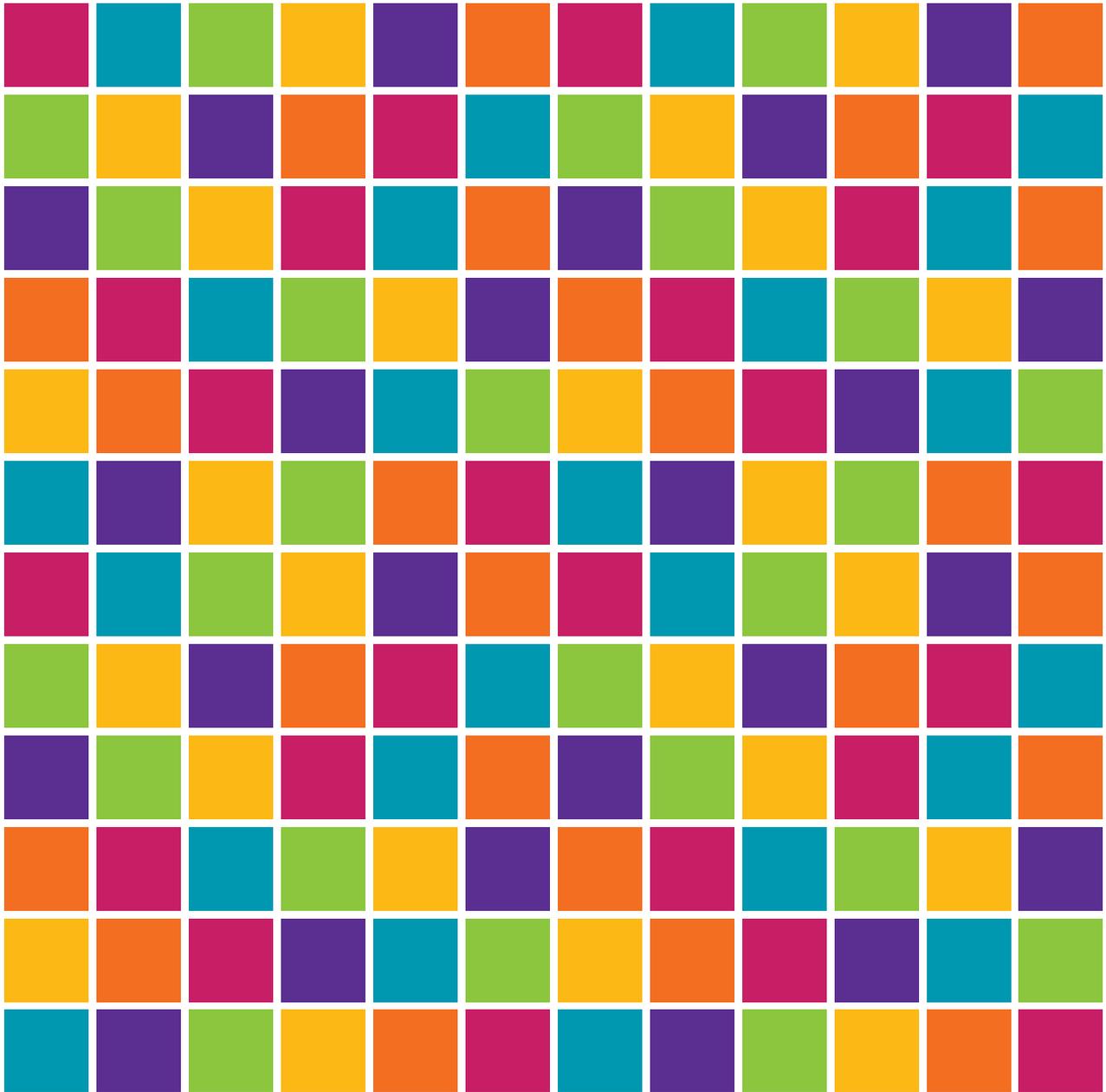# Basic qualification requirements for Federal Administration managers and executives

Basic qualification requirements for managers and executives

Basic qualification requirements are minimum requirements (= target) that Federal Administration (FA) managers and executives must fulfil in accordance with their management level. The basic qualification requirements for management personnel are founded upon the administrative management principles set forth in articles 11 and 12 of the Federal Ordinance on the Organisation of the Federal Government and Administration (RVOV*) and are in conformity with the applicable legislative objectives.

In order to deal with special circumstances and demands, different priorities or additional requirements may be set at the level of individual Departments or administrative units.

1. Context factors are surrounding conditions and developments that influence an individual's actions (e.g., globalisation, changes / transformations).

2. Requirements are context-specific or function-specific expectations that an individual must fulfil (e.g., acquire new knowledge, deal with changes).

3. Competencies are the knowledge, abilities, skills, and experience of an individual that are observable in that person's actions (e.g., openness to learning and change / flexibility).

The dimensions comprised in the basic qualification requirements are: the individual, the tasks, relationships, the organisation, political context / media / stakeholders. They indicate the setting in which the FA management personnel exercise their functions.

- *Individual* = how managers and executives deal with own self
- *Tasks* = how managers and executives deal with assigned tasks
- *Relationships* = how managers and executives relate to other persons relevant to the task
- *Organisation* = how managers and executives deal with own organisational unit
- *Political context / media / stakeholders* = how managers and executives deal with the political context, the media, and stakeholders

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* Federal Ordinance on the Organisation of the Federal Government and Administration (RVOV)

Art. 11 Principles of administration (Government and Administration Organisation Act, art. 3)
The Federal Administration shall act in conformity with Federal law and the objectives and priorities set by the Federal Council. In so doing, it shall observe, in particular, the following principles:
a. It recognises in good time where a need to take action newly arises and determines accordingly the appropriate objectives, strategies, and measures.
b. It organises its activities in accordance with their relative importance and urgency.
c. It performs its tasks in a citizen-friendly, sustainable, effective, and efficient manner.

Art. 12 Principles of administrative management (Government and Administration Organisation Act, art. 8, 35, 36)
[1] Management personnel at all levels of management shall act in keeping with the following principles:

a. They conduct management by maintaining agreement between objectives and effects.
b. They review the performance of their administrative unit and team members on a regular basis.
c. They adapt processes and organisation to meet new needs in a timely manner.
d. They make full use of the scope of their authority to act and make decisions and allow members of their staffs to do the same.
e. They foster a culture of openness for learning and change.
f. They institute results-oriented working methods using an interdisciplinary approach.

[2] Shall apply, for the rest, in particular, the legislation governing personnel and the personnel policy guidelines of the Federal Council.

www.admin.ch/ch/d/sr/172_010_1/a11.html

Top management /Senior management

Top management comprises the Directors of Federal Offices, General Secretaries, and State Secretaries. Senior management includes the Deputy General Secretaries, Deputy Directors of Federal Offices, Vice-Directors, and the Heads of Directorates and Divisions. For the most part, they are members of the Management Board.

Context factors

The Federal Administration increasingly takes a strategic approach to its operations and requires visions that it seeks to fulfil. Members of top management must succeed in asserting themselves in a climate where pressures for change and resistance to innovation often meet head-on. Coming to terms with the political system and a wide range of stakeholders places high demands on the members of top management. They are called upon to provide higher performance at lower cost in resources. The complexity of the tasks to be dealt with is constantly rising. At the same time, the internationalisation of many issues (environmental protection, migration, financial flows, etc.) is proceeding at a rapid pace, presenting members of top management with additional challenges.

Requirements

Individual dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

➡ acts in keeping with ethical standards, is careful to maintain integrity and credibility in professional and personal conduct, and consistently sets a good example (role model function).

➡ reflects upon his or her own leadership behaviour and conduct, recognises strengths and weaknesses, and strives to continually evolve.

Competencies according to the competency model

Leadership
Loyalty

Self-reflection

Tasks dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

➡ recognises causes and effects, and sees the overall context and linkages; takes an interdisciplinary and cross-organisational approach to complex subject matters.

➡ makes decisions based on careful analysis even where the information available is incomplete or contradictory; makes sure that decisions are implemented.

➡ has good active knowledge of at least one second official language and passive knowledge of a third official language and, depending on the position, also of English.

Competencies according to the competency model

Analytical and conceptual thinking
Networked thinking

Personal responsibility

Language skills

Basic qualification requirements for Federal Administration managers and executives, may 2013

Relationships dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

➲ shows farsightedness in workforce planning, recruits the right people for the right positions, leads, motivates and encourages them, and expresses appreciation.

➲ makes use of potential offered by diversity.

➲ communicates openly, creates a trusting working environment, and finds solutions to conflicts.

Competencies according to the competency model

People management

Diversity management
Ability to communicate
Ability to deal with criticism and conflict

Organisation dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

➲ anticipates important developments in surrounding circumstances (context), orients own organisation towards future challenges and formulates policies for own area of responsibility.

➲ develops vision / strategy for own organisation in keeping with legislative objectives, translates them into concrete goals, and sees to it that they are realised.

➲ provides staff with explanations of necessary changes and deals constructively with any resistance to those changes.

➲ designs efficient processes and operational structures and defines the organisational culture.

➲ manages resources in keeping with appropriate targets and sees to the efficient utilisation of resources.

Competencies according to the competency model

Strategic thinking and action

Change management

Entrepreneurial thinking and action

Political context / media / stakeholders dimension (national, international)
Requirements: A member of management …

➲ is familiar with political decision-making processes, maintains good relations with stakeholders, networks well, and knows how to find pragmatic solutions and negotiate a compromise or a consensus.

➲ capably represents own organisation in outside world (in Switzerland and abroad) and maintains a good working relationship with the media.

Competencies according to the competency model

Effective action in the political context

Basic qualification requirements for Federal Administration managers and executives, may 2013

Middle management

Middle management comprises the Heads of divisions, sections and units. As a rule, individuals in these positions already have management experience. The mandate given to middle management includes a complex set of tasks with a strong strategic dimension, involving diverse domains of activity and interconnected issues.

Context factors

The working environment for middle management is characterised by a high demand for managing change. As the pivotal link between senior management and the workforce, middle management must withstand pressures from various quarters. Strategic objectives must be operationalized and communicated to the workforce in a convincing manner. Rising demands (resource scarcity, increasing pressures, changing values, etc.) create a greater potential for conflict. Conflicts must be addressed directly and resolved by demonstrating firmness and resolution with regard to the subject matter while preserving an understanding and respectful tone in all dealings.

Requirements

Individual dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

- ➡ acts in keeping with ethical standards, is careful to maintain integrity and credibility in professional and personal conduct, and consistently sets a good example (role model function).

- ➡ reflects upon his or her own leadership style, recognises strengths and weaknesses, and strives to continually evolve.

Competencies according to the competency model

Leadership
Loyalty

Self-reflection

Tasks dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

- ➡ sets priorities, works in a focused manner, recognises interrelationships, and takes a cross-departmental approach.

- ➡ makes decisions in good time, resolutely implements decisions and accepts responsibility for them.

- ➡ delegates tasks, authority, and responsibility, in keeping with the demands of the situation and the capabilities of team members.

- ➡ has good active knowledge of at least one second official language and passive knowledge of a third official language and, depending on the position, also of English.

Competencies according to the competency model

Analytical and conceptual thinking
Networked thinking

Focus on objectives and results

Personal responsibility

Language skills

Basic qualification requirements for Federal Administration managers and executives, may 2013

Relationships dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

➡ recruits the right people for the right positions, leads, motivates and encourages them, and expresses appreciation; fosters the development of productive teams.

➡ makes use of potential offered by diversity.

➡ communicates openly, creates a trusting working environment, and finds solutions to conflicts.

Competencies according to the competency model

People management

Diversity management

Ability to communicate
Ability to deal with criticism and conflict

Dimension Organisation
Requirements: A member of management …

➡ intermediates between the strategic and operative levels of the organisation and contributes to strategy development.

➡ implements in own area of responsibility targeted, results-oriented performance goals that derive from the broader objectives fixed by the organisation.

➡ provides staff with explanations of necessary changes and deals constructively with any resistance to those changes.

➡ designs efficient processes, plans and allocates resources as needed to achieve goals and maintain high quality standards.

Competencies according to the competency model

Strategic thinking and action

Change management

Entrepreneurial thinking and action

Political context / media / stakeholders dimension (national, international)
Requirements: A member of management …

➡ is familiar with the political processes and demonstrates prudence in the performance of political tasks.

➡ maintains a good relationship with stakeholders and makes expedient use of own networks.

Competencies according to the competency model

Effective action in the political context

Lower management

Lower management comprises the leaders of teams that may be relatively large or smaller (including heads of groups). It includes, in particular, individuals that assume management tasks and require for this the requisite basic management qualifications. The management tasks assigned to members of lower management are situated at the operational level.

Context factors

Developments such as increases in pressure, increases in the scope of tasks, and rapid technological advances have resulted in higher demands being placed on management within the Federal Administration. In addition to specialised expertise, social and management skills have gained in importance. The personal leadership tasks that come with the assumption of a management position pose a challenge for the members of lower management. Members of lower management lead teams of increasingly greater diversity (composition by gender, age, language affiliation, etc.). The working environment for lower management is characterised by a high demand for managing change and dealing with the frequent reorganisation of administrative units.

Requirements

Individual dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

⮕ acts in keeping with ethical standards, is careful to maintain integrity and credibility in professional and personal conduct, and consistently sets a good example (role model function).

⮕ reflects upon his or her own leadership style, recognises strengths and weaknesses, and strives to continually evolve.

Competencies according to the competency model

Leadership
Loyalty

Self-examination

Tasks dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

⮕ sets priorities, works in a focused manner, recognises interrelationships, and takes a cross-departmental approach.

⮕ makes decisions in good time, implements decisions and accepts responsibility for them.

Competencies according to the competency model

Analytical and conceptual thinking
Networked thinking

Focus on objectives and results

Basic qualification requirements for Federal Administration managers and executives, may 2013

➜ delegates tasks, authority, and responsibility, in keeping with the demands of the situation and the capabilities of team members.

Personal responsibility

➜ has the requisite spoken and written knowledge of a second official language as needed for the exercise of the function and, depending on the position, also of English.

Language skills

Relationships dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

Competencies according to the competency model

➜ recruits the right people for the right positions, leads them, and assigns tasks in keeping with their strengths and capabilities; expresses appreciation and fosters the development of a productive team.

People management

➜ makes use of potential offered by diversity.

Diversity management

➜ communicates openly, creates a trusting working environment, and finds solutions to conflicts.

Ability to communicate
Ability to deal with criticism and conflict

Organisation dimension
Requirements: A member of management …

Competencies according to the competency model

➜ implements broader objectives through operative annual targets and individual goals for team members.

Focus on objectives and results

➜ provides staff with explanations of necessary changes and deals constructively with any resistance to those changes.

Change management

➜ sees to it that processes are carried out efficiently, allocates resources as needed to achieve goals and maintain high quality standards.

Entrepreneurial thinking and action

Basic qualification requirements for Federal Administration managers and executives, may 2013