

The IDEAS Framework: A Conceptual Competency Based Cycle Integrating Education, Training, and Performance

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Abstract

This paper presents the IDEAS Framework as a conceptual, competency-based cycle for integrating education, training, and performance within a unified architecture of learning and application. The framework addresses persistent fragmentation between education and training systems by organising competency development and performance translation across five interdependent phases: Identification of Needs, Design and Planning, Execution, Assessment and Accountability, and Sunset Provision. Methodologically, the study adopts a conceptual and analytical approach grounded in competency theory, the Iceberg Model of competency, and empirical insights informing competency clustering. The IDEAS Framework conceptualises competencies as organised into Core Competency Clusters, namely Functional, Behavioural, and Domain clusters, expressed through Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA). These are supported by deeper attributes comprising Self-image, Social roles, Motives, and Traits (SSMT), together with a unifying Moral Ethical Compass (MEC). Although these deeper attributes operate beneath the surface, they become observable over time through sustained behaviour, ethical conduct, and performance consistency. Performance within the IDEAS Framework is conceptualised as the dynamic interaction of Core Competency Clusters with environmental and motivational dimensions, shaping the expression, transfer, and sustainability of competencies across contexts. By embedding competency, contextual, and ethical considerations within each phase, the framework offers a coherent, scalable, and ethically grounded architecture for aligning education and training and enabling sustainable performance across educational, organisational, and societal domains.

1. Introduction

Education and training are complementary systems of human development operating on a shared competency architecture. Both systems draw upon common Core Competency Clusters and express learning through Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSA), supported by deeper attributes comprising Self-image, Social roles, Motives, and Traits (SSMT), together with a central Moral Ethical Compass (MEC). The distinction between education and training lies not in the nature of competencies themselves, but in their orientation and performance focus. Education emphasises the generic and developmental formation of competencies supporting performance at individual, group, community, societal, and global levels across life contexts, whereas training contextualises and strengthens these same competencies for task, job, team, functional, and organisational performance.

Within educational contexts, Core Competency Clusters provide an integrative structure by

organising interrelated competencies that support conceptual understanding, ethical reasoning, social awareness, and disciplinary knowledge. Using factor analysis, Garole P. D. (2024) identifies three interrelated clusters that collectively enable performance. The Generic Administrative or Vertical or Functional cluster supports analytical thinking and systems understanding. The Personal Social or Spherical or Behavioural cluster encompasses values, attitudes, communication, and interpersonal effectiveness. The Technical Departmental or Horizontal or Domain cluster develops conceptual and applied understanding across disciplines and professions.

Together, these Core Competency Clusters support lifelong learning, adaptability, social responsibility, and global citizenship. Building on this structure, Garole P. D. (2025) conceptualises the Moral Ethical Compass as a unifying dimension that guides the ethical expression and regulation of competencies across all clusters.

In training contexts, the same Core Competency Clusters and their associated KSA, together with SSMT and the Moral Ethical Compass, are operationalised to meet specific organisational tasks and performance standards. Functional competencies translate into administrative and managerial capabilities, behavioural competencies guide teamwork and ethical conduct, and domain competencies are refined into role specific and task specific skills that directly influence organisational effectiveness.

The Iceberg Model of competency provides a unifying lens across education and training. Observable competencies expressed through KSA constitute the visible elements of performance, while deeper attributes such as SSMT and the Moral Ethical Compass shape how Core Competency Clusters are enacted over time. Although not directly measurable, these attributes become observable through consistent behaviour, ethical choices, and responses to contextual demands.

Within the IDEAS Framework, performance is conceptualised as the combined outcome of Core Competency Clusters and non-core contextual enablers. Performance emerges through the interaction of Non-core environmental factors (E), motivational factors (M), and Core Competency Clusters (C), expressed conceptually as:

$$\text{Performance} = E + M + C$$

Environmental factors include organisational structures, leadership practices, systems, resources, and climate. Motivational factors include engagement, values alignment, commitment, incentives, and role clarity. Core Competency Clusters comprise functional, behavioural, and domain competencies expressed through KSA and shaped by deeper attributes. While presented in additive form for conceptual clarity, these dimensions interact dynamically in practice.

Despite this shared foundation, education and training are often designed and managed as parallel systems. Education may develop competencies without sufficient linkage to performance contexts, while training may prioritise immediate skills without adequate grounding in conceptual understanding, ethics, or motivation. This fragmentation weakens continuity and reduces the long-term impact of competency development.

The IDEAS Framework addresses this gap by integrating education and training within a single competency and performance architecture. Teaching-Learning-Research-Innovation (TLRI) functions as the operational continuum through which Core Competency Clusters are developed, contextualised, assessed, and renewed across the five phases. Competency, environmental, and motivational dimensions are embedded within each phase, enabling a systematic, sustainable, and ethically grounded approach to performance development.

2. Research Methodology

The IDEAS Framework was developed using a conceptual and analytical methodology supported by selective practical application. The approach combines conceptual analysis, focused review of education and training models, and reflective insights from academic and organisational contexts, ensuring conceptual robustness and applied relevance.

2.1 Conceptual and Literature Review

A focused review of international literature identified persistent challenges including weak translation of learning into performance, fragmented planning processes, limited renewal mechanisms, and insufficient attention to environmental and motivational influences. Literature on competency-based education, workplace learning, lifelong learning, smart learning environments, curriculum life cycle management, and training needs analysis informed the conceptual foundations of the IDEAS Framework and supported a system-oriented approach consistent with the Iceberg Model of competency.

2.2 Needs Analysis Perspective

The IDEAS Framework integrates Educational Needs Analysis and Training Needs Analysis as interconnected diagnostic processes operating on a shared Core Competency Cluster architecture. Educational Needs Analysis identifies competency gaps affecting performance across individual, group, community, societal, and global levels. Training Needs Analysis diagnoses gaps influencing task, job, team, functional, and organisational performance. Both analyses address observable KSA and constraints related to deeper attributes such as motivation, ethical orientation, role clarity, professional identity, and organisational climate.

2.3 Framework Construction and Refinement

The framework was constructed through iterative stages of conceptual design, integration of Core Competency Clusters with contextual dimensions, expert validation, and refinement through selective application. Pilot use across academic and training settings strengthened conceptual coherence, internal consistency, and operational relevance. The outcome is a higher order conceptual framework implemented through a cyclical structure to guide alignment, assessment, and renewal of education and training systems.

3. The IDEAS Framework: Structure and Orientation

The IDEAS Framework organises competency development and performance enhancement through a five-phase competency-based cycle comprising Identification of Needs, Design and Planning, Execution, Assessment and Accountability, and Sunset Provision. These phases operate as an iterative system rather than a linear sequence. Completion of the Sunset Provision phase informs renewed Identification, ensuring responsiveness to evolving knowledge, technological change, work roles, organisational priorities, and societal expectations.

As a framework, IDEAS integrates education and training within a single competency and performance architecture. Learning and performance development are viewed as interconnected cognitive, behavioural, ethical, and social processes embedded within institutional and organisational systems. Equal importance is accorded to the Core Competency Clusters developed, the processes through which they are developed, and the contextual conditions under which they are sustained and translated into effective performance.

Performance within the IDEAS Framework is conceptualised as the combined outcome of Core Competency Clusters and non-core contextual enablers, expressed through the interaction of environmental conditions (E), motivational factors (M), and Core Competency Clusters (C), collectively referred to as EMC. Although presented in additive form for conceptual clarity, these dimensions interact dynamically in practice across education, training, and work contexts.

Viewed through the Iceberg Model of competency, the framework supports the development of observable competencies expressed

through KSA, while explicitly addressing deeper attributes such as self-image, social roles, motives, personality traits, and moral ethical orientation. These attributes shape the quality, consistency, and ethical grounding of performance and become observable through sustained behaviour and role enactment over time.

Importantly, both Core Competency Clusters and environmental and motivational dimensions are embedded within each phase of the IDEAS Cycle rather than treated as external influences. This integrated orientation enables coherent design, effective execution, meaningful assessment, and systematic renewal across education and training systems.

3.1 Comparative Account of the IDEAS Framework and Established Models

The IDEAS Framework, operationalised through a competency based cyclical architecture, extends established education and training models by explicitly addressing limitations related to systemic fragmentation, short term instructional orientation, and insufficient consideration of contextual, motivational, and ethical dimensions of performance. While influential models such as ADDIE, Kirkpatrick, CIPP, and the Systematic Approach to Training (SAT) have made significant contributions within their respective functional domains, they primarily operate within bounded instructional, evaluative, or training focused paradigms.

In contrast, the IDEAS Framework functions at a higher conceptual and systemic level by positioning education and training as interdependent and continuous systems grounded in a shared competency architecture. This integrative orientation enables continuity across education, training, and performance contexts and supports the sustained translation of competencies into real world application across life, work, and societal domains. Performance is not treated as a linear or assumed outcome of instruction or training, but as a dynamic and emergent outcome resulting from the interaction of Core Competency Clusters with environmental and motivational conditions.

A further point of differentiation lies in the explicit treatment of ethics, deeper human attributes, and renewal mechanisms. Existing models largely emphasise observable outputs, instructional processes, or programme level outcomes, with

limited engagement with ethical orientation, motivation, identity, or long-term capability development. The IDEAS Framework integrates these dimensions across all phases of the cycle and institutionalises systematic renewal through Sunset Provision, thereby ensuring relevance, accountability, and sustainability over time.

Table 1 presents a structured comparative account of the IDEAS Framework alongside ADDIE, Kirkpatrick, CIPP, and SAT across key analytical dimensions.

Table 1. Comparative Account of the IDEAS Framework (Cycle) and Established Models

Dimension	IDEAS Framework	ADDIE	Kirkpatrick	CIPP	SAT
Primary purpose	Integrated education, training, and performance architecture	Instructional design	Training evaluation	Programme evaluation	Training performance alignment
Scope	Education, training, performance, context, ethics, renewal	Training delivery	Training outcomes	Programmes	Organisational training
Structure	Five interdependent phases with renewal	Five stages	Four levels	Four components	Four stages
View of competencies	Functional, behavioural, and domain clusters	Task based skills	Learning outcomes	Inputs and outputs	Job skills
Education training link	Fully integrated	Training centric	Training centric	Separate analysis	Training centric
Ethics	Central across phases	Not addressed	Not addressed	Indirect	Not addressed

Deeper attributes	Explicit focus	Not addressed	Not addressed	Limited	Not addressed
Concept of performance	Interaction of competencies, environment, motivation	Assumed outcome	Measured effect	Programme outcome	Behavioural effectiveness
Environmental factors	Explicit dimension	Implicit	Largely ignored	Strong emphasis	Background
Motivational factors	Explicitly analysed	Limited	Reaction level	Indirect	Rare
Assessment	Continuous and system wide	End stage	Post training	Continuous	Pre to post
Renewal	Formal Sunset Provision	None	None	Evaluation driven	Limited
Conceptual level	Higher order integrative framework	Design model	Evaluation model	Evaluation framework	Training model

Analytical Synthesis

The comparative analysis indicates that while established models provide robust tools for instructional design, training delivery, and evaluation, they do not sufficiently address the continuity, ethical grounding, and contextual embeddedness required for sustainable competency and performance development. Their predominant emphasis remains on discrete stages, outputs, or evaluative endpoints rather than on integrated and evolving competency systems.

The IDEAS Framework addresses these limitations by integrating education and training within a unified competency architecture, embedding environmental and motivational dimensions within performance conceptualisation, and institutionalising systematic review and renewal through Sunset Provision. Rather than replacing existing models, the IDEAS Framework provides an overarching and enabling structure within which instructional, training, and evaluation approaches can be coherently aligned, contextualised, and renewed. This

positioning enables institutions and organisations to move beyond fragmented interventions toward coherent, ethically grounded, and sustainable systems of learning, performance, and capability development.

4. Detailed Phases of the IDEAS Framework (Competency Based Cycle)

The IDEAS Framework operates through a five-phase competency-based cycle that integrates education, training, and performance development within a unified architecture. Each phase systematically addresses Core Competency Clusters alongside environmental and motivational dimensions, ensuring continuity, contextual embeddedness, and sustainability across the learning and performance continuum.

4.1 Identification of Educational and Training Needs

The Identification phase provides the diagnostic foundation of the IDEAS Framework by analysing current and emerging performance requirements across education and training.

In educational contexts, this phase identifies gaps within functional, behavioural, and domain competency clusters affecting performance across individual, group, community, societal, and global levels. In training contexts, it focuses on gaps in Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities influencing task execution, job effectiveness, team functioning, functional and organisational outcomes, including misalignment with emerging technologies, policies, and service delivery demands.

Environmental analysis examines organisational culture, governance, leadership practices, systems, resources, and infrastructure. Motivational analysis addresses engagement, commitment, values alignment, incentives, role clarity, and professional identity. Viewed through the Iceberg Model of competency, this phase addresses both visible competency gaps and observable deeper attributes inferred from behaviour, performance history, and contextual responses. Educational Needs Analysis and Training Needs Analysis employ methods such as competency mapping, interviews, surveys, focus groups, and performance data to generate a structured diagnosis of gaps and enabling conditions.

4.2 Design and Planning

The Design and Planning phase translates diagnostic findings into structured strategies for competency development and performance enhancement.

In education, learning outcomes are aligned with Core Competency Clusters and supported through curriculum design, pedagogical approaches, research orientation, and community engagement. In training, role specific Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities are defined, training modules are designed, performance standards are established, and pathways for workplace application are created.

Across both contexts, this phase considers digital platforms, analytics, institutional capacity, resource allocation, and governance requirements. From an Iceberg Model perspective, Design and Planning shapes observable deeper attributes by clarifying self-image, reinforcing professional and social roles, embedding ethical standards, and aligning learning interventions with intrinsic motivation and organisational purpose.

4.3 Execution

The Execution phase operationalises plans by translating them into learning and performance experiences.

In education, Execution includes classroom and online instruction, experiential learning, research projects, simulations, and community engagement activities. In training, it involves workshops, simulations, mentoring, coaching, and guided workplace application.

Effective facilitation, timely feedback, ethical leadership, and supportive environments strengthen the translation of Core Competency Clusters into observable performance. Execution reinforces deeper attributes such as professional identity, motivation, social roles, and ethical orientation, thereby influencing the consistency and sustainability of performance outcomes.

4.4 Assessment and Accountability

The Assessment and Accountability phase ensures that competency development and performance improvement processes are evidence informed, systemically aligned, and ethically grounded.

In education, assessment examines competency development, ethical reasoning, social responsibility, and readiness for application across

life contexts. In training, assessment focuses on proficiency in Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities, behavioural change, teamwork effectiveness, and contribution to organisational outcomes.

Assessment methods include formative and summative tools, competency-based instruments, performance dashboards, feedback mechanisms, and analytics. Accountability extends beyond learners and trainees to institutions and organisations by examining leadership practices, systems, and support structures. Findings inform corrective actions and feed directly into renewed Identification.

4.5 Sunset Provision

Sunset Provision institutionalises systematic renewal through structured review cycles. It evaluates curricula, training strategies, learning designs, and competency frameworks for continued relevance in response to advances in knowledge, technological change, organisational priorities, and ethical expectations.

Based on evidence generated across earlier phases, components may be continued, revised, integrated, scaled, or discontinued. This phase emphasises documentation, reflection, and institutional learning, and completes the cycle by informing renewed Identification and enabling long term reflection on the evolution of competencies and deeper attributes.

5. Education and Training within the IDEAS Framework

The IDEAS Framework conceptualises education and training as complementary and interlinked systems operating within a shared competency architecture organised through Core Competency Clusters and individual competencies expressed through Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes or Abilities.

Within the Iceberg Model of competency, Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities represent the visible expressions of performance, while deeper attributes such as self-image, social roles, motives, personality traits, and moral ethical orientation operate below the surface and become observable over time through sustained behavioural patterns and performance outcomes.

Across the five phases of the IDEAS Cycle, education emphasises the generic and developmental formation of competencies supporting performance across individual, group, community, societal, and

global contexts. Training contextualises and strengthens these same competencies for task execution, job effectiveness, team functioning, functional efficiency, and organisational performance. Viewed holistically, the framework ensures continuous interaction between visible competencies and their underlying drivers, enabling sustainable, responsible, and high-quality performance across education and training systems.

6. Conclusion

The IDEAS Framework presents a conceptual and competency-based architecture operationalised through a five-phase cycle for integrating education, training, and performance within a single, coherent, and continuous developmental process. Organised around Identification of Needs, Design and Planning, Execution, Assessment and Accountability, and Sunset Provision, the framework integrates competency development, performance application, and contextual conditions within a unified and iterative structure. The framework makes four principal contributions. First, it positions education and training as complementary systems operating on a shared competency architecture structured through three interrelated Core Competency Clusters, namely Functional, Behavioural, and Domain clusters. These clusters are expressed through Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes or Abilities and are supported by deeper attributes comprising self-image, social roles, motives, and personality traits, together with a central Moral Ethical Compass. Although these deeper attributes are not directly measurable, they become observable over time through sustained behaviour, ethical conduct, and role performance. Second, the IDEAS Framework reconceptualises performance as the interaction of Core Competency Clusters with environmental and motivational dimensions, recognising these elements as integral components of performance systems rather than peripheral influences. This perspective explains how learning is translated into consistent, effective, and sustained performance across diverse educational, organisational, and societal contexts. Third, the inclusion of Sunset Provision institutionalises systematic processes of review, validation, and renewal, ensuring the continued relevance of competencies, learning designs, and performance expectations in response to evolving knowledge, technological change, organisational priorities, and

societal needs. Fourth, when viewed through the Iceberg Model of competency, the IDEAS Framework highlights that observable competencies represent only the visible surface of performance, while deeper attributes shape its quality, integrity, and sustainability and become observable through consistent behaviour and ethical choices over time. By embedding attention to both visible competencies and observable deeper attributes across all phases, the IDEAS Framework provides an ethically grounded, scalable, and sustainable foundation for competency and performance development across integrated education and training systems.

7. References

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