Use Cases Business Competencies Analytics

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2 Introduction

This document describes the use cases for the <name goes here> Business Competencies feedback app. The purpose of this document is create a scenario to enable stakeholders to understand how the various users would use the app on the job. This document describes three uses cases; that is the individual employee, the team lead, and the business unit owner.

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3 The challenge and the proposed solution

Industry partners have expressed a concern that current talent and performance management systems do not always deliver sufficiently accurate data, based on day-to-day performance. They have a desire for an integrated system that captures and measures on the job performance. In the ideal world, integrated systems would aggregate data about employees' competencies over time and that way, a more complete picture of an individual's strengths and weaknesses would arise. Components that could potentially be part of the ideal integrated solution are workflows, on-the-job activities, competency models, feedback models, LMSs, talent management systems, and so forth.

Some challenges are in the mix; data inoperability being one of them. For example, systems such as LMSs, content repositories, talent management systems etcetera would all need to be integrated to be able to provide a complete picture on an organisation's employees' competencies. Another challenge is the fact that competency models would need to be integrated in a consistent way, so that all competency data can be interpreted in a consistent manner. In other words, there needs to be consistent mapping of content and data against competencies. Addressing these challenges requires careful design and planning and can most likely best be done in a phased process.

It also needs to be noted that one of the challenges of integrating systems and capturing and aggregating data from them, is the discrepancy between people's willingness to truly learn and rewards systems such as performance appraisals. Certain rewards surely do motivate people to improve. From that perspective, tying performance outcomes to incentives sometimes works. On the other hand, for people to truly be open to learning, they need to be willing to fail. If they know they are monitored and that their potential reward is at stake when they fail, they might be less open to learning and try to cover up their weaknesses

A mobile feedback tool that is integrated in the workflow, provides a strong opportunity to aggregate data through capturing of transversal competencies in real-time. In general, the concept of feedback is familiar to most people and, when ready for a next step, the data gathered through a feedback tool can support other, existing methods of transversal skills assessment.

This is how it works:

- Individual employees request feedback from or offer feedback to their team members.
- The feedback is always based on an 'event' (e.g. a meeting, a presentation) in order to contextualise it.
- The feedback is always based on specific behaviours. These behaviours are mapped to competencies (in the current app, these are transversal competencies, such as collaboration or communication, however, competencies could also be more job-role specific, such as sales skills).
- When offering feedback, the feedback giver *rates* that behaviour by selecting a behaviourally anchored rating statement. This way, over time competency profiles can be built.

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The previous section outlined the challenge of the balance between employees' willingness to fail in order to improve and providing meaningful performance analytics to an organisation. Therefore, the level of data collection varies based on the user type. For the individual employee, the focus will be on self-assessment through peer feedback and professional development, and not on performance reviews or talent management. The individual employee will get insight in their strong and weaker behaviours within competencies, and they will be able to read the specific feedback that their peers are giving them.

The analytics available to Team Leads and Business Unit Owners will be at a much higher level than the data that will be available to the individual employee. The individual has ownership over more detailed data in order to encourage them to improve their competencies, while the higher level analytics help team leads to support their team members, and business unit owners to take action within their organisation where needed.

By implementing the feedback app in the workflow, organisations can:

- Support real employee performance improvement / professional development.
- Support more accurate performance analytics for business unit owners.

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4 Business Case

The business case outlined in this document is based at a large publishing company. The management teams in each division of the company have processes in place for performance reviews. 360 is typically an element of review (more commonly called appraisal) and it usually happens on an annual basis and through regular conversations with line managers. A 360 review is a type of review involving a range of people involved in an employee's work process. It may include the manager, peers, direct reports, and possibly other stakeholders like clients, customers and vendors. However, because a 360 generally happens only once a year, the feedback is often not timely and generally decontextualized. In addition, employees are usually responding to a generic question set that does not necessarily include the topics that they wanted to give feedback on. Therefore, generally, a 360 does not deliver sufficiently accurate data about the employees' day-to-day performance.

Another challenge with current review and/or appraisal processes is that, because the data does not provide accurate insight to an employee's competency level, there is no real opportunity to measure the potential impact of skill levels or behaviours on performance.

The company is looking to improve this. They want to find a way to map on-the-job activity to competencies in real-time.

As the company evolves and adopts more agile approaches the culture and needs of the company are also changing. The company acknowledges that, in addition to expected job-specific skills, required competencies are changing and that there is a strong need for transversal competencies, such as collaboration and critical thinking. Transversal competencies are hard to assess, so they want to find a tool that captures and measures on the job performance of those transversal competencies.

4.1 Use Case: Individual Employee

A feedback tool allows capturing of continuous evidence of competencies in an on-the-job context. By participating in the process of both receiving and giving feedback, individual employees will increase their awareness of transversal skills. When feedback is given the right way, it will be actionable for the individual employee and therefore provides an opportunity to learn and improve.

Meet Juan: He is 42 years old and an experienced Project Manager.
Juan has been with the company for 2 years. He is quite focused when it comes to his professional development and has a reasonably good awareness of where his strengths and learning opportunities are. He is open to receiving feedback and is willing to give it to others although he doesn't always find it easy to give feedback the right way.

Technology Use: Juan has an Android phone that he frequently uses during the day to check and update his calendar, and to check and send quick emails. He also uses WhatsApp groups

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for chats with the team members. He uses his phone in parallel with his work laptop. He uses the laptop at his desk and he takes it with him for both internal and external meetings to access project management tools, make notes, look up and share documents, etcetera. He uses the laptop for emails that need more thought with regards to wording or that simply take more time to type. He also uses LinkedIn about twice a week; he communicates with his network and participates in Forums. He uses Twitter daily as a means of staying up-to-date on developments in his area of expertise.

As a Project Manager, Juan works with agile, cross-functional teams on 8 different projects on average. A project team usually has 4-7 team members in a variety of roles, such as Software Engineers, UX/UI Designers, Learning Designers, Business Analysts, and Project Managers. On a typical day, Juan has 4-5 team meetings. These team meetings are usually collaborative in nature and are sometimes just to give a quick project status update. About once a week he needs to present an update for all the projects to his manager.

In his last 360 review, before the mobile feedback tool was introduced in the company, Juan received some constructive feedback on his collaboration skills. Both his manager and several team members have expressed that he is not consistently sharing information and knowledge with them and as a consequence it is sometimes unclear how dependencies impact project progress. Juan has taken the feedback on board and is determined to improve his collaboration skills. Now that the mobile feedback tool has been introduced, Juan uses the mobile feedback tool after each meeting to request feedback from various team members. He can do this quickly, without it impacting his workflow, by selecting multiple peers at the same time, selecting the event that he would like to receive feedback on, selecting the competency "collaboration", and the behaviour "sharing necessary information and knowledge".

He ensures that over time, he requests feedback from a wide variety of team members and not only the ones that he has a friendly relationship with. When he receives feedback on his 'information and knowledge sharing' behaviour in the context of a specific meeting or other (informal) event, he can see if his peer thought he did well or if he can improve the behaviour. First, the behaviour is rated (between 1 and 5) based on a Behaviourally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS). Each behaviour has its own BARS. This approach is an established rating methodology known as a Behaviourally Anchored Rating Scale (BARS). The scale has been in existence for several decades and continues to be used in diverse areas of research such as team assessment of higher ed. students (Ohland, Matthew W. et al, 2002) and social clinicians, (Smith et al, 2014). Each anchor illustrates a 'level of competency'; that is an anchor defines what being really strong or weak in a certain behaviour looks like.

After rating Juan, peers usually provide an explanation on *why* they have rated him that way. The explanation gives Juan something to reflect on. Through the mobile app, he lets his peer know if the feedback received was valuable and if desired he can schedule follow-up time with his peer to discuss the feedback in more detail.

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Although Juan focusses on improving his collaboration skills this quarter, every now and again he also requests feedback on other competencies. For example, after one meeting he felt a bit self-conscious about his time management and prioritisation. He requested feedback from 3 team members on this and received some valuable responses that he could take action on.

His peers also offer him self-initiated feedback. One time, he received positive feedback from several team members after he gave a presentation on a challenging project. The team had been struggling with a certain problem for a while and Juan decided, after asking each team member's input, to suggest a solution. After the presentation, all team members thought that he used very good examples and some said that they were very happy with the clarity of his answers to the audience's questions. More importantly so, they said it helped them to solve the problem that they were facing.

Of course, it also happens the other way around. Juan's peers request feedback from him or Juan decides himself to give his peers feedback based on the context of an event. When Juan gives feedback to his peers, he strives to be as concrete as possible. After he has indicated if his feedback is positive ('did well') or constructive ('could be improved') he rates his peer using the BARS. After that, he will fill out the free text field. This free text field has a supportive feedback scaffolding model that outlines what good feedback looks like and has some examples to illustrate the 'rules of good feedback'. Juan can use this model as a Just-in-Time learning tool whenever he needs a reminder.

Juan keeps track of his behaviours within competencies through his Stats feature. He can see his average rating for each competency and more detailed ratings on behaviours within competencies. He can also go back to the free text feedback that his peers have provided him with.

Example Interaction:

- Juan requests feedback from various peers on his "sharing necessary information and knowledge" behaviour within the collaboration competency for a specific event.
- Juan receives feedback from his peers on his "sharing necessary information and knowledge" behaviour. The feedback is rated and in most cases accompanied by an explanation on *why* that rating was given.
- Juan gives feedback to his peers on the value of their feedback given to him.
- Juan requests feedback from some peers on an event without specifying a specific behaviour or competency.
- Juan receives unsolicited positive feedback from a peer on a team meeting that he has just attended as his peer thought that Juan very well handled a conflict between two other team members.
- A peer requests feedback from Juan on the competency 'creativity' for a certain event. She does not specify which behaviour she is requesting feedback for.
- Juan drags and drops the behaviours that go with the competency 'creativity' in the 'did well' and 'could improve' buckets within the feedback tool. Then, he rates each

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behaviour by using the slider.

- For most, but not all of them, he provides free text feedback explaining the reason for his ratings. A couple of times he uses the scaffolding tool that is integrated in the free text field to look at some examples of what good feedback looks like.
- On his initiative, Juan gives feedback to a peer after an informal chat at the coffee machine because he was pleasantly surprised how his peer inspired him to take on a challenge outside of his comfort zone (teamwork/collaboration).

4.2 Use Case: Team Lead

The team lead needs insight in his/her team's competency ratings and they have to be able to see some higher level data on individual team members' competencies as well so that they can take action when needed. In addition, team leads also need to have an idea on how regularly the team is using the app, what kind of feedback they tend to give, etcetera. This is important as it might say something about team dynamics (e.g. are team members very critical to one another or perhaps are they only positive because they don't feel comfortable giving constructive feedback?). No analytics will give the Team Lead insight in reasons for behaviours or (lack of) competencies, however, the analytics can 'flag' outliers, either positive or negative, upon which the Team Lead can act.

The team lead can:

- See how the team is performing at a competency level.
- See how team members are performing at a competency level.
- Identify trends at the team and individual levels to assist in management role.

On the other hand, to maintain a sense of ownership for team members, the team lead does not need access to specific behaviours or specific feedback.

Meet Veronica: She is 47 years old and has been with the company for over 5 years. She has been a Team Lead for 3 years; leading 4 cross-functional teams in collaboration with the Project Manager.

Technology Use: Veronica has an Android phone for work that she frequently uses during the day to check and update her calendar, and to check and send quick emails. She also uses Skype for Business to chat with her colleagues and team members. She uses her work laptop at her desk and she takes it with her for both internal and external meetings to access project management tools, make notes, look up and share documents, etcetera.

There is no such thing as a typical day for Veronica. Sometimes she is busy with coordinating internal and external customers, sometimes she needs to focus on obtaining necessary resources to support the team's requirements. However, of course, as a Team Lead, Veronica's main priorities are her teams and their performance. She has identified

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performance objectives for her teams in collaboration with their Line Managers and the Project Manager. Of course, these team objectives are aligned with the overall business objectives as well.

One of her teams, let's call them Team A has always been very creative, however, collaboration and communication has proved to be a challenge. Most of the individual team members are very results-focussed and have a "can do" mentality, however, sometimes they forget about interdependencies and they tend to run off with something and get it done without sharing sufficiently what they are working on and why. This starts to impact the team performance as it impacts on efficiency and sometimes on quality as well. Hence, improving collaboration and communication are competencies that Veronica wants her team to focus on the coming quarter.

Once a month, Veronica receives an email with a link to the web app. The dashboard in the web app gives her an 'at a glance' overview how a team is doing. She sees their overall competency rating (1-5) at that point in time and she can compare this rating to last month's ratings.

In this month's overview, she sees that both collaboration and communication suddenly have gone up for Team A. This is great, however, she also sees that the majority of the feedback that was given in the last month has been on collaboration and communication and has been positive. This tells her something about Team A's dynamics. It almost looks like the team has agreed to focus on collaboration and communication; which is understandable as it is part of their performance objectives. However, the numbers trigger Veronica to dig a little bit deeper before having a conversation with Team A.

She now looks at team members' individual data. First, she checks the team members' heat map in which she can compare the individual team members to each other at a high level. The heat map shows that all team members have an increased competency rating for collaboration and communication. Some team members have gone up slightly, others have gone up hugely. Veronica suspects that certain team members have explicitly agreed on focussing on collaboration and communication. She also suspects that this has happened because the company has quite a competitive culture. However, Veronica can only guess based on the numbers. The numbers are helpful in that they can flag possible opportunities or risks and they give Veronica an opportunity to explore those with her team. They are a tool to support conversations with her team.

Whatever the reason, if the team members *only* focus on the positive, it is probably a good idea for Veronica to discuss that with her team, explore why they do not give any constructive feedback and take appropriate actions to ensure more potential for learning and improvement.

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Example Interactions:

- Veronica views her monthly automatic email through which she can access the web app. Her dashboard shows high level team data, such as an average team rating for each competency. Veronica can also compare the current average team rating with their previous rating and with the average aggregated number from the other teams in the organisation.
- In the dashboard Veronica also sees other high level team analytics, such as how many feedback interactions have taken place within her team and how many team members have been using the feedback tool.
- In the analytics web app, she can also look at the team members' heat map in which she can compare the individual team members to each other at a high level.
- In the analytics web app, she can also look at team members' individual data, which is more detailed. For example, she can see an individual team member's average all time rating for a competency, she can compare that rating against last week, month or quarter and she can compare it to the team's average.

4.3 Use Case: Business Unit Owner

It is useful for the business unit owner to be able to get a high level overview and trends of their overall business unit. In general, the business unit owners also needs to have an idea on app usage (e.g. frequency of use, how many users). None of the analytics will give the business unit owner insight in *reasons* for usage frequency or (lack of) competencies, however, the analytics can 'flag' outliers, either positive or negative, upon which the business unit owner can act and initiate conversations with their direct reports.

The business unit owner can[1]:

- See how their overall business unit is performing at a competency level (e.g. average and trends).
- See how their direct reports' teams are performing at a competency level (e.g. average and trends).
- Identify trends and/or outliers in the overall team in order to trigger communications with their direct reports to explore matters and be able to take action.

Meet Lynn: She is 52 years old and has been with the company for over 15 years. She has been the Director QA Technology for 4 years. She has 4 direct reports who each lead several teams varying in numbers from 2 to 5; that is the Head of Engineering, the Head of Test, the Head of QA, and the Head of Localisation. The total QA technology unit has 18 members (4 Heads and 14 team members).

[1] The Team Lead perspective for the business unit owner will not be discussed in this section.

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Technology Use: Lynn has an iPhone that she uses both personal and for work and mostly for calls and texts. She also uses Skype for Business for meetings and to chat with colleagues and team members. She uses her work laptop to check and update her calendar, and to check and send emails. She also takes it with her for both internal and external meetings and uses it to access documents etcetera.

Lynn has a wide variety of responsibilities, such as ensuring strategic alignment of QA processes and toolsets and establishing criteria for test strategies for enterprise level platform products, courseware, and production tools. She works in close collaboration with her direct reports to ensure alignment on QA automation processes; not only with her own team but also with vendors and partners.

One of the things that is critical for Lynn is effective communication within and across the various teams (e.g. Engineering, Test). Without effective communication, she would not be able to do her job. For example, Lynn needs to drive innovation and improvement across the QA teams and partner organisations and she also needs to develop best-practice QA testing processes and procedures. For both, she needs to make sure that her direct reports are well-informed, that they interpret processes and procedures in the same way, and that they communicate in a consistent and concise manner. She also needs to gather feedback and maintain updates in a way so that all stay up-to-date.

In the last 6 months, there have been some instances where, for example (functional and cross-functional) teams reinvented wheels and did not work with the most up-to-date QA processes and procedures. This has impacted several projects negatively and has resulted in some unhappy clients.

Lynn has investigated the matter and has concluded that the problem is most likely that communication is lacking. She will be closely collaborating with her direct reports to improve this. In addition to in-depth conversations with her team, she will use an social network analytics (SNA) tool to increase her understanding of the social networks within and across teams. She will also use the data collected through the feedback app to get insight in how the teams perceive their communication skills.

Once a month, Lynn receives an email with a link to the web app. The dashboard in the web app gives her an 'at a glance' overview how the QA Technology teams teams are doing. For example, she sees an aggregated overall competency rating (1-5) for the various Engineering teams, labelled under 'Engineering'. She can see their rating at that point in time and she can compare this rating to last month's ratings.

In this month's overview, she sees that the overall communication competency rating that she is focussing on, has remained the same at 2.7. This is not what Lynn was hoping for. When she digs deeper, she can see that Engineering has gone up and have used the app frequently. Test

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and QA have gone down slightly and have used the app frequently. Localisation has remained the same, simply because they have not been using the feedback app.

All insights give Lynn a starting point for her conversations with her direct reports. For example, she can explore why Engineering teams are using the app frequently while Localisation is not. She can also investigate why Test and QA have gone down while Engineering went up. Based on the answers that she will find, she can take action and continue to work on improving communications within and across teams to support the QA technology process.

Example Interactions:

- Lynn receives her monthly automatic email through which she can access the web app.
- Her dashboard shows:
    - A rating for each competency at an organisational level.
    - High level business unit (QA Technology) data, such as an average rating for each competency.
    - Other high level analytics, such as how many feedback interactions have taken place within the QA unit and how many teams have been using the feedback tool.
    - 'Teams' heat map in which she can compare the various teams within her business unit to each other at a competency level.

Note: The business unit owner also needs insight in the competency ratings of the team that they are responsible for; their direct reports. From that perspective, the business unit owner would have the role of the Team Lead and hence would have similar analytics as outlined in the use case above.

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5 User Analytics

Possible **outcomes** for the scenario, or **metrics** used to evaluate the success of feedback tool are:
Business Unit Owner
Improved insights in competencies at an organizational level. Based on the behaviour ratings, the Business Unit Owner will see the aggregated data at a competency level. This way, they can see which competencies are strong and which ones are weak at an organizational level. To put things in perspective, it makes sense to provide the amount of feedback interactions given for a competency (e.g. % of total of feedback interactions) together with the rating. It also makes sense to see trends over quarters.
Insight in system usage (total of feedback interactions, total of users, total of teams who used it) – value in seeing engagement and uptake.
Insight in top and bottom rated teams (which team is rated highest/lowest for a certain competency).
Insight in competency rankings (for each competency, it will show the highest rated team and the lowest rated team).
Team Lead
• **Insight in average team rating for each competency at a certain point in time.** • **Insight in average team rating for each competency compared to a previous period.** • **Insight in average team rating for each competency compared to other team's overall average per competency.** Based on the behaviour ratings, the Team Lead will see the aggregated team data at a competency level. This way, they can see which competencies are strong and which ones are weak at a team level. They can compare it to a previous period in time (e.g. week, month, quarter) and they can compare it to the average of other teams (aggregated number) in the organisation.

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To put things in perspective, it makes sense to provide the amount of feedback interactions given for a competency (e.g. % of total of feedback interactions) together with the rating. It also makes sense to see trends over months/quarters.
Insight in system usage (total of feedback interactions, total of users) – value in seeing engagement and uptake.
Insight in how team members compare to each other for each competency (heat map). The heat map makes it easy to identify top and bottom rated team members for each competency.
Insight in competency trends per team member. • Current average compared to all time average. • Current and over time individual average compared to overall team average.
Individual Employee
Improved behaviours within competencies (based on behaviour ratings; trends over time). Note that you would expect this to be a somewhat 'dynamic' view. Competencies can fluctuate somewhat over time, depending on what projects Juan works on and what is learning focus is.
Improved competencies (based on behaviour ratings; trends over time)
Improved 'actionability'
Improved effectiveness of performance improvement (easier to find focus because the feedback is tangible, actionable, and based on day-to-day performance)

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6 Trialing

TBD

6.1 Infrastructure & Interoperability: eLearning Platform, LMS Technologies

Which OS are you using?

Which Programming languages are you using?

Are you using any Web Server? if yes which?

Which DataBase are you using?

Are you using or have the capacity to use Web Services? If yes, can you describe the type: SOAP based, REST based.

Do you have an integration/facilitation API?

What types of security mechanisms are in place?

What standards do you use for content (SCORM, IMS, etc), knowledge representation (OWL, RDF, etc), user modeling, etc?

Where do you see the feasible integration points (modes of interaction) for this scenario (i.e. is the technology for the scenario delivered via browser plug-in, native or remote widget, webpage/webapplication, etc)?

6.2 Evaluation Objectives and Metrics

6.3 Security

6.4 Deployment Constraints on the Client Side

6.5 OpenSource

What is your policy regarding open source tools? Any restrictions?

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