The Eight Competencies

A scoring rubric for one young man, in fifteen minutes

Take one resident you know well. For each of the eight competencies below, read the six levels and mark the one that describes his typical conduct. Not his best day, and not his worst day: typical. Score what he does, not what he says he could do, and score from conduct and conversation you have observed; where you have not observed, leave the row blank rather than guess.

> **What the scores mean.** 0 to 1: the competency operates below awareness. 2: emerging; it activates under favorable conditions and fails under pressure. 3: functional, the minimum target for all eight; it works in most daily situations. 4 to 5: strong; it holds under moderate to significant pressure.

Inner Observer

His ability to watch his own thinking, feeling, and reacting as it happens, without getting swept into it.

- ☐ **0** He rarely notices what he is thinking or feeling until after he has already acted on it. Most of his reactions happen automatically.
- ☐ **1** He sometimes catches himself mid-reaction and thinks, “Why did I just do that?” but only after the fact.
- ☐ **2** In calm, low-pressure situations, he can watch his thoughts move without following them. Under stress, this ability disappears.
- ☐ **3** He can identify what he is thinking and feeling during most daily interactions, even mildly stressful ones. He notices patterns in his reactions over the course of a week.
- ☐ **4** His ability to observe himself operates during most interactions, including moderately stressful ones. He can describe his internal state to someone else while it is happening.
- ☐ **5** He can deploy and release self-observation deliberately. He notices patterns across weeks and months. Under significant stress, the observer remains active.

Impulse Modulation

His ability to override an impulse in either direction: restraining himself from doing what he should not, and making himself do what he should.

- ☐ **0** When an impulse arises, he acts on it automatically. The gap between impulse and action is zero.
- ☐ **1** He recognizes some impulses after he has already acted on them. He can describe the pattern in retrospect.
- ☐ **2** He sometimes catches an impulse in real time and chooses to delay or redirect. This works for mild impulses but fails under stress or fatigue.
- ☐ **3** He reliably identifies most daily impulses as they arise and can override moderate ones. He has built at least one habit that requires regular impulse control.
- ☐ **4** Impulse override works in moderately stressful situations. He can sit with significant discomfort without acting to relieve it for an extended period.
- ☐ **5** Impulse modulation operates near-automatically. He can maintain discipline under significant stress. Others may describe him as disciplined or composed.

Emotional Modulation

His ability to feel his emotions fully, name them accurately, extract the information they carry, and act on that information rather than being hijacked by the feeling.

- ☐ **0** He often cannot name what he is feeling. Emotions hit as a general storm without clear differentiation. Emotional reactions frequently take over his behavior.
- ☐ **1** He can identify what he was feeling after the situation has passed. In the moment, emotions still run the show.
- ☐ **2** In calm situations, he can name his emotions as they arise and sit with them. In heated moments, the emotion still takes over before he can process it.
- ☐ **3** He can name and sit with his emotions during most daily situations, including mildly difficult ones. He has begun to notice that emotions carry information.
- ☐ **4** Emotional literacy operates fluently. He can identify mixed emotions, trace them to sources, and use that information to guide his response. Emotional hijack is rare and recoverable.
- ☐ **5** He processes emotions rapidly and accurately, even under pressure. He can hold space for intense feelings without being destabilized. He distinguishes between what the emotion signals and what the emotion urges him to do.

Epistemic Updating

His ability to change his mind when the evidence warrants it: to revise beliefs, strategies, and assumptions that are producing poor results.

- ☐ **0** He treats his beliefs as facts. When something contradicts what he believes, his first response is to defend the belief or dismiss the evidence.
- ☐ **1** He acknowledges in principle that his beliefs could be wrong, but he cannot point to any specific belief he has updated recently.
- ☐ **2** He has identified at least one significant belief he held that turned out to be wrong, and he changed it. He is beginning to notice when his predictions fail.
- ☐ **3** He maintains awareness of his beliefs as models rather than facts. He has revised two or more significant beliefs based on evidence.
- ☐ **4** He tracks his predictions with some regularity. When something he expected does not happen, his default response is to update his model rather than defend it.
- ☐ **5** He holds all beliefs as models with explicit confidence levels. Updating is a reflex. He actively seeks evidence that might contradict what he believes.

Reality Correspondence

How accurately his internal picture of the world matches the world as it operates: incentives, constraints, causality, and the behavior of the systems and people around him. The distortion runs in both directions, what he hopes and what he fears.

- ☐ **0** He is regularly surprised by how people behave and how situations unfold. Plans fail frequently and he attributes this to bad luck or unfairness.
- ☐ **1** He notices after the fact that he misread a situation. The pattern repeats.
- ☐ **2** He can identify specific areas where his understanding was wrong, and he has adjusted. In familiar domains, his predictions are reasonably accurate. In unfamiliar ones, he defaults to assumptions.
- ☐ **3** He distinguishes between what he knows from direct experience and what he assumes. He understands that people respond to incentives and factors this into his planning.
- ☐ **4** His model produces accurate predictions in most domains. He can identify the incentives and constraints behind situations that confuse other people.
- ☐ **5** He perceives systems, incentives, and constraints with high accuracy across domains. His plans account for how things work, and they succeed at a rate that reflects this.

Constraint Subordination

His ability to accept the limits reality places on him and build within those limits rather than against them.

- ☐ **0** He spends considerable energy resisting, resenting, or ignoring the limits on his life. His plans are built around how he wishes things were rather than how they are.
- ☐ **1** He acknowledges that limits exist, but he struggles to accept them emotionally. His plans repeatedly bump against the same constraints.
- ☐ **2** In some areas, he has accepted the constraints and adjusted. In other areas, he still resists.
- ☐ **3** He accepts most constraints without resentment and builds his plans around them. He has stopped making the same plan that fails for the same reason.
- ☐ **4** He treats constraints as design parameters rather than obstacles. He identifies the limit that most constrains his progress and focuses effort there.
- ☐ **5** Constraint subordination is reflexive. He builds within limits as naturally as a river follows its channel. He grieves what cannot be changed and moves on.

Responsibility Internalization

His ability to treat the outcomes in his life as feedback about his own choices rather than as things that happened to him.

- ☐ **0** When things go wrong, his first response is to identify who or what is to blame. His explanations center on circumstances, other people, or bad luck.
- ☐ **1** He can acknowledge his role in past outcomes when prompted, but his default reaction to setbacks is still to look outward.
- ☐ **2** In some domains, he has taken ownership and changed behavior based on results. In other domains, he still defaults to external explanations.
- ☐ **3** His default response to a negative outcome is to ask, "What did I do or fail to do that contributed to this?" He focuses on what he can control.
- ☐ **4** Responsibility is his default posture. He treats outcomes as data about his choices. He takes ownership publicly, not only privately.
- ☐ **5** Internalized responsibility operates automatically. He rarely blames and quickly corrects when he does. His life reflects steady improvement driven by honest self-assessment.

Strategic Volition

His capacity to construct, select, and sustain a direction for long-term effort.

- ☐ **0** He has no identifiable direction. He drifts between reactive tasks and cannot answer the question, "What are you building?"
- ☐ **1** He is vaguely aware that direction is missing. He may state preferences, but his daily behavior does not back them.
- ☐ **2** He has identified interests his behavior actually backs, but he has not committed to a direction. No system is in place.
- ☐ **3** He has a clear next-phase direction supported by a system. He sustains effort most weeks and evaluates monthly.
- ☐ **4** He sustains directed effort consistently. His system is well designed. He can distinguish persistence from stubbornness.
- ☐ **5** His direction is producing compounding results. He can articulate what he is building and why. He moves between phases without crisis.

> **Reading the profile.** Three is functional, the minimum target for every competency. Scores of 0 to 2 mark skills that fail under pressure or never formed. His lowest score matters most: under load, a young man operates at the level of his weakest competency, so the lowest number on this page is the one capping the others, and it is where training starts.

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