

AVERA

LEADERSHIP

COMPETENCIES

DEVELOPMENT  
GUIDE

Avera 



**Bob Sutton**  
President and CEO, Avera Health

## Dear Avera Leader,

All leaders in our organization share responsibility for making the mission and vision of our health ministry alive and effective for the people and communities we serve. Our success in doing so requires intentional and sustained effort. Avera's determination to strengthen our talent framework and ensure it connects to our business strategy includes a concerted effort by leaders throughout our organization. The Avera Leadership Competencies define observable behaviors which successful leaders demonstrate daily.

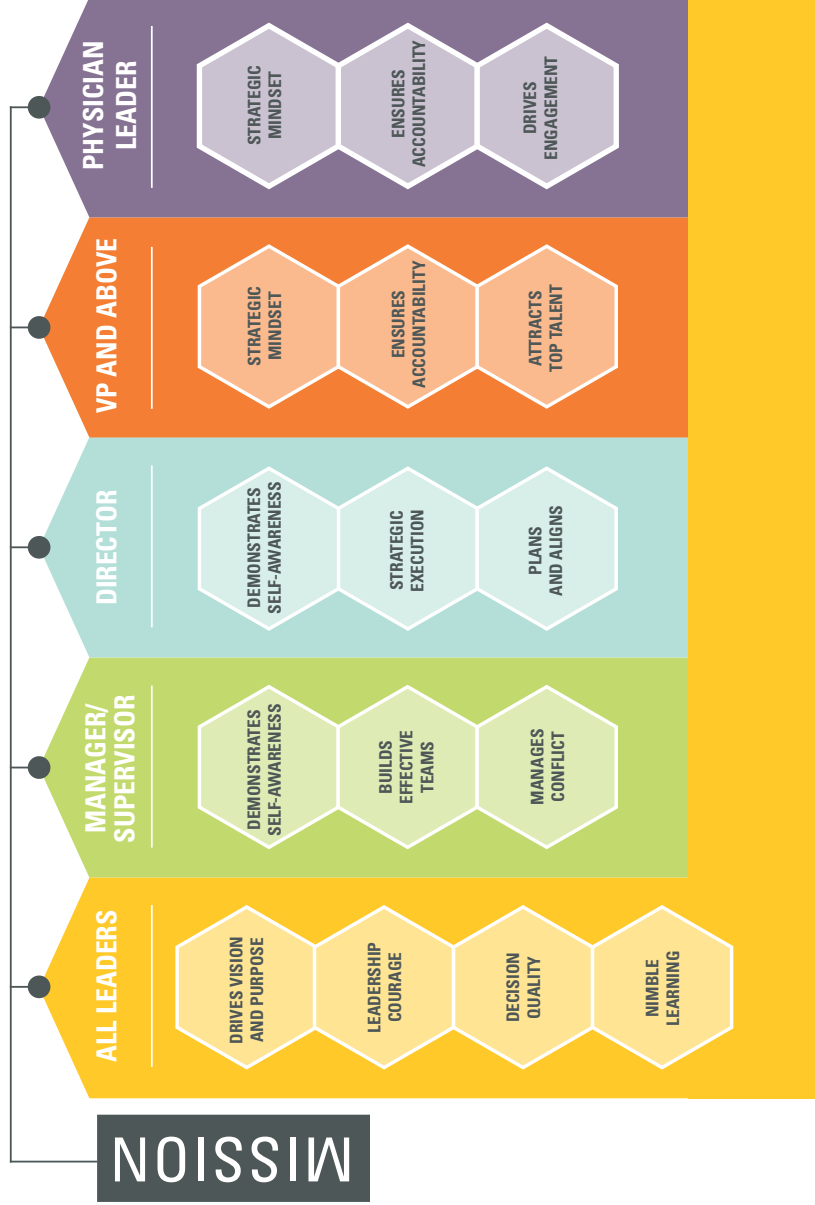
All leaders are expected to integrate the competencies into their daily leadership interactions. The five core and additional role-level competencies are a part of annual reviews in the performance management system and provide the behaviors essential to leadership development. Our leadership identity is a key way we exemplify our mission and drive the organization into the future.

I encourage you to embrace leadership opportunities and integrate the competencies into your daily work. Skills take effort and practice, and will provide you the fundamentals necessary to be a strong and effective leader. Be engaged, ask questions, and be a role model of Avera to your teams.

Thank you for being part of Avera, being a leader and having the courage to create a unified leadership identity.

**PURPOSE.  
IMPACT.  
YOU.**

The Avera Leadership Competencies define observable behaviors that successful leaders demonstrate daily. Our leadership identity is a key way we exemplify our mission to ensure the future of our health care ministry.



## FOUR CORE COMPETENCIES (applies to all levels of leadership)

### DRIVES VISION AND PURPOSE

Painting a compelling picture of the vision and strategy that motivates others to action.

#### TALENTED

- Articulates a compelling, inspired and relatable vision.
- Communicates the vision with a sense of purpose about the future.
- Makes the vision sharable by everyone.
- Instills and sustains organization-wide energy for what is possible.

#### SKILLED

- Talks about future possibilities in a positive way.
- Creates milestones and symbols to rally support behind the vision.
- Articulates the vision in a way everyone can relate to.
- Creates organization-wide energy and optimism for the future.
- Shows personal commitment to the vision.

#### LESS SKILLED

- Does not personally connect with the organization's vision.
- Has difficulty describing the vision in a compelling way.
- Can't simplify enough to help people understand complex strategy.
- Struggles to energize and build excitement in others.

#### OVERUSED SKILL

- May lack follow-through to execute the vision.
- Communicates at a high level too often.
- May lack patience when others don't share the same vision and sense of purpose.

## LEADERSHIP COURAGE

Stepping up to address difficult issues, saying what needs to be said.

### TALENTED

- Tackles difficult issues with optimism and confidence.
- Shares sensitive messages or unpopular points of view in a motivating manner.
- Informs people of where they stand, honestly and sensitively.
- Volunteers to tackle and lead tough assignments.

### SKILLED

- Readily tackles tough assignments.
- Faces difficult issues and supports others who do the same.
- Provides direct and actionable feedback.
- Is willing to champion an idea or position despite dissent or political risk.

### LESS SKILLED

- Shies away from difficult issues or challenging assignments.
- Expresses point of view in an indirect manner.
- Avoids giving corrective feedback.
- Does not take a stand on important issues.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- Struggles to identify which battles to take on and when to back down.
- Shares point of view on everything and could be seen as intimidating or a “know-it-all.”
- Communicates bluntly and does not recognize the impact on others.
- Puts aside own work in favor of getting involved in multiple difficult issues.

## DECISION QUALITY

Making good and timely decisions that keep the organization moving forward.

### TALENTED

- Decisively makes high quality decisions, even when based on incomplete information or in the face of uncertainty.
- Actively seeks input from pertinent sources to make timely and well-informed decisions.
- Skillfully separates opinions from facts.
- Is respected by others for displaying superior judgment.

### SKILLED

- Makes sound decisions, even in the absence of complete information.
- Relies on a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience and judgment when making decisions.
- Considers all relevant factors and uses appropriate decision-making criteria and principles.
- Recognizes when a quick 80 percent solution will suffice.

### LESS SKILLED

- Approaches decisions haphazardly or delays decision making.
- Makes decisions based on incomplete data or inaccurate assumptions.
- Overlooks different points of view or makes decisions that impact short-term results at the expense of longer-term goals.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- Applies an overly rigorous or methodological decision process to all issues, even where experience and intuition can work equally well.
- Is overly confident about own decision-making capability; reluctant to delegate decision making to others or hesitant to involve others when generating solutions.

## NIMBLE LEARNING

Actively learning through experimentation when tackling new problems, using both successes and failures as learning opportunities.

### TALENTED

- Tries multiple times using multiple methods to find the right solution.
- Views mistakes as opportunities to learn.
- Enjoys the challenge of unfamiliar tasks.
- Seeks new approaches to solve problems.

### SKILLED

- Learns quickly when facing new situations.
- Experiments to find new solutions.
- Takes on the challenge of unfamiliar tasks.
- Extracts lessons learned from failures and mistakes.

### LESS SKILLED

- Struggles to learn in new situations.
- Becomes frustrated or confused by unfamiliar tasks.
- Gives up on new ideas too soon.
- Resists taking a chance on untested solutions.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- Takes on new challenges for the sake of it rather than in the interest of making a positive impact.
- Focuses on untested ideas simply because they are new.
- May take unnecessary risks in the name of learning.

## MANAGER/SUPERVISOR COMPETENCIES

### DEMONSTRATES SELF-AWARENESS

Using a combination of feedback and reflection to gain productive insight into personal strengths and weaknesses.

### TALENTED

- Seeks and acts on feedback from a wide variety of people.
- Willingly admits and takes responsibility for mistakes and shortcomings.
- Views criticism as helpful.
- Can articulate the causes behind own feelings and moods.

### SKILLED

- Reflects on activities and impact on others.
- Proactively seeks feedback without being defensive.
- Is open to criticism and talking about shortcomings.
- Admits mistakes and gains insight from experiences.
- Knows strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and limits.

### LESS SKILLED

- Does not reflect on past mistakes.
- Acts defensively when given feedback.
- Is unaware of own skills and interpersonal impact.
- Makes excuses and blames others.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- Overthinks or overanalyzes feedback from others.
- May be self-critical to the point of risking credibility and appearing insecure.
- Spends too much time on building self-insight and not enough time on making meaningful changes to behavior or skills.

## BUILDS EFFECTIVE TEAMS

Building strong-identity teams that apply their diverse skills and perspectives to achieve common goals.

### TALENTED

- Defines success in terms of the whole team.
- Recognizes that leveraging each team member's unique background and perspective is critical to achieving team goals.
- Rallies others behind common team goals.
- Places team goals ahead of own goals.

### SKILLED

- Forms teams with appropriate and diverse mix of styles, perspectives and experience.
- Establishes common objectives and a shared mindset.
- Creates a feeling of belonging and strong team morale.
- Shares wins and rewards team efforts.
- Fosters open dialogue and collaboration among the team.

### LESS SKILLED

- Does not create a common mindset or challenge.
- Fails to recognize that morale, recognition and belongingness are integral ingredients of effective teams.
- Prioritizes and rewards individual efforts rather than team achievements.
- Does not shape and distribute assignments in a way that encourages teamwork.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- May focus so much on teaming behavior that results may suffer.
- May build such a strong sense of team identity that it is hard for new members to break in and get up to speed.
- May not develop individual leaders.

## MANAGES CONFLICT

Handling conflict situations effectively, with a minimum of noise.

### TALENTED

- Anticipates conflicts before they happen, based on knowledge of interpersonal and group dynamics.
- Asks questions and listens closely to all issues presented by stakeholders.
- Finds common ground and drives to consensus, ensuring that all feel heard.
- Defuses high-tension situations effectively.

### SKILLED

- Steps up to conflicts, seeing them as opportunities.
- Works out tough agreements and settles disputes equitably.
- Facilitates breakthroughs by integrating diverse views and finding common ground or acceptable alternatives.
- Settles differences in productive ways with minimum noise.

### LESS SKILLED

- Avoids conflict.
- Does not make progress when working through disagreements.
- Takes sides without digging deeply enough to fully understand the issues.
- Allows conflicts to cause massive disruption in the organization.
- Puts people on the defensive.
- May accommodate, wanting everyone to get along.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- May be seen as too involved in others' issues.
- Is too eager to engage others in debate.
- Pushes for resolution before others are ready.

## DIRECTOR COMPETENCIES

### DEMONSTRATES SELF-AWARENESS

Using a combination of feedback and reflection to gain productive insight into personal strengths and weaknesses.

#### TALENTED

- Seeks and acts on feedback from a wide variety of people.
- Willingly admits and takes responsibility for mistakes and shortcomings.
- Views criticism as helpful.
- Can articulate the causes behind own feelings and moods.

#### SKILLED

- Reflects on activities and impact on others.
- Proactively seeks feedback without being defensive.
- Is open to criticism and talking about shortcomings.
- Admits mistakes and gains insight from experiences.
- Knows strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and limits.

#### LESS SKILLED

- Does not reflect on past mistakes.
- Acts defensively when given feedback.
- Is unaware of own skills and interpersonal impact.
- Makes excuses and blames others.

#### OVERUSED SKILL

- Overthinks or overanalyzes feedback from others.
- May be self-critical to the point of risking credibility and lacking confidence.
- Spends too much time on building self-insight and not enough time on making meaningful changes to behavior or skills.

## STRATEGIC EXECUTION

Clarifies the organizations vision and strategy, and ensures efforts are prioritized to reach tactical goals.

#### TALENTED

- Makes frequent, clear and compelling references to the organization's vision and strategy and the efforts required to drive them forward.
- Strategically leverages the organization's distinct capabilities and competitive advantages, and seizes opportunities that stem from emerging trends.
- Effectively pursues future possibilities that will create sustainable value for the organization and its stakeholders.
- A strong big-picture thinker, effectively integrates and balances long-term opportunities and challenges with day-to-day activities.

#### SKILLED

- Provides a clear picture of the organization's vision and strategy and what the team needs to do to realize them.
- Develops strategies that capitalize on the organization's distinct capabilities and emerging trends in the market.
- Directs the pursuit of opportunities that will create sustainable value.
- Focuses on long-term opportunities and challenges even while handling day-to-day issues.

#### LESS SKILLED

- Is vague about the organization's vision and strategy and how to support them, may communicate infrequent, mixed or unclear messages.
- Does little to leverage organization's distinct capabilities and emerging trends when developing strategies.
- Pursues opportunities with little consideration of potential value.
- Remains pre-occupied with day-to-day issues, insufficiently considering long-term opportunities and challenges.

#### OVERUSED SKILL

- May be unable to connect the long-term strategy to operational goals.
- May be impatient with day-to-day tactical issues.
- Bounces around from idea to idea without clear direction.

## PLANS AND ALIGNS

Planning and prioritizing work to meet commitments aligned with organizational goals.

### TALENTED

- Focuses on highest priorities and sets aside less critical tasks.
- Lays out a thorough schedule and steps for achieving objectives.
- Makes implementation plans that allocate resources precisely.
- Looks for obstacles and develops excellent contingency plans.
- Uses milestones to diligently track and manage the progress of the work.

### SKILLED

- Sets objectives to align with broader organizational goals.
- Breaks down objectives into appropriate initiatives and actions.
- Stages activities with relevant milestones and schedules.
- Anticipates and adjusts effective contingency plans.

### LESS SKILLED

- Gets caught up in immediate needs without attending to larger priorities.
- Spends time and resources without a clear purpose.
- Gets caught off guard by problems due to the lack of contingency plans.
- Haphazardly tracks progress or performance.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- Is so focused on completing only mission-critical tasks that he or she lets the trivial many accumulate into a critical problem.
- Persistently follows plans, allowing little room for change.
- May leave out the human element of the work.
- Spends an inordinate amount of time planning for unlikely obstacles or roadblocks.

## VICE PRESIDENT AND ABOVE COMPETENCIES

### STRATEGIC MINDSET

Seeing ahead to future possibilities and translating them into breakthrough strategies.

### TALENTED

- Sees the big picture, constantly imagines future scenarios, and creates strategies to sustain competitive advantage.
- Is a visionary and able to articulately paint credible pictures and visions of possibilities and likelihoods.
- Formulates a clear strategy and maps the aggressive steps that will clearly accelerate the organization toward its strategic goals.

### SKILLED

- Anticipates future trends and implications accurately.
- Readily poses future scenarios.
- Articulates credible pictures and visions of possibilities that will create sustainable value.
- Creates competitive and breakthrough strategies that show a clear connection between vision and action.

### LESS SKILLED

- Is more comfortable in the tactical here and now.
- Spends little time or effort thinking about or working on strategic issues.
- Contributes little to strategic discussions.
- Lacks the disciplined thought processes to pull together varying elements into a coherent view.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- May be seen as too theoretical.
- May be so far ahead that others have trouble seeing how the organization will get from here to there.
- May be impatient with day-to-day tactical issues.
- May overcomplicate plans.



## ENSURES ACCOUNTABILITY

Holding self and others accountable to meet commitments.

### TALENTED

- Assumes responsibility for the outcomes of others.
- Promotes a sense of urgency and establishes and enforces individual accountability in the team.
- Works with people to establish explicit performance standards.
- Is completely on top of what is going on and knows where things stand.
- Provides balanced feedback at the most critical times.

### SKILLED

- Follows through on commitments and makes sure others do the same.
- Acts with a clear sense of ownership.
- Takes personal responsibility for decisions, actions and failures.
- Establishes clear responsibilities and processes for monitoring work and measuring results.
- Designs feedback loops into work.

### LESS SKILLED

- Fails to accept a fair share of personal responsibility.
- Gathers little information about how things are going.
- Provides inadequate feedback; does not help others adjust course midstream.
- Prefers to be one of many accountable for an assignment.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- May not give appropriate credit to others.
- Strictly enforces accountability; does not consider situations that are beyond individuals' control.
- Focuses too much on numbers and hard data; measurement becomes a goal and a pursuit of its own.

## ATTRACTS TOP TALENT

Attracting and selecting the best talent to meet current and future business needs.

### TALENTED

- Actively seeks and secures the best talent available.
- Creates pipelines of talent for the future from both internal and external talent pools.
- Evaluates talent using a thorough and consistent process.

### SKILLED

- Attracts and selects diverse and high caliber talent.
- Finds the right talent to meet the group's needs.
- Closes talent gaps with the right balance of internal and external candidates.
- Is a good judge of talent.

### LESS SKILLED

- Selects talent into the organization without adequate consideration.
- Takes little action to match the talent to the role or organization.
- Is unclear about selection criteria or how to evaluate others' skills.
- Selects people that are very similar to self.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- Overanalyzes and fails to get people into roles quickly enough to meet the needs of the business.
- May overlook slow starters and quiet, less expressive talent.

## PHYSICIAN LEADER

### STRATEGIC MINDSET

Seeing ahead to future possibilities and translating them into breakthrough strategies.

#### TALENTED

- Sees the big picture, constantly imagines future scenarios and creates strategies to sustain competitive advantage.
- Is a visionary and able to articulately paint credible pictures and visions of possibilities and likelihoods.
- Formulates a clear strategy and maps the aggressive steps that will clearly accelerate the organization toward its strategic goals.

#### SKILLED

- Anticipates future trends and implications accurately.
- Readily poses future scenarios.
- Articulates credible pictures and visions of possibilities that will create sustainable value.
- Creates competitive and breakthrough strategies that show a clear connection between vision and action.

#### LESS SKILLED

- Is more comfortable in the tactical here and now.
- Spends little time or effort thinking about or working on strategic issues.
- Contributes little to strategic discussions.
- Lacks the disciplined thought processes to pull together varying elements into a coherent view.

#### OVERUSED SKILL

- May be seen as too theoretical.
- May be so far ahead that others have trouble seeing how the organization will get from here to there.
- May be impatient with day-to-day tactical issues.
- May overcomplicate plans.

## ENSURES ACCOUNTABILITY

Holding self and others accountable to meet commitments.

#### TALENTED

- Assumes responsibility for the outcomes of others.
- Promotes a sense of urgency and establishes and enforces individual accountability in the team.
- Works with people to establish explicit performance standards.
- Is completely on top of what is going on and knows where things stand.
- Provides balanced feedback at the most critical times.

#### SKILLED

- Follows through on commitments and makes sure others do the same.
- Acts with a clear sense of ownership.
- Takes personal responsibility for decisions, actions and failures.
- Establishes clear responsibilities and processes for monitoring work and measuring results.
- Designs feedback loops into work.

#### LESS SKILLED

- Fails to accept a fair share of personal responsibility.
- Gathers little information about how things are going.
- Provides inadequate feedback; fails to help others adjust course midstream.
- Prefers to be one of many accountable for an assignment.

#### OVERUSED SKILL

- May not give appropriate credit to others.
- Strictly enforces accountability; doesn't consider situations that are beyond individuals' control.
- Focuses too much on numbers and hard data; measurement becomes a goal and a pursuit of its own.

## DRIVES ENGAGEMENT

Creating a climate where people are motivated to do their best to help the organization achieve its objectives.

### TALENTED

- Creates a positive and motivating working environment.
- Knows what motivates different people and aligns work accordingly.
- Gives others appropriate latitude to get work done.
- Invites input from others.
- Makes people feel that their contributions are visible and valued.

### SKILLED

- Structures the work so it aligns with people's goals and motivators.
- Empowers others.
- Makes each person feel his/her contributions are important.
- Invites input and shares ownership and visibility.
- Shows a clear connection between people's motivators and the organizational goals.

### LESS SKILLED

- Has little insight into what motivates others.
- Doesn't give people enough flexibility and autonomy to do their work.
- Does little to create enthusiasm.
- Is unwilling to share ownership and give up control of assignments.

### OVERUSED SKILL

- May accommodate others' motivators at the expense of getting needed work done.
- May empower beyond people's capacity.
- May avoid giving constructive feedback if it could negatively impact engagement.

## AVERA MISSION

Avera is a health ministry rooted in the Gospel. Our mission is to make a positive impact in the lives and health of persons and communities by providing quality services guided by Christian values.

## AVERA VALUES

In caring together for life, the Avera community is guided by the Gospel values of compassion, hospitality and stewardship.

### Compassion

The compassion of Jesus, especially for the poor and the sick of body and spirit, shapes the manner in which health care is delivered by Avera's employees, physicians, administrators, volunteers and sponsors. Compassionate caring is expressed through sensitive listening and responding, understanding, support, patience and healing touch.

### Hospitality

The encounters of Jesus with each person were typified by openness and mutuality. A welcoming presence, attentiveness to needs, and a gracious manner seasoned with a sense of humor, are expressions of hospitality in and by the Avera community.

### Stewardship

Threaded through the mission of Jesus was the restoration of all the world to right relationship with its Creator. In that same spirit and mission, the members of Avera treat persons, organizational power and earth's resources with justice and responsibility. Respect, truth and integrity are foundational to right relationships among those who serve and those who are served.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## AVERA LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

### 1 – 3 – 5 Personal Action Plan

1 Main Goal

---

---

3 Strategies to achieve the goal (plan of action)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

---

2. \_\_\_\_\_

---

3. \_\_\_\_\_

---

5 Action Steps for completing each strategy  
(the tactic that supports the strategy)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

---

2. \_\_\_\_\_

---

3. \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. \_\_\_\_\_

---

5. \_\_\_\_\_

---

## AVERA LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

### 1 – 3 – 5 Personal Action Plan

**EXAMPLE:**

1 Main Goal

Enhance my Leadership Courage skills from being skilled to talented.

---

3 Strategies to achieve the goal (plan of action)

1. Provide timely constructive feedback to employees

---

2. Provide clear expectations after every meeting.

---

3. Promote team building within our department to help myself and our team members enhance their collaboration.

---

5 Action Steps for completing each strategy  
(the tactic that supports the strategy)

1. Feedback: Ask my next employee to meet privately with me and visit about their situation. Focus on the behavior and not the person

---

2. Expectations: Prior to each meeting take 5 minutes to reflect on the content to ensure I am able to provide clear expectations.

---

3. Host a DISC session with our team

---

4. Team Building: Include team building activities at our meetings. Use resources from the Retention Engine on the KnowledgeNet.

---

5. \_\_\_\_\_

---







Avera Leadership Development  
605-322-8958