



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PSPGOV515A Develop and use political nous

Revision Number: 3

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Modification History

| Release | TP Version | Comments |
|---------|------------|---|
| 3 | PSP12V1 | Unit descriptor edited. |
| 2 | PSP04V4.2 | Layout adjusted. No changes to content. |
| 1 | PSP04V4.1 | Primary release. |

Unit Descriptor

This unit covers the development and use of political nous to navigate and succeed in the political environment of the public sector. It includes identifying the political terrain, evaluating the political environment, forming alliances, and bargaining and negotiating to achieve outcomes.

In practice, developing and using political nous may overlap with other generalist or specialist public sector work activities such as acting ethically, complying with legislation, providing client service, leading a group, developing policy etc.

This is one of 3 units of competency in the *Working in Government* Competency Field that deal with government processes. Related units are:

- PSPGOV422A Apply government processes
- PSPGOV601B Apply government systems
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- No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication

Application of the Unit

Not applicable.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

Not applicable.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable.

Employability Skills Information

This unit contains employability skills.

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements are the essential outcomes of the unit of competency. Together, performance criteria specify the requirements for competent performance. Text in *bold italics* is explained in the Range Statement following.

Elements and Performance Criteria

| ELEMENT | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA |
|--|---|
| 1. Identify the political terrain | 1.1 <i>Stakeholder positions are identified</i> and taken account of. 1.2 Corporate politics are analysed to identify agendas and players. 1.3 Awareness of and sensitivity to political agendas, both open and hidden, are developed and utilised. 1.4 The current agenda is located in the wider context to appreciate the big picture and provide more than one perspective. 1.5 The impact of the agenda on the work area is identified and confirmed in accordance with organisational protocols. |
| 2. Evaluate the political environment | 2.1 Information is sourced from inside and outside the organisation, and its authenticity and reliability are confirmed. 2.2 An analysis of the political, social and economic environment is undertaken that takes into account emerging trends and current and possible future goals of the organisation. |
| 3. Form alliances | 3.1 Power structure and sources of <i>power</i> are identified in the organisation and the wider public sector. 3.2 People prepared to trade mutual support are identified and the benefits assessed. 3.3 Risks and benefits of possible alliances are weighed. 3.4 Interested groups/individuals are lobbied to gain support and acceptance of ideas/courses of action. 3.5 Influence is built with key policy makers, <i>decision makers</i> and key influencers, in accordance with public sector standards and legislation. |
| 4. Bargain and negotiate to achieve outcomes | 4.1 Sound positions are developed with supporting arguments. 4.2 Responses to possible contradictory positions are formulated. 4.3 Positions are negotiated and refined with feedback from the negotiation process. 4.4 Consensus with others is achieved for one's position. 4.5 Outcomes are implemented in accordance with organisational policy and procedures. |

Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the essential skills and knowledge and their level, required for this unit.

Skill requirements

Look for evidence that confirms skills in:

- applying legislation, regulations and policies relating to the public sector
- undertaking research and analysis
- using a range of communication activities such as negotiating, consulting, influencing, bargaining, resolving conflict, networking, etc
- responding to diversity, including gender and disability
- applying risk management strategies
- applying procedures relating to occupational health and safety and environment in the context of the political environment.

Knowledge requirements

Look for evidence that confirms knowledge and understanding of:

- legislation, regulations, policies, procedures and guidelines relating to the public sector environment
- organisational policies and procedures
- organisational and public sector power structures and sources of power
- macro view of agendas, positions, and power
- government directions and agendas
- equal employment opportunity, equity and diversity principles
- public sector legislation such as occupational health and safety and environment and sustainability

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide specifies the evidence required to demonstrate achievement in the unit of competency as a whole. It must be read in conjunction with the Unit descriptor, Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Public Sector Training Package.

Units to be assessed together

- *Pre-requisite* units that must be achieved prior to this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-requisite* units that must be assessed with this unit: *Nil*
- *Co-assessed units* that may be assessed with this unit to increase the efficiency and realism of the assessment process include, but are not limited to:
 - PSPETHC501B Promote the values and ethos of public service
 - PSPLEGN501B Promote compliance with legislation in the public sector
 - PSPGOV510A Undertake and promote career management
 - PSPGOV511A Provide leadership
 - PSPGOV512A Use complex workplace communication strategies
 - PSPGOV516A Develop and use emotional intelligence
 - PSPPOL501A Develop organisation policy.

Overview of evidence requirements

In addition to integrated demonstration of the elements and their related performance criteria, look for evidence that confirms:

- the knowledge requirements of this unit
- the skill requirements of this unit
- application of Employability Skills as they relate to this unit
- development and use of political nous in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time)

Resources required to carry out assessment

These resources include:

- legislation, policy, procedures and protocols relating to the public sector
- organisational and public sector power structures and sources of power
- case studies and workplace scenarios to capture the range of situations likely to be encountered when developing and using political nous

Where and how to assess evidence

Valid assessment of this unit requires:

- a workplace environment or one that closely resembles normal work practice and replicates the range of conditions likely to be encountered when developing and using political nous, including coping with difficulties, irregularities and breakdowns in routine

- development and use of political nous in a range of (3 or more) contexts (or occasions, over time).

Assessment methods should reflect workplace demands, such as literacy, and the needs of particular groups, such as:

- people with disabilities
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women
- young people
- older people
- people in rural and remote locations.

Assessment methods suitable for valid and reliable assessment of this competency may include, but are not limited to, a combination of 2 or more of:

- case studies
- portfolios
- questioning
- scenarios
- authenticated evidence from the workplace and/or training courses

For consistency of assessment

Evidence must be gathered over time in a range of contexts to ensure the person can achieve the unit outcome and apply the competency in different situations or environments

Range Statement

The Range Statement provides information about the context in which the unit of competency is carried out. The variables cater for differences between States and Territories and the Commonwealth, and between organisations and workplaces. They allow for different work requirements, work practices and knowledge. The Range Statement also provides a focus for assessment. It relates to the unit as a whole. Text in ***bold italics*** in the Performance Criteria is explained here.

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>Stakeholders</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people within the organisation and the public sector • public sector organisations • non-government organisations • community organisations • peak bodies • lobby groups • statutory bodies • industry groups • local government |
| <i>Identification of positions</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knowing who to talk to • recognising informal as well as formal structures • using personal profile within the organisation |
| <i>Power</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • positional power • coercive power • power in relationships • control of scarce resources • information and knowledge • interpersonal alliances |
| <i>Key decision makers</i> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • senior executive officers • government bodies • special interest groups • policy officers |

Unit Sector(s)

Not applicable.

Competency field

Working in Government.