**The local government skills framework**

To deliver its vital services, councils require a varied skillset and experience. Whatever experience you may have or role you may be in, it is important to continuously review your skills and identify opportunities for development. The local government skills framework highlights skills that are important for our sector. Remember, there may be specific skills you need to concentrate on that are related to your role.

You may want to use the local government skills framework with your line manager during your one to ones or annual appraisals to agree opportunities for developing your skills.

**Professional Communication**

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| **Skill** | **Details** | **Self-Assessment**  **1 (requires improvement - 5 excellent)** | **Ideas to Improve**  **Some useful resources, tools, and ideas to improve the associated skill. You will need to think of other ways to improve your skills which will be personal to you. Consider discussing this with your mentor or manager.** |
| Influence and persuasive communication | The ability to shape or reinforce the decisions and actions of others. Consider the use of evidence and explanation, and how best your viewpoint can be presented for your audience. |  | The Rhetoric Triangle, the different elements to persuasion.  Ask for a mentor, someone who you think is persuasive |
| Adapting communication for audience | Awareness of your audience and how to adapt your communication. This includes the tone, level of formality, complexity of language, the use of visual and audible methods, and the distillation of complex ideas into understandable chunks. Pay attention to the needs of individuals and consider their preferences to optimise communication. |  | Improving communication and collaboration through [Emergenetics](https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/workforce-and-hr-support/creating-effective-teams-emergenetics-psychometric-profiling) |
| Active listening | Attentively listening to an individual or group, understanding what they are saying, responding and reflecting on what has been communicated in an effective manner. Take action to check your understanding and demonstrate your engagement. Use listening to progress your understanding of both the topic and the individual. |  | Practice summarising and paraphrasing.  Ask appropriate questions to clarify and demonstrate interest. |
| Diplomacy and negotiation | A dialogue between two or more people to reach an agreeable outcome for all parties in a diplomatic manner. This could be both formally and informally through various means of communication and will rely on mutual compromise. Relationship building, tact, and mutual respect are key. |  | Shadow colleagues in meetings and reflect on their negotiation style. |
| Critical thinking | Consider multiple sources of information to form opinions and make decisions. Do not rely on your gut feeling, ensure that other points of view are considered and given relevant weighting. Think about where the information you are considering comes from. |  | Practice asking open questions to inform your decisions.  When evaluating pieces of information use RAVEN to inform your choices. **Reputation** (who has the information come from? Could this impact what they are saying?) **Ability to observe** (is the information provider in a position to provide real evidence on the topic?) **Vested interest** (Does the information provider have a reason for presenting the facts in a specific way?) **Expertise** (Does the information provider have sufficient knowledge or experience of the topic?) **Neutrality** (Is the information biased or one sided?) |

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| **Skill** | **Details** | **Self-Assessment**  **1 (requires improvement - 5 excellent)** | **Useful resources** |
| Political sensitivity | The ability to consider your political environment in your behaviours and communication. This may include tailoring your communication to avoid causing offense over a topic of political nature. Be aware that issues that are no sensitive or important to you may be to others. |  | Keep up to date with current affairs. |
| Customer focus | Support clients to create a positive customer experience and establish relations with customers. Being able to solve problems that may directly or indirectly impact the organisation’s customers. Councils exist to provide services and serve the public, all work conducted will impact the public whether or not this is directly public facing. |  | If not in a frontline team, ask if you can shadow their work to develop your understanding of the influence your work has on others’ lives. |
| Collaboration | The ability to utilise the thoughts and suggestions of others and incorporate these with your own to strengthen your work and successfully achieve a common goal. This requires professional communication skills and an ability to adjust your ideas in line others to ensure you achieve the best outputs. |  | Improving communication and collaboration through [Emergenetics](https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/workforce-and-hr-support/creating-effective-teams-emergenetics-psychometric-profiling) |
| Cross-cultural awareness | An awareness that cultural differences exist, such as with values, beliefs and identities. Extend the awareness in practice by considering any differences between cultures and community groups and use this to contextualise your decisions and actions. |  | Join different networks run by your council and the wider sector to understand cultural differences. |
| Tact and discretion | Communicating in challenging situations by considering the emotions of others and being careful about what is communicated. Consider word choice, your delivery, and the timing of the message. Avoid causing offence and revealing confidential information. |  | Reflection is key, ask your managers and colleagues on how you could improve this. |
| Build relationships | Make efforts to foster positive relationships with those in your team and in your extended network. These are not friendships, but professional connections which will help co-working. Relationships are crucial for cross-departmental and general team working as this can facilitate collaboration, negotiation and conflict management. |  | Engage with other departments or teams to understand their priorities and how their work links to your role.  Attend any opportunities to meet new colleagues. |

**People skills**

**Business skills**

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| **Skill** | **Details** | **Self-Assessment**  **1 (requires improvement - 5 excellent)** | **Useful resources** |
| Digital skills | The ability to use various technology including computer software and applications, digital devices and other means. Local authorities are embracing technology and the use of AI, so it is important to develop your digital skills and maintain your skill set with the flexibility that changes in digitalisation will bring. |  | Research what training is available through your organisation. There may be free online courses available to support your development. |
| Administration | An ability to complete day-to-day tasks which are required for services to operate effectively. This includes email writing, diary management, inbox management, signposting to the correct people, completing daily tasks and reporting. |  | Utilise guides on office management such as [Best practices for Outlook - Microsoft Support](https://support.microsoft.com/en-gb/office/best-practices-for-outlook-f90e5f69-8832-4d89-95b3-bfdf76c82ef8). |
| Stakeholder management | Understanding the relevance of external bodies to particular projects of themes of work and working with these groups as required to support your work. Consider how you will manage, monitor, and engage with stakeholders depending on their importance to the project. |  | Consider Power/Impact charts to organise priorities and strategies. |
| Workload management | Maintaining control over your daily tasks and projects. Prioritising different pieces of work, and keeping an accurate record of your different tasks and what needs completing when by. Ensuring you leave sufficient time to complete tasks, and keeping a balance over the amount of work you have. |  | Tools include tick-lists, Gantt charts, post-it notes, and utilising your online calendar. |

**Mindset**

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| **Skill** | **Details** | **Self-Assessment**  **1 (requires improvement - 5 excellent)** | **Useful resources** |
| Confidence | Believing in your own abilities, judgements and qualities. This does not mean having total self-belief, it is having an accurate perception of yourself and trusting in your actions and self in line with this. |  | Confidence may develop through expanding your knowledge of certain areas. Consider working with other colleagues and teams to develop your knowledge. |
| Resilience | Carrying on and recovering when faced with challenges or change. Not giving up when in difficulty, and coping with stressors in the workplace, and putting in place measures and techniques to help you do so. |  | The NHS has a guide on building resilience more generally, which is applicable in work environments too: [Bouncing back from life's challenges - Every Mind Matters - NHS (www.nhs.uk)](https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/self-help-cbt-techniques/bouncing-back-from-lifes-challenges/) |
| Adaptability | Being able to change and respond when faced with changes in the workplace. Having an open mindset and being willing to consider new options which you may not have previously considered or encountered. |  | Consider working out of your comfort zone or on tasks that are not in your usual remit. |
| Taking ownership | Accepting accountability for your decisions and actions, whether good or bad. Accept feedback and continually revisit it to make sure that you are taking ownership of your actions and work, and improving upon these. |  | Volunteer yourself for opportunities and projects which enable you to develop your responsibility. |
| Emotional intelligence | Awareness of the emotions of those around you and using this knowledge to tailor your communication. Consider individual’s contexts, and their behavioural cues such as (when possible) facial expressions, body language and what they are saying to inform you as to how to conduct yourself. |  | Understand your own emotions and how you respond to others. You could track when you feel a strong emotion. |

**Skills Development Plan**

Use this as an opportunity to reflect on your skills and identify opportunities to develop these. You may want to work with your line manager, a mentor or other colleagues. You may want to link these opportunities to your own personal development plan.

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| **Skill** | **Opportunities for development**  *Examples could include shadowing colleagues, attending courses or learning on the job.* | **Timeframe** | **Progress** |
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