
Expectations and the Competency Pyramid

Play Ball!

Given that baseball is one of America's favorite sports and most kids grew up playing it, do you remember the first time you played the game? What were the most important aspects of the game that you can remember? How important was it to know the rules of the game? Did you know where to run after you hit the ball? Did you know where to throw the ball after you caught it?

Imagine if you didn't know the rules and ran to third base instead of first or caught the ball but didn't know where to throw it?

Initially you would be very confused because people are yelling at you to go in the other direction. After that you would become very frustrated because no one told you ahead of time which way to run. At the same time the other people playing would also be frustrated because they assumed you knew, or at least someone told you, what the rules were and how to play the game.

How many times is the example above repeated daily in the workplace?

Just like learning to play baseball the same holds true in the workplace. Your performance will be based upon how well you understand what is expected. Once you are aware of what is expected, your time can be spent on meeting the expectation instead of trying to understand what the expectations are.

With this in mind, anytime you work for someone, you are exchanging your time for money. From the company's perspective, are you getting your monies worth from an employee? Likewise as an employee how do you know you're meeting the company's expectations?

Questions to think about from an employer's perspective:

"Are you hiring people to invent a job or are you hiring people to do a job your organization has already invented?"

"Would you rather have people perform just like a 'new hire' or constantly exceed your expectations and provide ideas about how the job could be done better?"

If either of the above questions goes un-answered, employees must guess and assume what the expectations are.

Vague Instructions will return Vague Results!

If you want people to succeed, start with good expectations. People will do what you expect if you tell them specifically what they are supposed to do, when to begin, when to end, and what the finished product should to look like.

The remainder of the document lists the following:

- Planning questions guide you through answering what is required regarding results, impact, criteria, skills, and resources for meeting the expectation.
- Key actions describe the steps necessary to accurately define the expectation.
- The Template allows you to outline the expectations.
- The Competency Pyramid allows you to see the progression of an employee from 'New Hire' to 'Exceptional'.

Planning Questions

What are the major results or outcomes you expect your employee to achieve?

What impact do these results or outcomes have on the department, on co-workers, and/or on the business?

What specific criteria or standards does this employee need to meet?

What skills, resources, or guidelines are important for this job or task?

Key Actions

1. Describe the Expectation in terms of its major outcomes and how it fits into the larger picture.
2. Mutually agree on a Unit of Measurement and Consequences.
3. Mutually identify necessary skills, resources, and guidelines.
4. Determine priorities.
5. Review and check for understanding and commitment.
6. Set a date for an early progress review.

ALWAYS, ALWAYS, ALWAYS ... FOLLOW THROUGH!



Expectations Template

Name: _____

Assignment: _____

Start date: _____

Expectation	
Unit of Measurement	List of criteria that will be used to measure their performance.
Skills Required	List of skills required to complete the task.
Tools Required	Examples: Workspace, Personal computer / Software, Reference documents
Personnel to be contacted for support	Individuals that can be used as primary and secondary contacts.
Guidelines	Documentation such as Specifications, Flowcharts, Manuals.
Completion date	Date to complete task.
Progress Review	Date of first scheduled review.

Competency Pyramid Theory

Every job has a set of expectations that are both Technical and Behavioral in nature. Each expectation must be capable of Definition, Measurement, Progress Review, and Consequences.

The unit of measurement will be the individual's competency level when performing said expectation. A Competency Level is defined as one having the skill, knowledge, and experience to meet the expectation.

The quadrant for each competency level is defined as follows:

Exceptional = "Consistently Exceeds Expectations."

Recognized as your 'go to' people every time! You think of them first when an important task needs to be completed on time and on point!

Desired = "Meets and occasionally Exceeds Expectations."

They 'surprise' you from time to time. They always meet your needs and on occasion go over and above.

Average = "Meets Expectations."

They know what is expected of them and they do it, 'no less and no more'. While they may not have aspirations to further themselves in the organization; they are recognized as a valued part of the team.

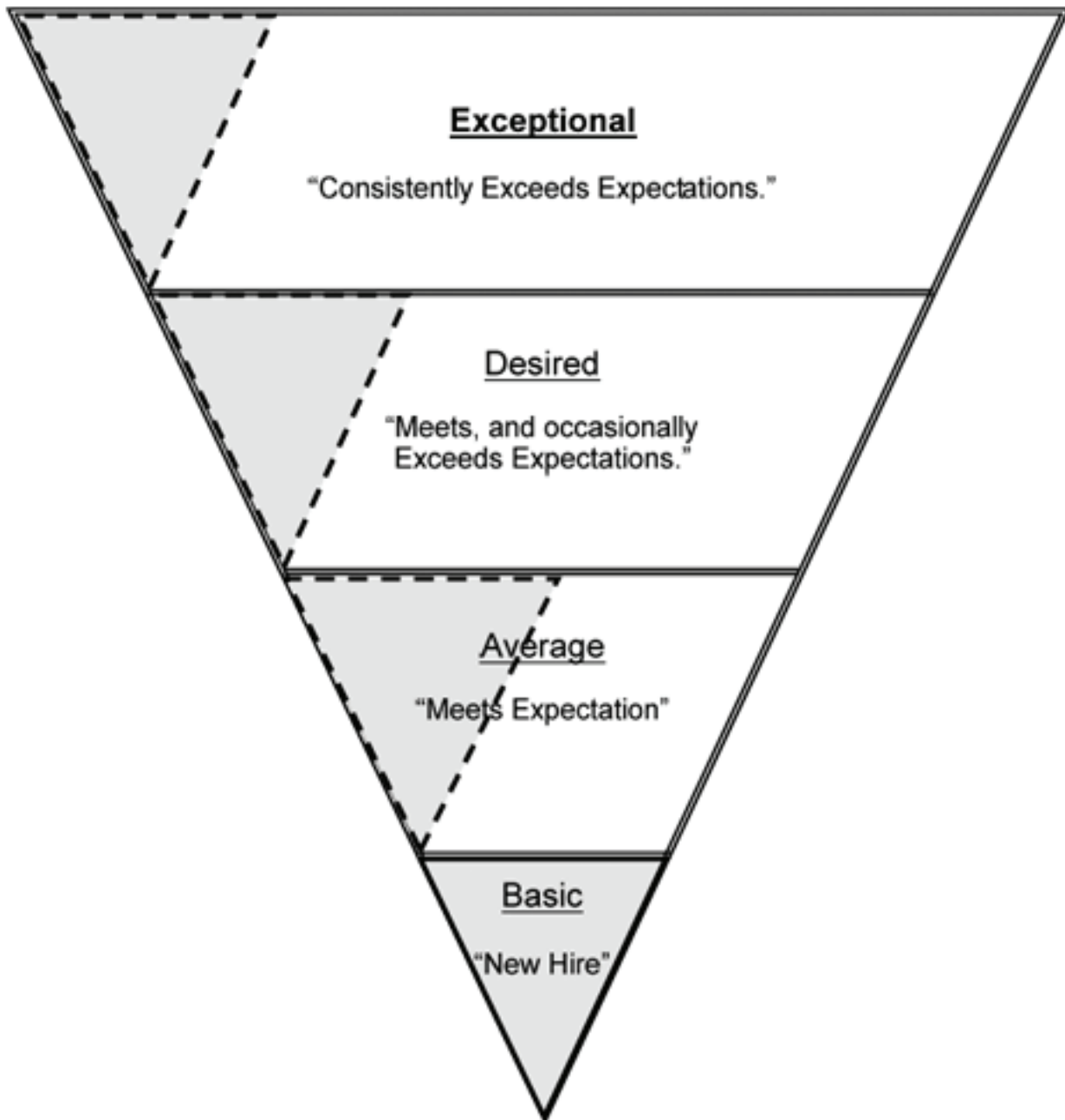
Basic = "New Hire"

New employees that possess the skill set to meet the expectation but have yet to prove themselves. An employee should rapidly progress within three months of entering the organization.



Competency Pyramid

Note: The distance across each quadrant is proportionate to the effort required for each level of competency!





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