Introducing the Seven Competency Areas

Overview

Having laid the groundwork establishing the need and validation for organizational competency in Part 1, the purpose of Part 2 is to provide the reader with a solid introduction to each of the seven organizational competency areas:

1. *Visionary Leadership/Empowerment:* collaborative leadership to reach the shared vision

2. *Communication:* dynamic process grounded in respect for diverse voices

3. *Information Management:* using technology to manage the transfer of information to end-users

4. *Assessment, Planning, and Evaluation:* the continuous quality improvement cycle

5. *Partnership and Collaboration:* optimizing performance through shared resources and responsibility

6. *Systems Thinking:* future-oriented problem solving and decision making

7. *Promoting Health and Preventing Disease:* putting the science and art of public health into action

Each competency area is expressed differently as a function of *where* it is being practiced. Systems thinking will look one way when a nurse is consulting with a patient; it will look different when it is applied to how a chief financial officer might reengineer an agency billing process, and be different still again when utilized in strategizing a community-wide response to teen pregnancy. For each competency area, we will examine three distinct customer settings:

1. Individual/Client

2. Organization

3. Community

Similarly, while the development of each competency area is essential across the institution, how it is expressed varies as a function of who is practicing it. In other words, how visionary leadership is practiced by an agency director will be markedly different from how the same competency is expressed by a nutritionist or a billing clerk. The competency of each party matters, but its expression will look very different. For each competency area, we will examine the following three organizational levels:

1. Senior Management   **2. Credentialed/Supervisory**   **3. Technical/Support Staff**

The body of this part will contain a brief summary of the seven competency areas, what we mean by customer setting and organizational level, and an in-depth exploration of each competency and subcompetency area.