Client Case Study

HRSG

Implementing Competencies Quickly with Software

Adaptavist

ABOUT ADAPTAVIST:

Adaptavist, an organization with hundreds of employees spread out across four worldwide offices, provides consulting, training and implementation support for businesses using Atlassian software — a suite of tools that supports organizational communication, development, project and product planning.

The Challenge

With Adaptavist entering a phase of rapid growth, Neil Penny, the organization's newly-appointed Learning and Development Consultant, had a daunting task on his hands: how to bring structure to his quickly-expanding organization?

"We were acutely aware that HR needed to do more than just the personnel," Neil said of the early internal discussions. "A lot of that involved — how do we actually grow teams? And how do we put structure in place for those teams to work? And for career development to happen, where do we even start?"

HRSG

For Adaptavist, Neil was a great fit — having built custom competencies in the past, as a way to answer some of those same questions. So, he set out with a good understanding of what needed to be done.

"My overall view was that we needed to create a grade level structure within a team, and ultimately every team across the business. Within a team, we needed to be clear as to the roles that currently existed and the specific experience and skills needed at each level within the grade level structure," Neil said.

"Then, what are the details of those roles… 'what's the difference between 'x' role at this level vs. the same role at the next level up?'"
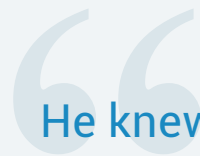
> " He knew that he'd found something that could help him match the rapid pace at which his company was growing.

Building Roles Quickly

One of the main challenges he faced in taking on this massive project that involved mapping competencies to every role in his organization was time.

Having worked on similar process improvements in the past, Neil knew that the project would be intensive. So, he began to research options as to how to speed up the development and implementation of competencies.

When he found CompetencyCore and HRSG's library of pre-built, battle-tested competency content, he knew that he'd found something that could help him match the rapid pace at which his company was growing.

"I knew I needed to hit the ground running," he said. "The ability to have on-hand, pre-built competencies that I could just pull down from a library was an important motivator. In previous efforts where I've done this, I had to build them all from scratch… And that's where CompetencyCore, and competencies came in — to allow me to do this at scale with the growth of the business."

Finding the Right Balance

Being in a highly technical organization, and given his past experience, Neil also understood that he had to strike the right balance when building competency profiles for roles.

The competencies couldn't be too generic; they needed to contain actionable, measurable behavioral indicators and skills in order to foster both a tangible understanding on the part of the employees, as well as activities like employee assessments down the line.

At the same time, he had to avoid turning the roles into overly-detailed checklists of activities.

"A lot of the time I find that companies either massively overcomplicate it, or just seem to get it plain wrong. You need to give people some guidance, but you don't need to give them a checklist. It can't work that way," he said. "And an employee — particularly a technical employee — won't get this. It won't work for them."

With that in mind, he used CompetencyCore's included competency libraries as the basis for developing his organization's accurate, highly relevant competency profiles.

Once Neil got into the tool, it significantly accelerated the process of building and customizing competencies, linking them with roles and building an organizational competency hierarchy.

Given the specialized nature of his organization, there was definitely some customization required, but the head start that CompetencyCore's libraries provided saved him hundreds of hours of labor, he estimated.
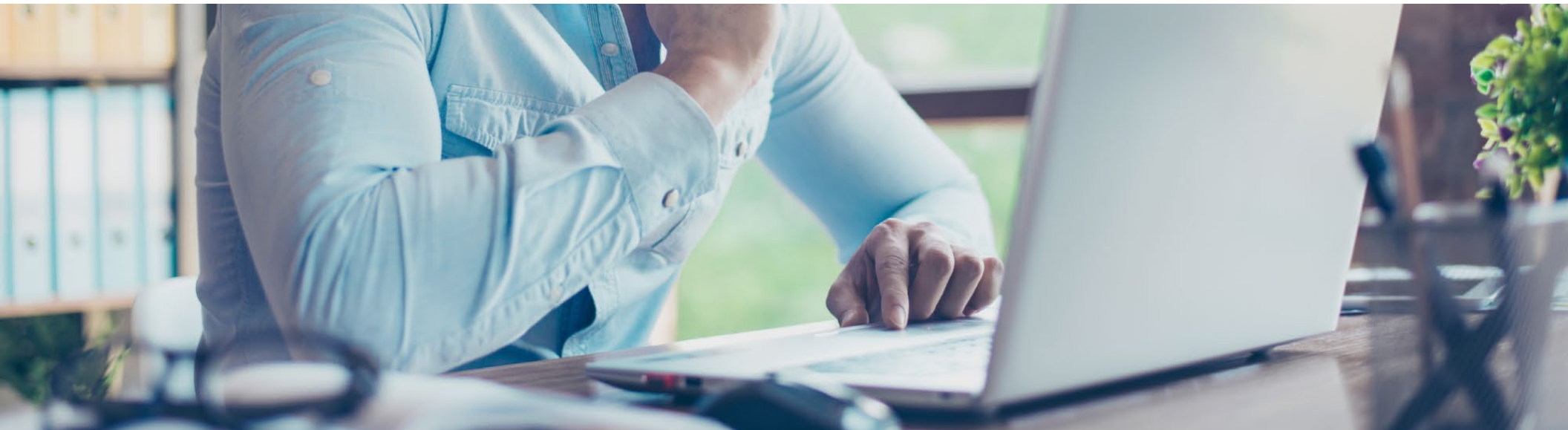
The CompetencyCore Experience

Beyond the competency content within the software, CompetencyCore provided the intuitive tools for Neil to effectively take on his project at scale.

"The tool made it easy for me to customize the competencies and drop them into the libraries, drop them into the roles really quickly," he said. "Open up the software, break out the libraries, review with the team lead and drop some competencies in and play a bit with the levels. With that, we had a first cut of a role ready for review in 5 or 10 minutes."

Neil was able to push a project that could have potentially taken years down into a span of several months. In fact, he's been able to implement competency profiles for all pertinent technical roles in his organization.

Job: Accountant

Summary

- ◆◆ Competencies
- 📄 Responsibilities
- 📚 Knowledge Areas
- 🎓 Education

◆◆ Competencies

Accounting and Reporting	Level 3
Reconciliation and Analysis	Level 2
Attention to Detail	Level 3
Fostering Communication	Level 3
Auditing	Level 2

Feedback Thus Far

With that, it's time to take stock of the program internally.

"Some teams are almost coming up to their one year anniversary, and that's where I'll sit down with the heads of departments again and we'll start to review the roles," he said.

The informal feedback he's received so far has been glowing — highlighted by a chat with one of the company's employees that he had recently.

"He's a very cynical, typical engineering kind-of-guy," Neil said with a laugh. "And his response was, and I quote, 'this is really good. [Much better than the stuff] we had previously… I now actually know what my role here is. I know what I'm being asked to do.'"

Feedback from management at Adaptavist has echoed the same themes.

"[They've told me] this makes it so much easier for us to have a constructive conversation with an employee because it gives us the framework; it gives us the parameters of the things that we should be talking about in relation to their role," Neil recalled.

> ❝ Here's the clarity. Here's the structure. Here's some guidance. And it's designed to be flexible.

Overall, Neil is pleased with the program and structure that he's been able to put into place, with a big helping hand from HRSG's CompetencyCore software.

"That was always my aim: it was never to be, 'hey, this is the rulebook for the roles,'" he said. "It was, 'here's the clarity. Here's the structure. Here's some guidance. And it's designed to be flexible.'"

"The focus has got to be… to get people to realize that their work is about learning, that they should be able to give us examples that will absolutely hit some of the competencies that make up the roles, as long as we've got the role right. And for the most part, I'm pretty confident that the competencies for the roles are right."

About CompetencyCore

CompetencyCore is competency-driven job description management software that enables you to elevate your process and empower your people. CompetencyCore helps you define job requirements with competencies so you can make sure you are hiring, retaining and developing the best people.

Our competency-first job description and career management tools make it possible to implement competencies easier than ever to deliver tangible value quickly.

Book your demo today to see how CompetencyCore can help your organization.

Book Your Demo

ABOUT HRSG

For three decades, HRSG has delivered products and services to define talent needs, address skill deficiencies and improve individual and organizational performance.

Our Products division has distilled that 30 years of expertise into a competency, job description and career management software solution. Leveraging the power of AI, CompetencyCore™ is unlike any other product on the market, bringing together the power of competencies and the utility of job descriptions.

Our Talent Management Solutions division delivers best practice professional services in competency-based management, testing and assessment. In addition, we train HR professionals worldwide in our competency-based management methodologies.

To learn more about how HRSG's software makes HR professionals proactive and in-control, visit us at www.hrsg.ca or call 1-866-574-7041 x600.

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