

Leadership Competencies Rubric

In order to build leadership capacity within their organization, managers should provide their teams with clear rubrics that define what strong performance looks like in their current role and what indicates readiness for advancement.

This document serves as an example of how companies can set clear expectations across ten key competencies. It outlines performance levels for individuals at the **director level within a marketing department**. Each competency is rated on a scale of 1–5:

- 1–2: Emerging — Developing but not yet demonstrating proficiency in their current role.
- 3–4: Proficient — Demonstrates strong capabilities and may exhibit advanced-level skills.
- 5: Ready for Advancement — Fully capable of serving at an executive level.

This rubric is intended for illustrative purposes only. A company-specific rubric would typically include greater specificity related to the organization’s mission, vision, values, product/service, and functional expertise (e.g., marketing, sales, customer success, product, curriculum). Additionally, rubrics should be tailored by seniority level (manager, director, VP, C-suite), with more detail on functional skills at the manager and director levels.

It’s also important to recognize that **titles and responsibilities vary from company to company**. While this rubric is designed for director-level roles, the scope of responsibility and measures of success at this level may differ significantly depending on company structure and size.

Feel free to use this document as a starting point for developing or refining your own tools to provide guidance and clarity on the path to advancement.

Strategic Thinking and Decision-making

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Focuses on short-term execution with limited strategic influence. Decisions are primarily operational. Struggles to anticipate long-term trends. Has difficulty connecting functional efforts to overall business objectives.
2		
3	Proficient	Contributes to strategic planning at the department level, aligning functional priorities with company goals. Identifies long-term opportunities and risks. Balances short-term execution with broader strategic initiatives.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Shapes and influences company-wide strategy, ensuring alignment with K–12 market trends and growth opportunities. Develops clear strategic frameworks for decision-making. Proactively positions the company for anticipated industry shifts.

Cross-Functional Influence and Collaboration

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Collaborates within their department but has limited engagement or influence across other departments' teams and struggles to align with other departments' priorities. Has difficulty navigating organizational complexity.
2		
3	Proficient	Partners effectively with other departments, supporting alignment on shared initiatives. Understands how functional goals intersect with company-wide objectives. Navigates cross-team collaboration challenges effectively.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Aligns multiple teams, drives cross-functional initiatives, and influences executive leadership decisions. Builds strong relationships with key stakeholders. Acts as a bridge between functions to drive company-wide impact.

Leadership Communication

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Communicates effectively at the team level but lacks confidence in executive settings. Tends to focus on details rather than high-level impact. Struggles with adapting communication to different audiences.
2		
3	Proficient	Articulates ideas clearly to senior leaders and contributes meaningfully in executive discussions. Adjusts messaging based on audience needs. Uses data and insights to support recommendations. Effective at "managing up."
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Communication instills confidence during executive meetings. Demonstrates strong listening skills and the ability to synthesize complex scenarios. Effectively conveys vision and strategy with clarity. Builds credibility with senior stakeholders.

Business and Financial Acumen

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Manages departmental budgets but lacks deeper financial insights. Has limited understanding of key business drivers. Struggles to connect financial metrics to strategic decisions.
2		
3	Proficient	Understands P&L, evaluates ROI, and makes data-driven decisions to optimize department performance. Aligns budgets with business objectives. Balances cost efficiency with growth investments.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Makes trade-off decisions with company-wide financial implications and contributes to revenue growth strategies. Anticipates financial risks and opportunities. Integrates financial strategy into decision-making.

Change Leadership and Scaling Operations

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Implements change within their team but struggles with scaling operations. Has difficulty managing ambiguity and uncertainty. Reacts to change rather than proactively driving it.
2		
3	Proficient	Supports organizational change efforts, improving efficiency in functional areas. Identifies key operational bottlenecks and implements improvements. Manages change communication effectively.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Leads transformational change at a company-wide level, anticipating and solving scaling challenges. Creates scalable processes that support long-term growth. Inspires teams to embrace change proactively.

K-12 Domain Expertise

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Understands customer needs at a basic level but lacks insight into broader market trends. Relies primarily on internal assumptions rather than data. Struggles to translate insights into strategy.
2		
3	Proficient	Uses customer insights to inform strategies and adjusts functional initiatives based on market trends. Engages with customers to understand pain points. Monitors relevant legislation and competitor activity.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Integrates deep market intelligence into company-wide strategic decisions, positioning the company for success. Predicts market shifts and adjusts strategy accordingly. Leverages insights to differentiate the company.

Talent Development and Leadership Depth

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Focuses on team management but does not actively develop leadership pipelines. Provides minimal coaching and mentorship. Struggles with delegation.
2		
3	Proficient	Coaches direct reports and supports leadership development within their function. Provides meaningful feedback and development opportunities. Balances leadership development with business goals. Delegates and leverages own time effectively as a leader.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Builds a strong leadership bench, mentors emerging leaders, and influences company-wide leadership culture. Champions succession planning and leadership readiness. Develops high-potential employees into future executives.

Execution and Accountability at Scale

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Focuses on operational execution but struggles with prioritizing high-impact initiatives. Tends to be reactive rather than proactive. Lacks clear performance metrics.
2		
3	Proficient	Ensures department execution aligns with company objectives and delivers measurable results. Manages resources effectively. Holds teams accountable to performance metrics.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Drives results across multiple teams, ensuring accountability for large-scale business outcomes. Creates systems for tracking progress and measuring impact. Prioritizes high-value initiatives. Effectively identifies and resolves obstacles.

External Partnerships and Thought Leadership

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Has limited external presence and industry relationships. Rarely engages in networking or industry events. Lacks visibility regarding thought leadership.
2		
3	Proficient	Represents the company in some industry settings and builds relevant external partnerships. Engages with K-12 district leaders or ed-tech peers. Shares insights within the industry.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Shapes the company's industry reputation, expands strategic partnerships, and engages in thought leadership. Positions the company as a leader in the K-12 ed-tech space. Advocates for industry-wide innovation.

Functional Leadership — Marketing

Rating	Readiness	Description
1	Emerging	Focuses on tactical execution of marketing campaigns but lacks a strategic lens. Struggles to align marketing efforts with revenue growth. Limited ability to measure marketing ROI.
2		
3	Proficient	Develops and executes integrated marketing strategies that align with business objectives. Uses data-driven insights to optimize campaigns and improve lead conversion. Balances brand awareness and demand generation efforts effectively.
4		
5	Ready for Advancement	Ensures that strategies are in alignment with revenue goals and business priorities. Proactively incorporates business objectives of internal stakeholders into marketing strategy. Builds scalable marketing systems and establishes a high-performing marketing team.