

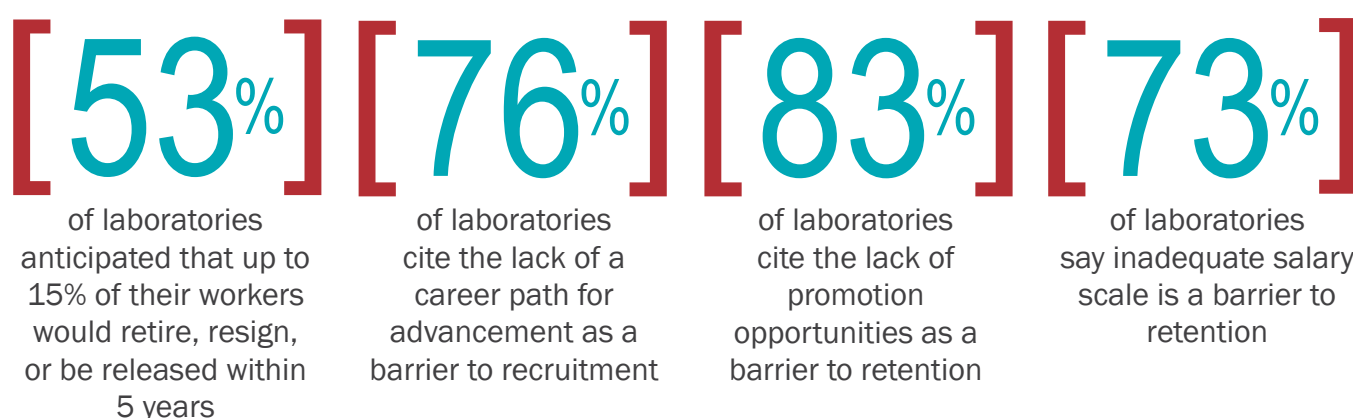
Competency Guidelines for Public Health Laboratory Professionals



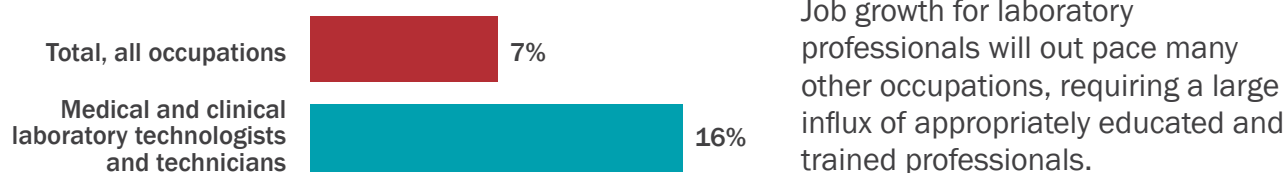
Laboratory Professions are Challenged

By Workforce Shortages and Retention of Qualified Professionals ^{1, 2}

Fortune 500 companies as well as other health care professions are now looking closely at behavior-based competency models as a way to address challenges of recruitment and retention – Why not the laboratory profession?



Bureau of Labor Statistics Projection of Job Growth through 2024



Integrating competencies into position descriptions, performance assessments, career ladder development, education programs and other professional development activities has the potential to address these significant challenges.

Download Competency Guidelines for Public Health Laboratory Professionals³ to begin the process

¹ Boulton M., Beck A., National Assessment of Capacity in Public Health, Environmental, and Agricultural Laboratories – United States, 2011, MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, March 2013

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/home.htm>, accessed 8/10/2016

³ cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/other/su6401.pdf

Tools and resources to aid in competency implementation will be posted on www.aphl.org (Your Development > Professional Development).

Competencies are a tool to guide professional development... they are not a test.

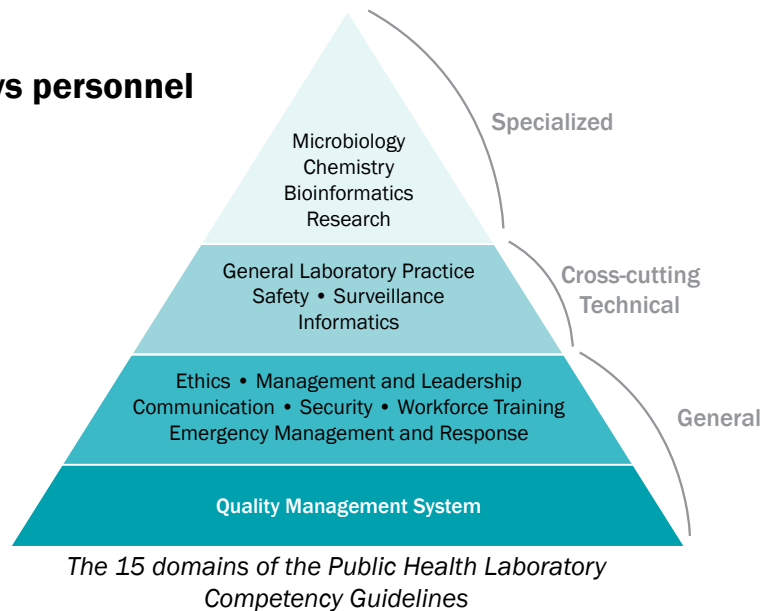
Behavior-based competency guidelines vs personnel competency assessments

The Laboratory Competency Guidelines are a series of behaviors or skills separated into 15 different domains that cover the breadth of laboratory practice. These behavior-based competency guidelines differ from the personnel competency assessments required to meet regulatory requirements such as CLIA, ISO or NELAC.

For example, the CLIA assessments are six prescribed procedures that address a laboratorian's ability to correctly perform individual tests that are assigned to them.

CLIA assessments measure proficiency of performing a test and do not provide for a progression of knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) with behaviors that demonstrate professional and personal growth.

The Laboratory Competency Guidelines are designed to support an individual in acquiring expertise throughout their career. The Guidelines' tier statements list desired behaviors that increase in scope and responsibility in four levels: beginner, competent, proficient and expert. The tier statements are not linked to a specific job position but rather to an individual's development within a particular skill or behavior.



Following is an example of the progression of a behavior through the tier statements:

SHC 3.00 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): employs the selection, use, and care of personal protective equipment while being continually mindful of its limitations

SHC 3.01 PPE selection

Beginner	Describes appropriate PPE and its limitations for jobs assigned
Competent	Selects appropriate PPE for jobs assigned
Proficient	Develops procedures for the appropriate selection of PPE
Expert	Ensures staff knowledge of procedures for the appropriate selection of PPE

Competencies for laboratorians support training standards and performance expectations, and can be readily integrated into human resource practices.

Competencies support workforce essentials such as

- identifying job responsibilities
- developing career ladders
- assessing individual performance, and
- providing a framework for producing education and training programs.