objectives
- Critically evaluate and interpret labor market statistics and trends
- Understand current workplaces, workers' rights, conditions, and employment and recruitment practices
- Understand educational and training opportunities and resources and transition pathways as appropriate to work setting

6b. Use labor market information to assist clients in career planning and job search strategies

- Expose clients to various career search strategies
- Assist clients to interpret labor market information in the context of career decision-making and the client's aspirations, skills, knowledge and needs
- Research available occupational and education data online and in other forms to find current labor market and educational information and projections for the future of work
- Assist clients in identifying accurate, current labor market to inform their career plans
- Assist clients in self-management and self-promotion

Professional Behavior

7. Apply the APCDA Code of Ethics

- Understand, reflect on, and adhere to the APCDA Code of Ethics in your practice
- Engage in ethical practice with other practitioners, clients, employers and the public

8. Professionalism

8a. Demonstrate commitment to professionalism

- Act as a role model for the profession
- Show respect to others
- Act responsibly and within professional scope of practice
- Offer quality service to clients
- Liaise with relevant bodies to identify best practice relationships and professional networks
- Demonstrate reflective practice to identify areas for improvements that will enhance practice
- Understand how public policy, legislation, and regulation relevant to career work impact on your role and practice
- Obtain feedback on, and conduct evaluation of, services provided
- Enhance awareness of the value of professional career management services, increasing the public's ability to discriminate wisely in selecting qualified practitioners who reflect the highest standards of our profession's values and expertise

8b. Develop relationships with other professionals

- Create a climate of trust
- Share knowledge and skills

- Network locally, provincially, nationally and internationally
- 9. Performance Improvement and Lifelong Learning**
- Analyze future organizational needs and current level of employee skills and develop performance improvement training.
 - Maintain currency through further education and continuing professional development, either formally or informally
 - Plan, and retain a record of, own professional development
 - Stay up-to-date with different modalities of counseling and theories of career development

10. Supervision

10a. Seek Supervision

- Recognize own limitations as a career counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate
- Utilize supervision on a regular basis to maintain and improve counselor skills
- Consult with supervisors and colleagues regarding client and counseling issues and issues related to one's own professional development as a career counselor

10b. Provide Supervision

- Demonstrate Knowledge of supervision models and theories
- Demonstrate ability to provide effective supervision to career professionals at different levels of experience by:
 - knowledge of your roles, competencies, and ethical standards
 - determining your competence in each of the areas included in your certification
 - further training them in competencies, including interpretation of assessment instruments
 - monitoring and mentoring your activities in support of the professional career counselor; and scheduling regular consultations for the purpose of reviewing your activities

11. Research

- Expand the body of knowledge of the career professional field through research, development and publication
- Understand a range of research methods and apply appropriate methods to gather information
- Conduct research that is respectful of participants' cultures and takes into account ethical requirements and regulatory obligations
- Prepare and present research proposals, funding grants, or contract tenders
- Plan, design, manage, and report on research projects
- Critically analyze and interpret data
- Prepare, present, and disseminate results in appropriate ways

12. Event/Project/Program Delivery

12a. Event/Project/Program design

- Conduct needs assessment prior to the development of career development programs
- Understand and describe models of group facilitation
- Apply group facilitation skills to foster career development learning
- Plan career development programs that fit the work setting, clientele and societal context
- Develop and deliver theoretically driven career development programs that cater for diversity and different learning styles
- Select tools, techniques, and technology to best facilitate the program

- Understand the importance of technology for scalability in the delivery of career development programs
- Create resources, career information, and tools to best facilitate and market programs

12b. Event/Project/Program implementation and management

- Understand and apply the processes of, and tools for, preparing project plans, managing projects, including effective budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Monitor the progress of clients and of the group
- Establish and maintain strong communication with both client and management, through consistent and timely project reporting and project review meetings and presentations
- Manage third-party relationships involved in the overall implementation of the project

12c. Event/Project/Program evaluation

- Review, evaluate, and revise career development programs
- Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the program and suggest ways to improve the weakest parts
- Ensure that quality deliverables are produced to customers' expectations

13. Diversity and Inclusion

13a. Recognize and respect diversity

- Be knowledgeable about legislation related to discrimination
- Accept and work respectfully, effectively, appropriately and ethically with diverse clients
- Appreciate that clients may not share practitioner's personal or professional perspectives
- Understand the influence and impact of the client's cultural, geographic, social and economic environment or context in career decision-making
- Promote access to services for diverse clients
- Demonstrate awareness of, reflect on, and self-critique cultural beliefs, values, and historical positioning, and how these impact on one's practice with clients from other cultural backgrounds
- Understand theory, models, and practices and your application to diverse people
- Understand applied counseling approaches and your application to people with disabilities
- Apply a working knowledge of vocational and occupational rehabilitation systems
- Facilitate accommodations needed for job placement

13b. Conduct career development work in culturally sensitive ways

- Identify developmental needs unique to various diverse populations, including those of different gender, sexual orientation, ethnic group, race, and physical or mental capacity
- Assist other staff members, professionals, and community members in understanding the unique needs/characteristics of diverse populations with regard to career exploration, employment expectations, and economic/social issues
- Find appropriate methods or resources to communicate with limited-language-proficient individuals
- Identify alternative approaches to meet career planning needs for individuals of various diverse populations
- Ensure pre-judgment and biases are not affecting service delivery
- Identify, and work with clients to overcome systemic biases that limit your career development
- Provide an inclusive environment when working with clients
- Determine whether clients' needs are within the scope of practice of the practitioner and, if not, determine an appropriate referral

Information and Technology in Career Services

14. Computerized Career Tools

- Demonstrate knowledge of various computer-based guidance and information systems as well as services available on the Internet
- Use published standards related to computerized career tools to evaluate their value for your clients and your system to meet local needs
- Apply ethical standards to the use of computer-based systems and Internet services to assist individuals with career planning
- Recognize the characteristics of clients which allow them to profit from use of technology-driven systems and apply this knowledge in your recommendations to clients

15. Technology, Information and Resources

15a. Collect, analyze and use information

- Identify and critically evaluate the range, sources, and types of information available
- Apply appropriate research strategies to retrieve information needed, including the appropriate use of information technology (e.g. Social media and on-line information sources)
- Access and exchange information relevant to one's practice
- Maintain, retrieve and interpret information effectively to assist clients
- Develop and apply information management strategies
- Manage and organize career development information in a way that is accessible for use by intended audiences
- Help clients use relevant information technology resources and tools ethically and effectively
- Produce career information and resources that support your work

15b. Keep up-to-date with emerging technologies and innovations

- Remain current and have a sound understanding of emerging technologies and their application to practice
- Use appropriate forms of electronic communication and social media
- Remain aware of changing contexts, including the political, economic, technological, social, environmental, and organizational contexts
- Be adaptable and flexible, using and applying technology in your own context
- Recognize the impact that AI and other technologies are having on the world of work and career development practice
- Create and deliver information and resources using technology (e.g. Presentations, videos, webinars, multimedia resources)

15c. Identify relevant support organizations, resources and services

- Identify and source relevant organizations, resources, and services that address the unique needs of clients
- Identify service gaps in the community
- Make appropriate referrals

Adult-Specific Competencies

16. Career Management Coaching

- Identify areas of interest and provide guidance on creating a balanced approach to link client's interests to a full spectrum of activities (school, career, family, friendships, community, spirituality, advocacy, recreation, and hobbies) to create life-work synergy

- Assist the client in coping with the needs and demands of important people in their life; such as family, friends, peers, direct reports, and managers; while satisfying their personal needs for relationship
- Talent Development:
 - Assist the client in identifying, cultivating and promoting self to assure career satisfaction.
 - Teach managers and leaders the skills to coach, manage performance, and develop employees
- Offer guidance on the appropriate department, vendor or professional to be engaged to meet specific needs for services and support
- Analyze and assess client's working environment in the context of business, political, social and economic factors
- Develop strategies for learning and development to improve client's performance and further long-term goals
- Understand how an organization's culture impacts career management and use this knowledge to help clients develop effective career strategies
- Carry out an analysis of work alignment and performance using assessment instruments and, through consultation with the client, develop a plan consistent with the client's capabilities and aspirations
- Advise clients on issues related to job loss or employee termination
- Understand the elements of a Strategic Plan in order to guide an organization through the process and ensure organizational structure and staffing are optimum
- Demonstrate effective communication and conflict resolution skills

17. Employability Skills

- Teach clients the importance of timekeeping and appearance and assist clients to develop self-management skills
- Be familiar with time management tools and teach clients how to use them
- Assist clients in developing problem-solving skills related to applying for and maintaining a job
- Train clients to set goals, develop realistic objectives, and assess their progress toward their goals
- Assist clients to develop professional communication skills
- Assist clients to develop skills needed to work with a team
- Guide clients in identifying and developing their personal brand
- Following an assessment of entrepreneurial potential, assist clients to explore self-employment options

18. Job Search Skills

- Identify an individual's unique value (discreet skills, strengths, and achievements) and developing strategies to communicate a value-based profile to one's professional network and prospective employers
- Identify appropriate resources for discovering job openings and teach clients to use these resources effectively
- Provide guidance and training to clients on the job search process, including preparing résumés and cover letters/letters of application, developing a marketing plan, networking, interviewing and negotiating, self-marketing, using portfolios, personal presentations, addressing selection criteria, assessment preparation, use of recruitment agencies, use of online resources, the role of professional associations, the preparation of application forms, online application preparation, and creating an online presence
- Teach clients to use social media appropriately for networking
- Assist clients in creating their own opportunities, including entrepreneurial opportunities
- Assist clients to identify hidden job markets

- Identify cultural differences in expectations of the job search process
- Recognize changing conditions, roles, and expectations in the workplace and assist clients to adapt to them

19. Employer Liaison/Outreach

- Collaborate with diverse internal and external stakeholders, including recruitment agencies, employers, and peak industry groups to maximize benefits for clients
- Demonstrate a high level of client focus
- Apply effective networking, presentation, negotiation, and influencing skills
- Maintain data on the outcomes of your employer liaisons and use this data to increase your effectiveness