Skills Matrix: How to create a skills matrix

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A Skills Matrix is a tool that shows people's proficiency in specific knowledge and competencies and their willingness to work on assignments that need these skills and knowledge. Whether you have control over who is assigned to your project team or people are assigned to your team without your involvement, you must understand what each team member is capable of. A skills matrix is a technique used in the workplace to identify the talents required for a team to execute a project successfully. This matrix could include both talents that team members already have and skills that need development.

It manages, plans, and tracks existing and desired talents for a certain function, team, department, project, or firm.

Organizations may readily see where employees are succeeding and where they need to improve by building a skills matrix. A well-designed skills matrix is beneficial to a business since it can assist HR managers and learning and development specialists in creating create personalized training programs for each employee. It can also help you save money on overhead and improve staff morale. It is great to create a database of talents that updates itself as people complete training courses.

Additionally, adopting an employee skills matrix chart will help you to see who has the skills to work on various jobs at a glance. It's critical to provide your staff with broad and particular skills when building a well-balanced team. However, not everyone will achieve the same level of proficiency, so you need to know who is the best choice when you require someone who is an expert in a certain ability. A project may require mediocre proficiency in numerous tasks, or three people with great ability in three different abilities may be required. In any event, having several skill matrix levels set for each employee from the start can aid you in selecting the ideal worker for each project.

Below is an example of a simple skills matrix for an IT software development team:

Capabilities	Jerry		Sophie		Kate		David	
	Proficiency	Interest	Proficiency	Interest	Proficiency	Interest	Proficiency	Interest
Front-end development	5	1	1	0	1	1	2	1
Back-end development	2	1	4	1	0	0	2	1
Storage management	0	0	3	1	1	1	0	0
Quality assurance	2	1	0	0	3	1	1	1
Testing	2	1	0	0	1	1	5	1
Development Operations	2	1	0	0	5	1	0	0

Proficiency levels
0 = No capability
1 = Basic proficiency
2 = Some experience
3 = Average expertise
4 = Advanced
5 = Expert

Interest
0 = Has no interest in applying this capability
1 = Is interested in applying this capability

Why are skills matrices important?

Employee Learning & Development (L&D) is one of HR managers' and L&D professionals' most critical responsibilities. Businesses can gain a competitive advantage, raise profitability, and enhance retention by evaluating employee performance and training them on relevant skills.

According to the LinkedIn Workplace Learning Report 2019, 94 percent of employees said that if their employers invested more in their learning and development, they would remain longer. Since the onset of the coronavirus epidemic, the dynamics of recruiting, firing, and work have shifted dramatically.

According to a Statista analysis, 4.4 million Americans lost their employment in September. When many people abandon their employment, businesses must be more agile than ever before to stay competitive and retain personnel.

According to the LinkedIn Report 2021, top L&D professionals believe that reskilling and upskilling is a high priorities for them.

However, it is not always easy to decide on what skills are needed to prepare staff for future projects and difficulties. A skills matrix can help in this situation.

The matrix assists HR managers by offering a visual representation of employee skills. It can identify talent shortages, assign personnel to appropriate projects, and create training programs.

Matrices are practically required for firms that have adopted talent pool management approaches. HR managers and project heads are the most likely to employ them. You can detect any weak links or weaknesses in terms of skills and who has particular qualifications and accreditation to carry out any given activity, using skills matrices.
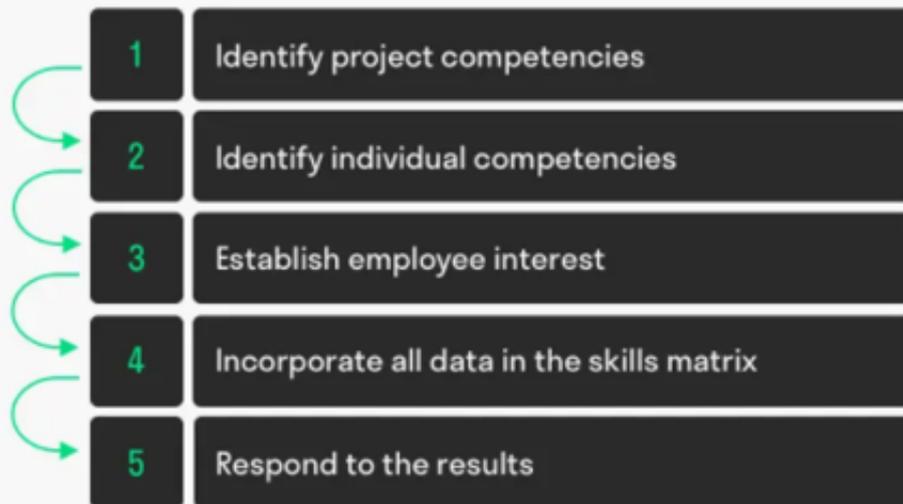
Let's go over how a skills matrix might benefit your organization in further detail.

Benefits of Skills Matrices

Skills matrices are beneficial for the following reasons:

Skills Matrix steps — toolshero

1. Identify project competencies
2. Identify individual competencies
3. Establish employee interest
4. Incorporate all data in the skills matrix
5. Respond to the results

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1. Determination of critical tasks and criteria

Because they illustrate the talents and qualifications inside your company so simply and concisely, skills matrices allow you to quickly and effortlessly identify important jobs and current requirements effortlessly and rapidly.

There are probably some duties in your firm that only a few people are qualified to perform. If this is the case, you can devise a strategy to train and qualify more personnel to perform these vital activities.

2. Identifying the right personnel

You can use a skills matrix to find the proper people for the job, task, or project. It will assist managers in informing better and more productive teams and filling vacancies with the best individuals for the job.

3. Determine which skills are lacking

Skills matrices can assist you in figuring out what skills you are missing in a team, department, or the entire firm.

If your employees lack key business-critical skills or expertise, while your competitors do, your company will be at a significant disadvantage.

4. Determine the disconnection between employees, teams, and departments

Knowing where you lack the necessary abilities might help your company save time and money.

5. Keep track of your employees' development.

Skills matrices provide information to the L&D department that can be used to identify what training is required for employees. They can find training opportunities by using the skills matrix. The skill matrix can also be used as a framework for career planning and development for employees. Creating a learning path is easier when you know what skills are required for the next level or promotion.

Using a skill matrix, it's simple to find the people in your company who have the most valuable expertise and track the advancement of important personnel. These are crucial employees, and it's vital to know who they are and whether or not they're happy.

It may also identify employees who deserve to be promoted or thanked.

6. Assist HR in identifying the ideal candidate

It's simpler to figure out what skill set you've lost and who you need to employ if someone leaves your firm when you utilize a skills matrix.

It helps the HR department simplify the hiring process and hire individuals with the appropriate skills, resulting in a more efficient process and a better final product.

7. Provides adaptability and versatility

Skills matrices are incredibly flexible and versatile tools that teams can utilize. They also allow you to design personalized solutions. **Employees are assisted in identifying their strengths and weaknesses.**

Employees can use the skills matrix to determine their strengths and limitations. This knowledge can assist them in selecting projects and tasks that are a good fit for their abilities while also allowing them to work on their deficiencies.

8. Internal mobility within the organization is improved

The movement of employees within an organization is referred to as internal mobility. Companies might use a skills matrix to place internal staff in roles instead of hunting for the perfect applicant outside the business.

9. Identify training needs and assign assignments using the skills matrix

Create training and development initiatives for employees in advancing their careers. Consider bringing in a trainer to offer a workshop if any of your employees lack certain abilities.

How to create a skills matrix

A skills matrix can be created by following the steps below:

Step 1: Determine the project's competencies

Each project has its own set of knowledge and skill needs. Determine which components are critical, which competencies are essential, and which specialized talents are still needed. These competencies should be divided and placed on the left side of the Skills Matrix.

Soft skills such as communication, collaboration, and emotional intelligence are just as important as technical or core competencies.

A software engineer working with a customer, for example, must be skilled in teamwork and communication, in addition to technical abilities such as programming and data analysis.

Step 2: Determine each person's strengths and weaknesses

Now conduct interviews with all of the team or group members. Discuss their abilities, knowledge, and passions in relation to the project or task goals. Explain that you're searching for the proper level of competency for the job so that the right people can be assigned the right responsibilities.

Employers' methods for evaluating their workforce's talents differ from one organization to another.

The following are some common methods for grading and categorizing employees' abilities:

- Recommendations from their manager or direct supervisors.
- Requesting that workers self-declare their talents, interests, and level of expertise.
- Graded Assessments

Step 3: Determine whether or not employees are interested in working for you

When determining individual skills, it is also vital to consider if individuals are willing to take on various responsibilities. Try to figure out why someone is not interested in executing a task so you can adapt it to something more appealing to them.

Step 4: Fill in the Skills Matrix with all of the information

Collect all the information from the Skill Matrix preparation phase and paste it into the template.

Excel is one of the most frequent tools for creating a skills matrix. To make a skills matrix in an Excel document, follow the instructions below.

1. Create a table or matrix called "Skills or Competency" with the skills stated in the first column.
2. In the "Name" column, write the team members' names horizontally.
3. Under Name, add the columns "Expertise" and "Interest."
4. Add the information about your skill and level of interest that you gathered earlier.

This will give you an insight into each employee's capabilities. Sort the skills into groups depending on their value in completing a practical project.

Click the link below for examples of skills matrices:

https://www.zavvy.io/blog/skill-matrix#templates

Important things to remember when creating a skills matrix

There are a few basic blunders to avoid when building a skills matrix.

- Do not construct a skills matrix without examining the talents required for a successful project. This will guarantee that your approach is comprehensive, considering both employee and company viewpoints.
- Remember to highlight talents that are required for success in each role.
- Remember to assign skills to team members and roles as needed. This will ensure that the skills matrix is accurate.

Skills matrices can help you recruit and retain the right personnel

Conclusion

The Skills Matrix gives an accurate picture of a team's knowledge and skills when utilized correctly. It can inform you if you have the skills to complete a project or complete certain tasks.

When a team is missing certain key abilities, it is called a skills gap

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