

Core Competencies

For Recreation and Parks 1.0



CANADIAN PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES PARCS ET LOISIRS

Introduction

What are Core Competencies?

Core competencies are the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by recreation and parks professionals. Core competencies transcend the boundaries of specific domains and are independent of any program or topic. They provide the building blocks for effective recreation and parks practices. Together, these core competencies provide a solid foundation for the recreation and parks sector to fulfill its mandate.

How Were the Core Competencies Developed?

Education and professional development has always been a CPRA priority. Over the past few years, there has been a focused effort to establish a pan-Canadian approach to increasing the sector's capacity. Identifying core competencies is a critical element of this approach.

In 2009, ARPA undertook provincial consultation process to identify core competencies –*Vocational Competencies for Recreation and Parks Practitioners 2009*.

Conversations with recreation and parks stakeholders lead to first draft of 18 core competencies. In 2012, ARPA undertook a process to review these competencies. From this review a second draft of competencies was developed. The draft was shared with CPRA and has been enhanced by feedback from key stakeholders from across the country.

Core Competencies in Recreation and Parks 1.0 is put forward as a living document. It reflects the feedback and suggestion from pan-Canadian consultation and should be reviewed, in the same spirit, on a regular basis.

Who are the Core Competencies For?

The recreation and parks sector is comprised of individuals with a wide range of experiences and expertise. The core competencies are relevant to practitioners in any recreation and parks position. In broad terms, these individuals can be organized based on three different points of entry into the field:

- Individuals with a post-secondary training in recreation and parks,
- Individuals with post-secondary training in other areas, or
- Individuals with strong community connections and experience.

None of these groups are expected to have all of the core competencies. However, it is expected that over time, individuals within each group will use the core competencies as a tool for identifying and obtain a balance of competencies that are appropriate to their role and organization.

Why Do We Need Core Competencies?

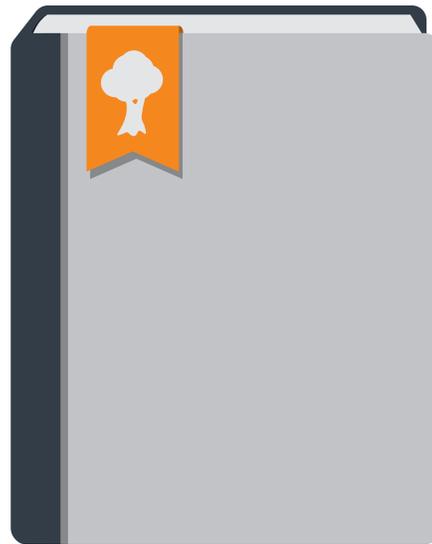
Guiding Principles

Increasing the level of professionalism within the field of practice requires a commitment to continuous improvement. The core competencies are a tool for assessing personal strengths and weaknesses and are essential for charting a journey of professional development. They also help increase a member's capacity to perform his or her role or advance his or her career.

Ensuring that recreation and parks practitioners acquire and maintain a balanced competency profile is a shared responsibility. Individuals must actively seek out and engage in professional development opportunities. It is also important that employers, CPRA, P/T Associations, educational institutions, consultants, other professional organizations, and governments at the federal, provincial/ territorial and local levels, support these individuals.

Core Competencies

The 19 core competencies have been organized under five categories: foundations, leadership, community building, service development, organizational management.



1 Foundations

This category includes key knowledge and critical thinking skills related to the values, attitudes, and philosophies on which the recreation and parks sector is founded.

A recreation and parks practitioner is able to...

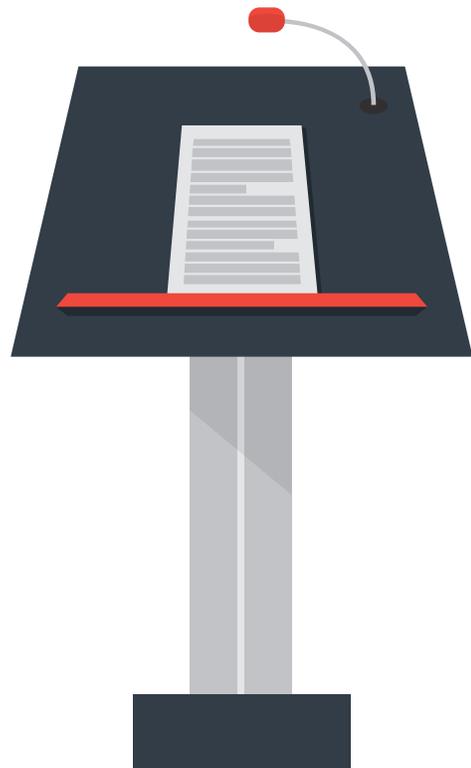
- 1.1 Understand and promote the important role that recreation and parks plays in securing a high quality of life and wellbeing for Canadians.
- 1.2 Apply diversity and inclusion ideals in all aspects of practice.
- 1.3 Demonstrate the ability to pursue lifelong learning opportunities in the recreation and parks sector.
- 1.4 Build and support partnerships and collaborations with other groups or sectors that are invested in improving quality of life and wellbeing for Canadians.

2 Leadership

This category identifies core competencies needed to influence and transform personal, organizational, and community capacity to create and pursue a shared vision.

A recreation and parks practitioner is able to...

- 2.1** Facilitate growth and development among individuals and groups that work together to achieve common goals within the recreation and parks sector.
- 2.2** Demonstrate the principles of change management and is able to position organizations and communities to respond to current issues.
- 2.3** Apply critical thinking and vision skills to foster attitudes and actions, such as strategic planning, that position the recreation and parks sector at the forefront of sector specific, national, and global issues.

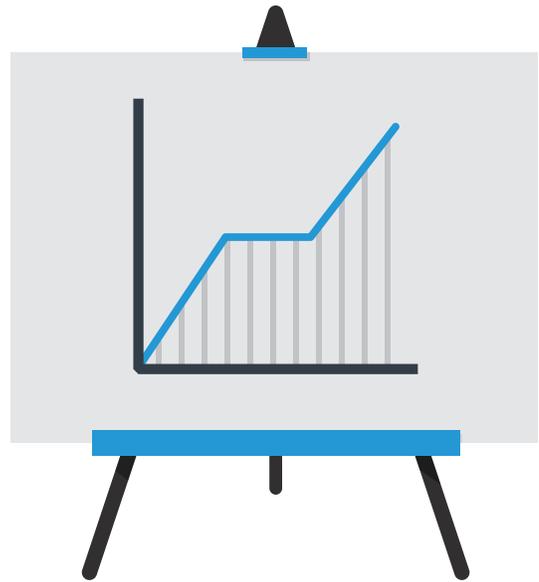
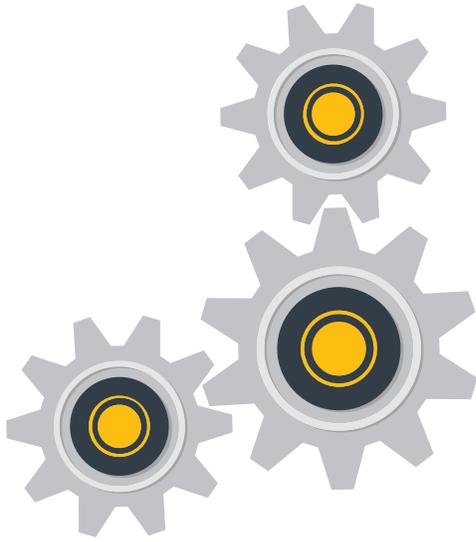


3 Community Building

These core competencies are central to engaging communities in a positive process for creating and sustaining recreation and parks opportunities that meet their specific conditions and demands.

A recreation and parks practitioner is able to...

- 3.1** Apply the principles and practices of community development to recreation and parks initiatives.
- 3.2** Advocate for, and support recreation and parks as a vehicle for enhancing citizenship.
- 3.3** Facilitate organizational and community capacity to engage in positive dialogue on issues related to, or affecting, recreation and parks.



4 Service Development

This category of core competencies is tied to the knowledge and skills needed to create, implement, and evaluate various service activities.

A recreation and parks practitioner is able to...

- 4.1 Design and deliver programs and events that draw on existing practices in recreation and parks.
- 4.2 Access, engage, and utilize research initiatives that can catalogue and advance recreation and parks understanding and practice.
- 4.3 Engage a variety of critical thinking skills to problem solving approaches in order to align services with strategic direction in the recreation and parks sector.
- 4.4 Understand and leverage the relationship between legislation, standards, policies, and regulations in order to improve the development and maintenance of recreation and parks venues.
- 4.5 Understand and leverage the relationship between legislation, standards, policies, and regulations in order to advance the role of recreation and parks practitioners as environmental stewards.

5 Organizational Management

This category of core competencies focuses on the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to ensure organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

A recreation and parks practitioner is able to...

- 5.1 Incorporate human resource theory and practices in order to sustain and improve employee, volunteer and participant safety and satisfaction.
- 5.2 Engage in decision-making and operational practices that maximize personal and organizational administrative capacities.
- 5.3 Analyze, create, and carry-out effective and innovate messaging, branding, and positioning of the recreation and parks sector.
- 5.4 Foster appropriate alliances, sponsorships, and partnerships that allow recreation and parks organizations to develop and sustain their financial and human capital.