



**Project Management Tools and Processes
Conference, 23-25 March 2010**



**Processes and Tools for Assessment and
Development of Soft Competencies**


Professor Ali Jaafari

Asia Pacific International College*
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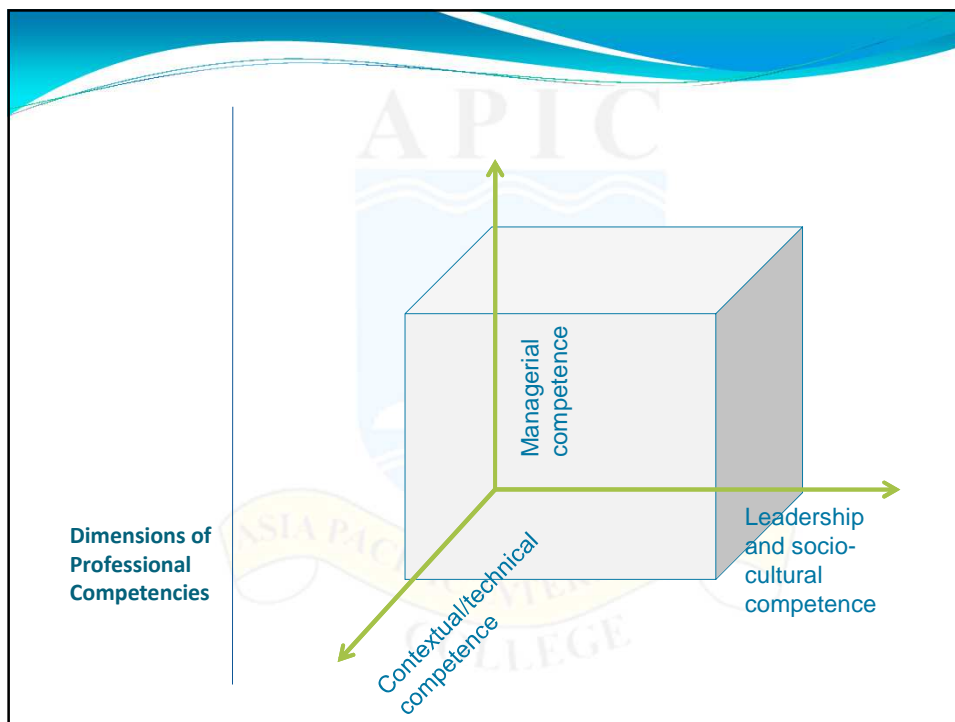
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**The
Mantra**

**If you cannot
measure it
you cannot
improve it!**



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Leadership and Socio-Cultural Competencies

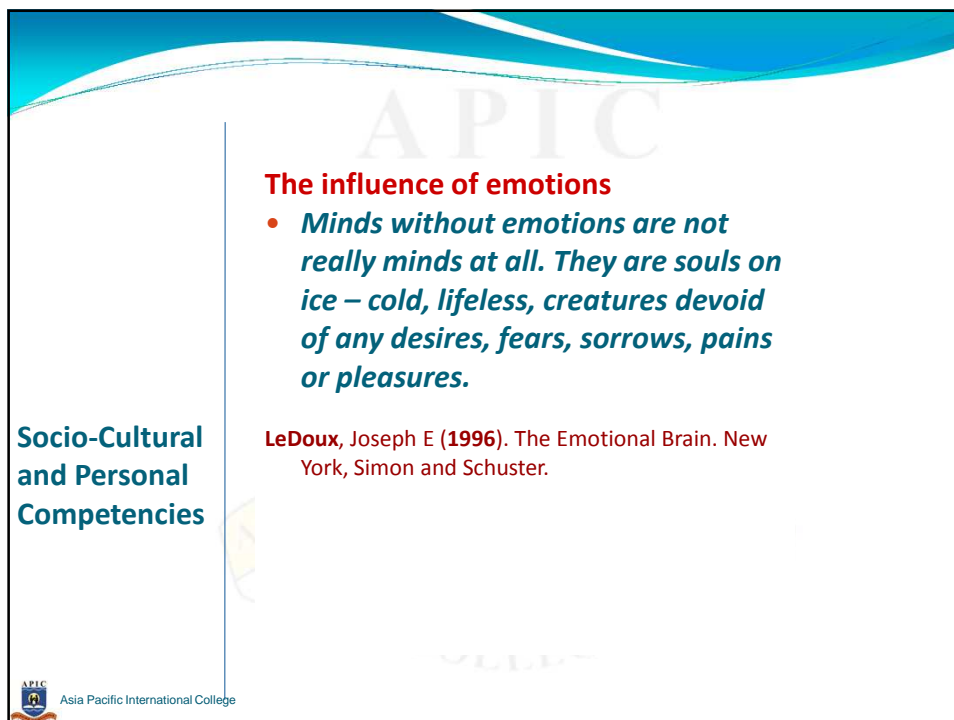
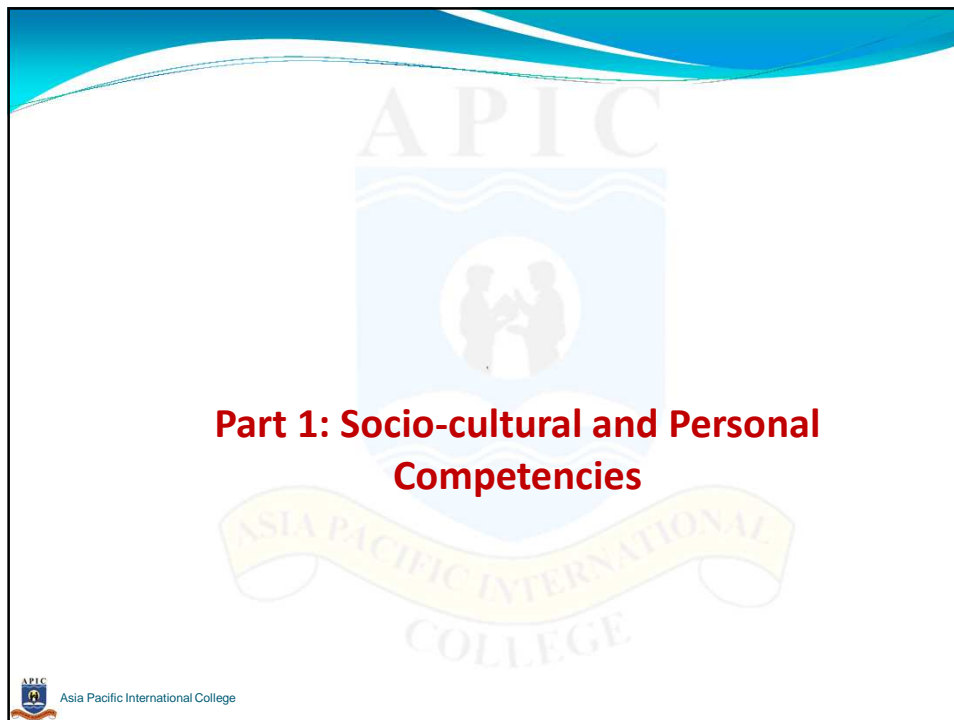
Socio-cultural and Personal Competencies:

- Focus is on soft competencies that
- Every professional person needs to have
- Regardless of position or role or tasks they perform
- It concerns self management, as well as positively influencing peers, teams, projects, programs and organisations

Professional Leader:

- Those who are in senior positions in directing and managing projects, programs, organisations etc.
- Their primary role is to align and lead people

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What controls our emotions?

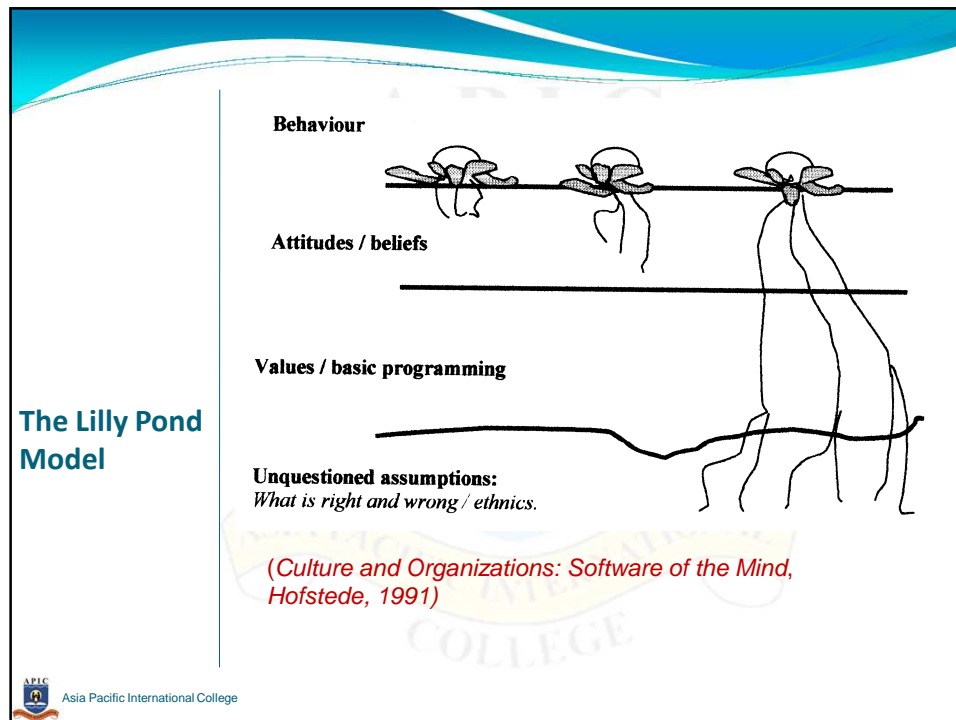
- Complex area influenced by
 - physiological make up
 - imprints since childhood
 - learnt behaviour
 - Individual power of reflection & judgement
 - groupthink mentality
 - other environmental factors
- Exhibited performance tracked longitudinally and horizontally

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The inner & outer sides

- Two sides of humans:
 - **Inner side** (personality traits, ingrained beliefs & assumptions)
 - **Outer side** (exhibited behaviour in interactions with others)
- Personality traits are just one input to exhibited behaviour
- Humans learn much of their conduct and behaviour in interactions with others
- Including communication skills
- **We are all good actors!**
- After a while acting becomes part of us
- **Assessment & feedback of exhibited behaviour is critical in performance enhancement**

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- Typical Approaches**
- Literature focus is typically on workplace psychology
 - Psychometric & cognitive assessment & profiling
 - Prone to error as these focus on natural tendencies
 - Exhibited performance is influenced by both **natural** and **learnt** abilities
 - Feedback allows individuals to reflect & improve performance
 - How a person's personality factors influence his/her behaviour varies at individual level
 - No universal laws as we are complex individuals
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Typical Psychometric Tests

- The Myers-Briggs test (based on Jung)
- 16 PF- The Sixteen Personality Factor questionnaire
- The SHL Decision Maker (job profiling & candidate assessment)
- PA2000: Indepth character trait assessment
- The California Psychological Inventory
- The Prevue Assessment System (focuses on ability to do the job)
- Expert: Designed for individual character profiling, job profiling and team profiling
- OPQ – Occupational Personality Questionnaire

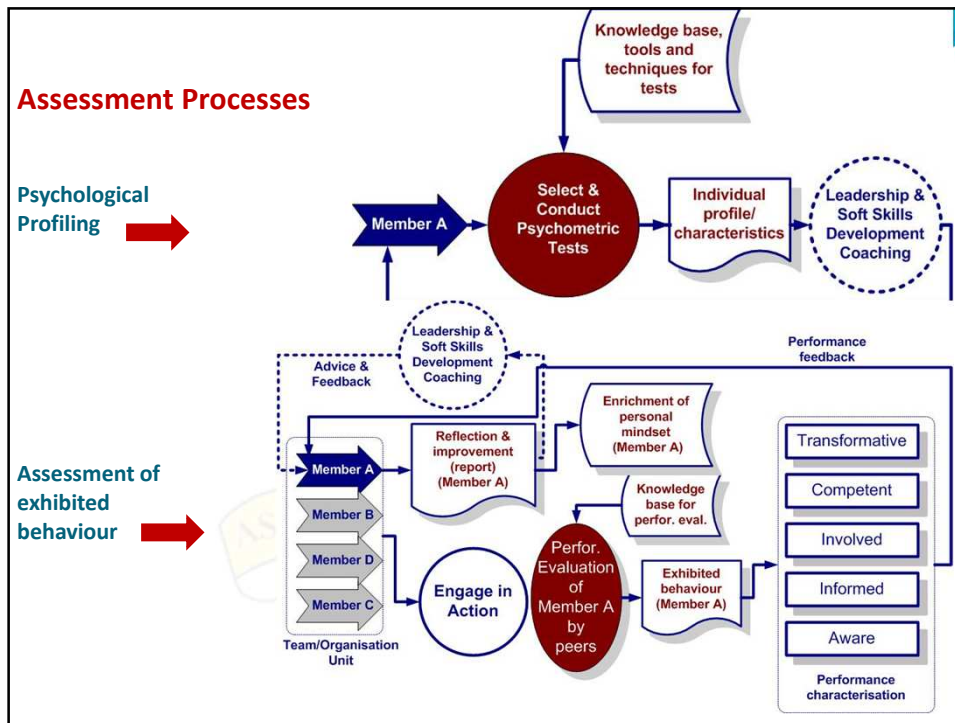
(see www.Brainbox.com.au 2003)



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What Approach to Take?


- Understanding one's inner self is important (self rediscovery)
- Psychological profiling yields useful knowledge
- Does not necessarily correspond with optimum performance
- Competencies needs external assessment & feedback from peers, mentors,...
- Understanding how inner strengths influence individual behaviour & performance is unique & individual (there is no universal law to correlate these two)
- **Adopt a dual approach:** give the person information on their natural characteristics as well as their exhibited behaviour/performance



Attributes for Socio-cultural and Personal Competency



Competency Unit	Code	Competency Element
Generic	A1	The general state of acting and performing as a professional
Leadership	A2	The direction, motivation and management of individuals and teams
Commitment	A3	The personal dedication to task and to project/function/organisation outcomes
Attitude	A4	The frame of mind that promotes integrity and support for achievement of project/organisation goals within a desired social context
Self direction	A5	The ability to manage within and without guidelines and processes and to work without supervision
Learning	A6	The commitment to continuous improvement in knowledge, skills and attitude, and to creating new knowledge, developing skills and approaches
Cultural empathy	A7	The awareness of, respect for and accommodation of individual lifestyle, beliefs and norms
Innovation and creativity	A8	Capacity to generate new ideas/approaches & realise these in a beneficial manner

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Competency Levels


- **Aware** ➤ Understands principles and its application to self
- **Informed** ➤ Measures and applies principles to improve own performance vis-à-vis peers and teams
- **Involved** ➤ Measures and applies principles/tools to improve performance of peers and team
- **Competent** ➤ Tailors approaches to suit different contexts & achieves optimal results
- **Transformative** ➤ Leadership capability and systems approach, unlocks energy & intellect, engenders creativity & breakthrough solutions

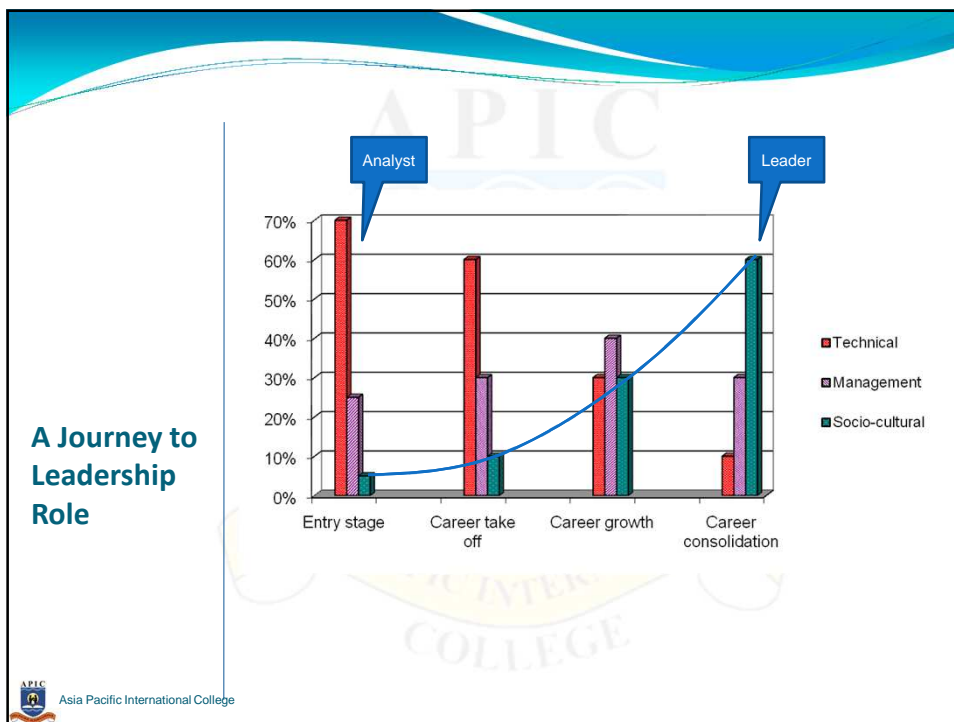
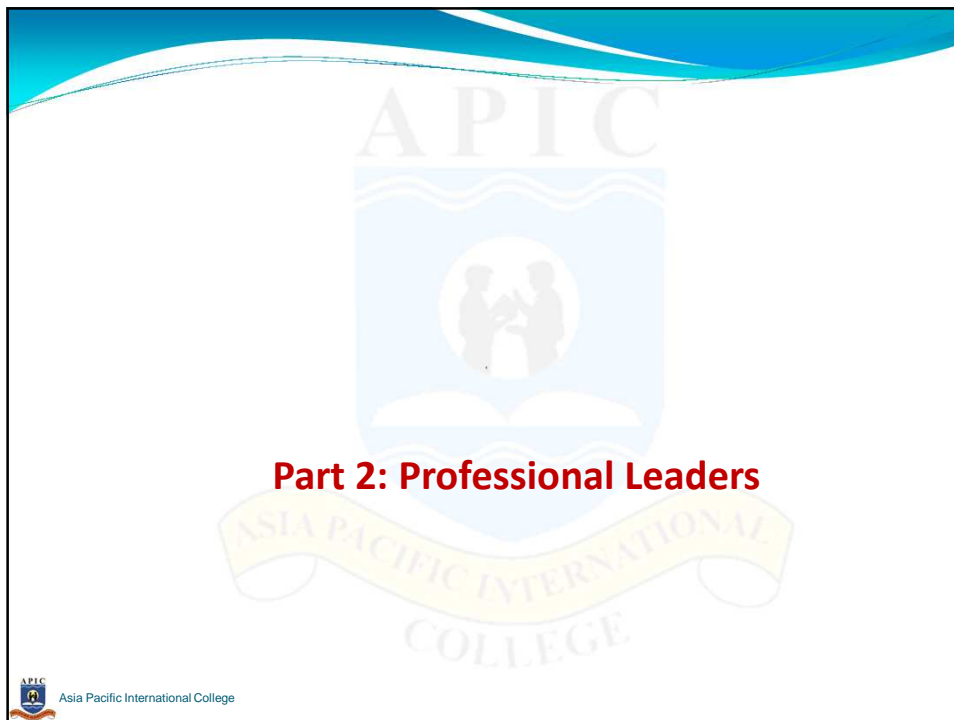



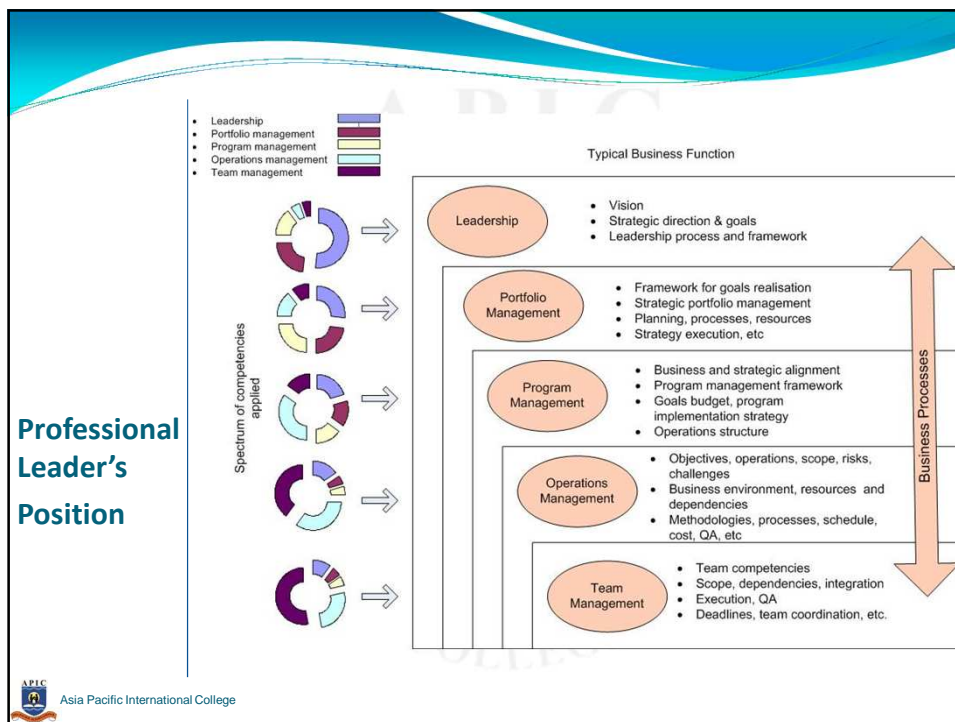
Sample Scorecard

Area	Description	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Generic	General state of acting as a professional	Existing competencies	Existing competencies	Competency Gaps	Competency Gaps	Competency Gaps
Leadership	Direction & motivation of individuals/teams					
Commitment	Personal dedication to project/organisation					
Attitude	Frame of mind promoting integrity & support for project/organisation goals					
Self Direction	Ability to work with or without supervision					
Learning	Commitment to continuous learning & development					
Cultural Empathy	Respect for cultural diversity & individuals					
Innovation Creativity	Lateral thinking ability & promotion of a culture of creativity and innovation					

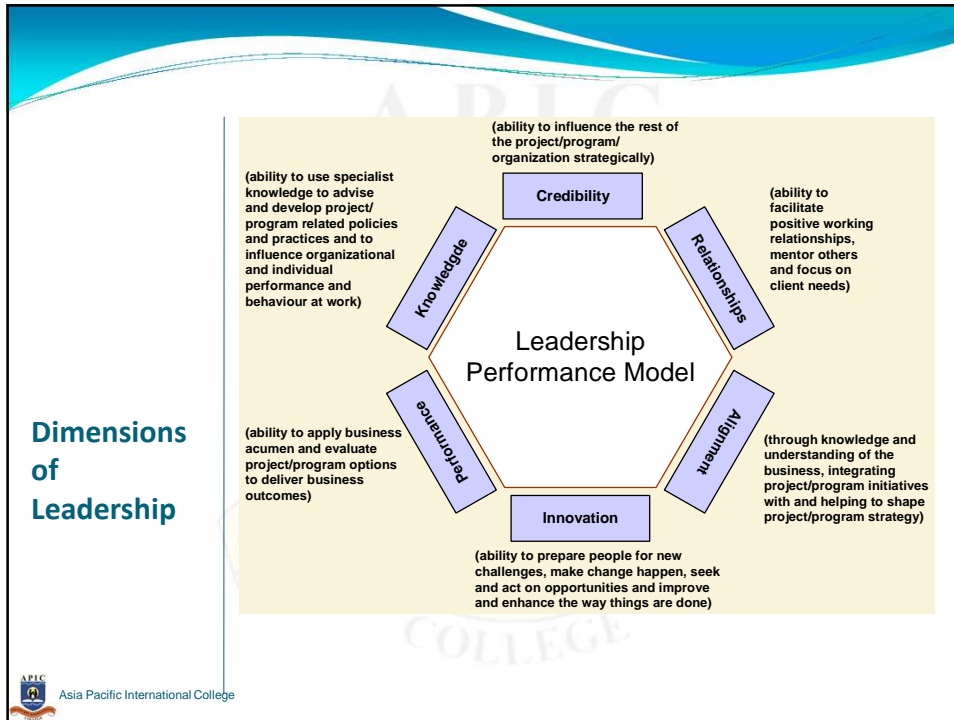
Existing competencies Target competencies







- Professional Leaders**
- Professional leadership has 6 dimensions:
 - Knowledge
 - Credibility
 - Relationships
 - Alignment
 - Innovation
 - Performance
 - Development of leaders needs a structured approach
 - It is not about whether leaders are born or trained
 - It is about giving leaders the competencies they need to perform well as leaders
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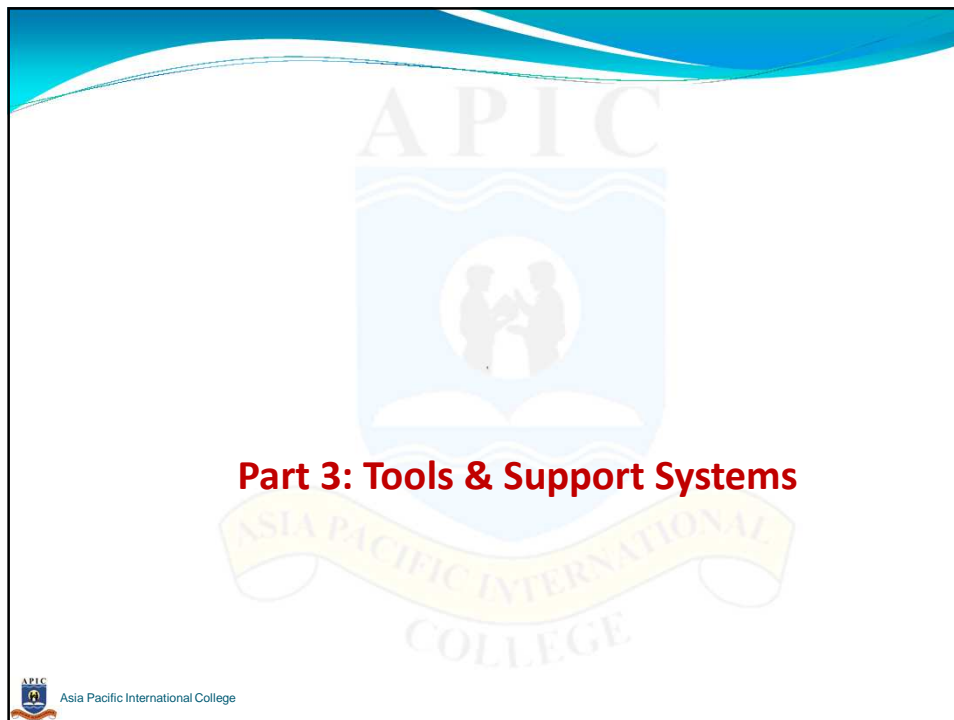


Units and Elements of Leadership Competencies*

Credibility	Skills in being influential and persuading others
	Ability to act a strong role model
	Ability to be analytically agile
Knowledge	Ability to develop project/program/organisation-related policies and processes
	Ability to understand organisational dynamics
	Ability to attract, develop own people and set reward systems
Relationship	Ability to create and maintain partnerships
	Know how to focus on the needs of others
	Know how to coach and develop others
Innovation	Ability to prepare people for change
	Ability to seek out and act on opportunities
	Know how to demonstrate flexibility and explore options
Alignment	Ability to scan and read the business
	Ability to integrate project/program/organisation initiatives with business plans
	Ability to contribute to and support project/program/organisation business strategy
Performance	Ability to apply business acumen to project/program/organisation decisions
	Ability to drive for results and manage risk
	Ability to evaluate outcomes

*Based on Australian Public Service Model

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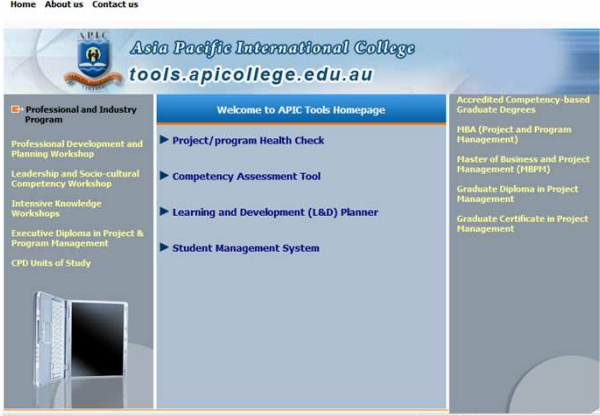


The slide has a blue wavy header. On the left side, the text 'Tools & Support Systems' is written in blue. To the right of this text is a vertical line, and to its right is a bulleted list of features. The APIC logo and 'Asia Pacific International College' text are in the bottom left corner.

Tools & Support Systems

- APIC provides an online tool for socio-cultural and leadership competency assessment
- Supports both self and peer assessments
- Assess at element or unit level
- Results can be reported by area or unit
- Results exported to Learning and Development planning template
- To aid a structured approach to L&D Planning
- Available to anyone wishing to use
- A tool for continuous self management & tracking personal development
- Training/mentoring to address competency gaps

Example of Tools




With user ID & Password users can:

- Access their account and conduct competency assessment
- They can set targets for their development
- Then develop an L&D Plan to address missing competencies
- Any structured development program can be considered

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Example of Support Systems



APIC provides training that mirror competency areas:


- Socio-cultural and Leadership development
- Project, program and portfolio management
- Business and organisation management
- In addition, socio-cultural and personal competencies tracked longitudinally

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Conclusions

- Soft competencies (EI) crucial to performance of individuals, team, projects, programs and organisations
- Psychometric & cognitive profiling is of limited value unless used as an additional input for understanding exhibited behaviour/performance
- Focus should be on improving exhibited behaviour/performance
- Assessment & development requires real life settings and observations
- Reflective learning at individual level is key to development
- Professional leaders reach ultimate state of socio-cultural competence



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