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COMPETENCY MAPPING: AN INNOVATIVE HRM TOOL

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Abstract

Today, in the era of cut throat competition, companies are putting incredible effort to hire competent employees and to develop relevant competencies in their existing employees by which companies can gain competitive edge over one other. Competency Mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for an organization, the jobs and functions within it. Competency Mapping is an innovative idea to sustain a company as employees are the Human Capital for any company. In this slowing economy where so many companies are fighting for limited resources and talent, it is very important for organizations to continually re-examine their competencies, update it and have the courage to make the necessary changes. It is equally imperative for a firm to define a set of core competencies which corresponds with its key market differentiators. This is where competency mapping plays a key role.

Present study focuses on the retail sector namely Big Bazaar of Mangalore. Social and economic prosperity can be established with the help of retail sectors as it deals with consumer goods. To sustain, to manage risk, and to be ethical in this ever booming competition, competency mapping is a useful and an innovative way to make itself strong and have constant growth. Thus the primary focus is to find out the competency level of retail employees and explore the factors essential for efficient performance.

Competency mapping as a HR tool helps in meeting various demands that customers are expecting from them. Thus findings of study can help the organization in developing a clear strategy for developing competencies of their workforce. Overall it will support successful performance of the employees within the organization and thus will bring up means to tackle and evolve as a leader in this challenging times taking into consideration the aspects of Risk, Ethics, Governance and Sustainability.

Key words: Competency mapping, Human Resource, Retail, Customer, Work Force.

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Introduction

Competency Mapping is the process of identification, evaluation of employee's competencies and organization requirement and establishing perfect collaboration among them. Competencies help people get results in their job. By developing competencies the goals can be achieved. Competencies differ in each individual and the type of competencies possessed is of much importance. Behavioral competencies are tough to develop but the technical / functional competencies can be easily developed. There are earlier researches done to put light to my concept. It includes from the beginning of the concept to give a better idea on Competency Mapping.

In the global economy firms are becoming more and more aware of the need to have competent employees. It is not surprising that interest in this concept is rising tremendously. There are certain factors which can be responsible for growth that are linked to organizations growth. Competencies possessed by an employee may differ but the role which the employee has to play remains the same in the organization. Competencies are thus underlying characteristics of people that indicate ways of behaving or thinking, which generalizes across a wide range of situations and endure for long periods of time. Companies are now realizing the need to have competent employees for crucial roles. Opportunity cost may go higher if the firm does not have employees to react quickly and tactfully in certain decision making situations. Other than this there is a focus on performing roles, time management, nurturing of competence, increased emphasis on performance management systems, and recognition of strategic advantage given by the employee competencies in building up the core competencies of the organization. This is the reason why the global world is consistently considering the importance of Competency Mapping in its daily process.

To understand competency in the best way, they can be broadly classified into five types as per the research done earlier:

1. Knowledge-This refers to information and learning resting in a person, such as teacher's knowledge of subjects.

2. Skill-This refers to a person's ability to perform a certain task, such as teacher's skills to teach.

3. Self Concepts and Values-This refers to a person's attitudes, values and self-image .An example is self-confidence, a person's belief that he or she can be successful in a given situation.

4. Traits-Traits refers to physical characteristics and consistent responses to situations or information Good relational skill is a necessary trait for a teacher, self-control is an ability to remain calm under stress.

5. Motives-Motives are emotions, desires, physiological needs or similar impulses that prompt action. For example teachers with high interpersonal orientation take personal responsibility for working well with other staff members.

In today's competitive world, everyone wants employees to be perfectly "blessed" with whatever activities or role he/she might have to perform. Every well-managed firm should have well defined roles and list of competencies required to perform each role effectively. To come up to such a situation one needs to know the applicability of it. Competency mapping identifies an individual's strengths and weaknesses in order to help them better understand themselves and to show them where career development efforts need to be directed. Competency mapping is not only done for confirmed employees of an organization and it can also be done for contract workers or for those seeking employment to emphasize the specific skills which would make them valuable to a potential employer. These kinds of skills can be determined, when one is ready to do the work. Competency mapping is one of the most accurate means in identifying the job and behavioral competencies of an individual in an organization. In today's environment, every firm needs to sustain its competitive advantage. For that the firm needs to have strong human capital in place. To do so, the employees who work in the organization what and how are they supposed to do the work instead of just giving them a list of to-do activities. The competencies of the employees needs to be furnished in the most appropriate way.

Competencies possessed by employees are like natural resources for the firm. They can be tapped a utilized for individual s and firm development as well. Competency mapping identifies an individual's strengths and weaknesses in order to help them better understand themselves and to show them where career development efforts need to be directed. There

may be various set of competencies based on what role he/she is in. Competencies are derived from specific jobs within the organization and are grouped into categories. All the firms should realize the importance of competency assessment together with goal assessment. Every company needs an employee who is competent enough to do a particular task. Competencies are possessed by every employees but the level of it matters. Each employee has its own set of competencies which the firm needs to tap and develop to improve the level of efficiency and result oriented performance. Competency Mapping thus plays a vital role in the organization to determine the required competencies and evaluate the need for improvement. The rise in the online industry, is shaping the future course of action of the firm. This industry already has captured 12% of the market and is creating a sense of emergence in change for the established organizations. To face this new trend, firm must look forward to provide values in its service and in product quality. This can be done only be having competent employees who can retain and recruit new customers.

Competency Mapping is an innovative Human resource management tool to successful achieve the goals and even solve various issue. It is the concept which links all the aspects including Human Resource, Marketing, Finance, Operations and Strategy in the firm. The growing concern regarding employee attrition in retail industry can be solved by the solutions mentioned in this research. It is a tool to achieve greater heights for the firm by achieving sustainable growth and even leads individual development.

Big Bazaar Outlet Profile

The largest retailer of India - Big Bazaar is now the only modern retail chain to be present across more than 100 cities. Big Bazaar is the flagship hypermarket retail chain from Future Group, having over 264 stores across the country. With its motto of "Making India Beautiful", Big Bazaar ensures that all the products are of good quality and offered at the lowest prices. Promising 'more for less', Big Bazaar, offers 1.6-lakh mass-market product ranges that are sought by a majority of Indian consumers. It also offers a host of value-added services. The special discounts and promotional offers, which are available at regular intervals, make the format very unique and distinct. The consumer experiences a new level of standard in price, convenience, comfort, quality and store service levels.

Since its inception, Big Bazaar has been a front runner in industry for creating occasions of consumption for Indians. Shopping days which were created by Big Bazaar like "Sabse Saste Din", "Maha Bachat", "Wednesday Bazaar", and "Monthly Bazaar", have now become an industry norm. The attractive deals that range across product categories coupled with the best of quality, have always delighted millions of Indians.

It is Public Limited Company founded in the year 2001. Its headquarters is in Mumbai, India. It is a hypermarket which employees nearly 36000 people all over India. It has its presence in PAN INDIA Big Bazaar has enabled every Indian to have equal standard of living, so much so that consumers from every strata of society shop at Big Bazaar. From Fashion to Food to Home, Big Bazaar ensures that every category has the best of variety of offerings. Big Bazaar today has a loyal customer base of over two and a half crore. These customers are part of various loyalty programs of Big Bazaar like, Payback, T24 Mobile and Big Bazaar Profit Club that offer them more out of every rupee that they spend in our stores. Along with bringing in modernization in business, Big Bazaar's roots are imbibed deep down to Indian culture. Every employee of Big Bazaar believes in SEVA, that has become everyone's way of life. Be it a customer, colleague, society or community, Big Bazaar is forefront in facilitating a free helping hand in every way possible. Big Bazaar's Rourkela store in Orissa is the latest entrant in the market making the retail chain hit the 100th goal. Now, Big Bazaar reaches out to every consumer's home from Agartala in East to Bhuj in West, from Zirakpur in North to Palakkad in South. Thus, it has existence all over India making its operations extensive to cater to everyone s needs.

Big Bazaar, Mangalore which has its establishment in a prominent location even has competent employees. This study was based upon identifying the competency level of employees, with the highest and lowest skill together with the factors necessary for smooth functioning of the enterprises. This firm has strong orientation with relation to its vision and mission and imparts the same on the employees. This gives a clear picture about the firm's importance on its core values. This makes the workplace, the best place to work in. There will be shortcomings in every firm but it needs to tackle it continuously. An ever growing emphasis on quality and technological use makes this industry a competitive force. The rise in the online industry, is shaping the future course of action of the firm. This industry

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Competency Mapping is an innovative Human resource management tool to successful achieve the goals and even solve various issue. It is concept which links all the aspects including Human Resource, Marketing, Finance, Operations and Strategy in the firm. The growing concern regarding employee attrition in retail industry can be solved by the solutions mentioned in this research. It is a tool to achieve greater heights for the firm by achieving sustainable growth and even leads individual development. This study gives a clear picture on the controllable aspects which can be utilized strategically to overcome the uncontrollable ones. Thus, giving the firm a strong edge over the competitors and create a strong human resource advantage over the other. Creativity and Innovation is the base of any new idea or tool. Thus, Competency Mapping is a useful HR tool for the company as well as the employee. The research was conducted to map the level of required competencies possessed by employees and to find out the factors essential for a sales oriented job as to link the factors and the competencies to give the right details of how it should be.

Competency Mapping for Retail Employees

Retail employees are now facing a huge showdown due to the presence of the online retailing industry. The existing firms are currently facing the heat of the growing completion in the market share between various other firms. This pressure is directly or indirectly being put on the employees to work well and make the company's get profit. To that the firm needs to recruit new customers and retain the old customers. This will bring sustainability in the organization. To do so the retail employees must know how to recruit new customers when they come in the organization to purchase. The biggest challenge the employees face in making the customer purchase goods from the shop. Each customer has its own different way of behaving and reacting to certain situations. Keeping those aspects in mind the employees need to face the customers. Another aspect is to retain old customers. There are various customers who are loyal to the firm shop from the same firm again and

again. Such customers need to be treated in a special way. The employees must do the hard work of linking what the customer usually purchase and inform them about the recent updates regarding that particular brand the next time they come. That could one of the ways of retaining the customer. For this they knowledge of customer s choice and preferences need to be known by the employees.

This newer aspects, rising competitions in the market make the employees under perform and the employer s either remove them from job or deduct their salary. There comes the importance of competency mapping to the retail employees. The competencies possessed by employees differ from individual to individual and are unique to an extent. The roles what the employees play in the organization are linked to the competencies what they possess. There are different roles which the employees have to perform in the organization. Competency Mapping thus reduces the burden of employee as they know what is supposed to be done and what is the parameter of evaluation and how fruitful the work should be in order to meet the goals. The competencies need to be possessed by the employees. This technique will help the employees to know their strengths and weaknesses. Performance appraisal just gives the overall picture of whether the employees have achieved the goal or no but before that the employees should know whether they have the required competencies or no and if not then how they can improve and if they have how they can improvise on that to make them a stronger competent employee in the firm. Everything has a scope of improvement and no employee can be perfectly competent in its work.

Retail employees tend to mistake only way to achieve the goal is to sell the product whoever comes to them. But basically the employees should understand that they need to build strong customer base and need to maintain cordial relationship between them. A strong customer base will someday or the other reap benefits. Individual goals should not be the major criteria when it comes to company's goals. It is been seen that employees want to achieve their target and then enjoy without considering the company's overall goal. Competency Mapping will help the employees know what needs to be done and how it need to strengthened to make their firm win over the other firm. The employees have a lot of confusion in their mind regarding the work they do, what needs to be done, some are not

satisfied with the training that is provided to them, whereas some do not know what to do in the firm. There are huge set of retail employees who are not satisfied with the performance appraisal done to them. The inner capacities of the employees are not at all considered when it comes to retail firm. Thus, this concept benefits both the company as well the employee to clear picture of what the company expects from the employee and how the employee must do its task. Using this tool, the employees will know the factors essential for their job are and will achieve the goals in an effective manner. The crucial differentiation it will have is that it will have an all-round development of an individual. It is from the role it plays in the organization and the competencies required for the role-based job. Every employee have different roles to play in the organization, it may be with its other team members, to the organization, to the customer and finally to the self. To understand these roles and its effectiveness competencies required need to put into in these roles and a good set of role based competency model can be developed to clarify regarding the role they have to play and importantly the competencies that fit in to their role. Once the employees understand the useful of using competency mapping in their day to day work it will make their work easy, their goals will be achieved, they will improve themselves as they will know their weakness and to reduce that training will be provided by the firm. Thus, this tool can be widely used by all the firm and basically retail employees as the competition which they are going to face in the times to come is tremendous. There may come on Online Revolution where majority of people buy form online. To avoid that companies need to perform, and for the companies to perform they need competent employees and for the employees to be competent they should know what competencies they should possessed for their job and for that Competency Mapping is necessary. Thus, the employees will grow together with the company.

Literature Review

David McClelland (1973) professor of psychology at the Harvard University coined this concept in the year 1973 in its book "Testing for competencies rather than intelligence". McClelland's research indicated that although traditional academic aptitude and knowledge content tests were good predictors of academic performance, they seldom predicted outstanding on-the-job performance. The Iceberg Model of David McClelland is the base of any Competency Oriented research.

Richard E Boyatzis (1982) published in the book titled "The Competent Manager" defined competency as 'an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/ or superior performance in a job'. It was with Boyatzis that job competency came to widely understood to mean an underlying characteristic of a person that leads or causes superior or effective performance. Boyatzis was explicit in describing the importance of clearly-defined competency as reflected in specific behavior and clearly defined performance outcomes when he wrote that "the important points is that specific actions cause, or lead to, the specified results. Certain characteristics or abilities of the person enable him or her to demonstrate the appropriate specific actions.

Spencer and Spencer (1993) improvised on the concept framed by David McClelland (1973) in their book titled "Competence Model at work for superior performance". They developed "Behavioral Event Interview (BEI) combining Critical Incidents Method " (CIM) with "Thematic Appreciation Test" (TAT). They said that there are specific competencies at work which differentiates between it and being competent. It is widely accepted even now.

Ranjan Chaudhuri (2008) highlighted that flexibility is an important concept when conducting business or managing distribution channels, particularly in retailing, especially in the current era when consumer demands are challenging and competition is tense. Flexibility in retailing is an emerging research domain. There is limited research into flexibility in the market orientation literature in retailing. This research, led through a case study of an Indian retailer, is intended to stimulate research activity to develop new knowledge on marketing and flexibility. This created a positive gain of developing and using resource and coordination flexibilities that create the strategic options and resulting strategic flexibilities that are most useful in managing the future uncertainties facing an organization.

Dr. Ishwara P (2013) in his research paper made an attempt to study HR practices in Retail sector, more specifically BIG BAZAAR in Mangalore Branch. In order to collect the views and perception of the employees working for big bazaar in Mangalore city toward HR practices, 100 employees have been randomly selected and issued questionnaire. These employees are working at various positions from top to bottom in the organization. As far as

their career data is concerned, they are with few years of job experience and just have Degree educational background. His study revealed that almost all employees aware of HR activities and they are not fully satisfied with respect to pay, involvement in decision-making, relationship, performance based pay etc.

Research Methodology

Present study focuses on the retail sector namely Big Bazaar of Mangalore city. Social and economic prosperity can be established with the help of retail sectors as it deals with consumer goods. Hence, to sustain, to manage risk, and to be ethical in this ever booming competition, competency mapping is a useful and an innovative way to make itself strong and have constant growth. Thus a descriptive research study was conducted to find out the competency level of retail employees and explore the factors essential for efficient performance.

Scope of the Research

Competencies play a major role in determining an employee's worth and credibility. Edward Deming's principal of eliminating numerical targets has a crucial role to play in considering the use of skills of an employee. The scope of the study is restricted to Big Bazaar employees in Mangalore city. Big Bazaar in Mangalore city consists mostly employees who are involved directly selling the products to the customers. Numerical goals are the major tool for assessment of these employees. So far the competency assessment is not done for the employees of Big Bazaar in Mangalore City. Hence this forms the objective of the study.

Objectives of the study

1. To explore the competencies required for a retail sales oriented employees.
2. To develop competency model identifying the roles required for the developing the competencies.

Data Collection

Primary data was collected using a well-structured questionnaire which included dichotomous, closed ended and scaled questions. Interview method was adopted to collect the required response for the questionnaire. The study constitutes total of 110 sample respondents. Present study includes all employees who are team members, team leaders, assistant department managers and department managers.

Limitations

1. Some of the employees may not know their hidden competencies
2. Opinions may differ due to the various respective reasons

Future Line of research

This study can be used as a base to evaluate the employee's competency level. The limitations can be overcome by using various HR techniques such as role play, thematic appreciation test to evaluate and find out the hidden competencies. Thus this forms the scope for the further research.

Data Analysis & Findings

Table 6.1 Socio-demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender classification of respondents	Male	70	63.64
	Female	40	36.36
TOTAL		**110**	**100%**
Age group of respondents	Below or =20	31	28.18
	21-30	54	49.09
	31-40	17	15.45
	41 and above	8	7.28
Total		**110**	**100%**
Experience level of respondents	Less than 1	35	32
	1- Less than 2	34	31
	2- Less than 3	16	15
	3 and above	25	23
Total		**110**	**100%**
Number of daily customer interaction	0-100	38	34.55
	101-200	12	10.91
	201-300	33	30.00
	301-400	13	11.82
	401 and above	14	12.73
Total		**110**	**100%**
Educational background of respondents	S.S.L.C	5	4.54
	P.U.C	23	20.91
	Degree	58	52.73
	Post Graduate	10	9.09
	Others	14	12.73
Total		**110**	**100%**

Interpretation: The above socio demographic table depicts that the majority of the employees responded for the survey were males. Also maximum respondents belong to the age group being between 21 years to 30 years. It is also observed that majority of the employees have a minimum of 1 year of experience with daily customer interaction of 100 customers. Also maximum of employees are graduates.

Table 6.2 To Explore The Competencies Required for a Retail Sales Oriented Employees.

A factor analysis was conducted to explore the major competencies required for the employees. Factor analysis is performed in order to group these statements on priority basis based on the strength of inter-correlation between them, called 'Factors' and cluster these statements into the factors extracted and the results are presented in the following table. The study explores a total of 11 competencies which the employee require. Factor analysis results are as follows:

Factors	Items Included	Factor Loadings	Name of the factor	% Variance Explained
F 1	- Team worker - Accepts mistakes & learns - Maintains formal relationship - Good relation with customers - Listens to other people point of view	.784 .765 -.750 .461 .454	**Interpersonal**	10.104
F 2	- Remains calm during stressful situation - Innovative way of dealing - Ability to deal with multiple issues - Knowledge of competitors products - Willingness to approach customers	.816 .778 .680 .-590 -.522	**Customer Oriented**	8.715
F 3	- Systematic work execution - Controlling shrinkage - Firms product knowledge - Follows grooming standards - Knowledge of technical aspects	-.804 .778 -.583 .550 .468	**Core**	8.694
F 4	- Empathy in dealing - Shows responsible behavior - Creates and follows plan through completion	.875 .691 .414	**Organizational**	8.020
F 5	- Shows Emotional maturity - Shows resilience in procedure - Assertiveness at work - Builds lasting relationships - Ability to connect to newer ideas	.808 .750 .723 -.482 -.466	**Emotional Intelligence**	7.840
F 6	- Strives to improve productivity - Confident at work - Meets expected standards - Follows procedures - Knowledge of basic computer skills	.921 .721 .652 .571 .522	**Process Oriented**	7.643
F 7	- An pleasing way to approach customers - Convincing customers for purchase	.831 .644	**Persuading**	7.090

F 8	- Enthusiastic in activities - Achieves goal - Adherence to S.O.P	.830 -.602 -.551	**Job Competence**	6.625
F 9	- Maintains organizational discipline - Ability to do things differently - Ability to deal with multiple issues - Understands that each customer is different	.706 .698 -.552 -.469	**Analytical Ability**	6.099
F 10	- Understands financial impact of decision on purchaser.	.866	**Cross Functional**	4.646
F 11	- Being Prompt	.832	**Promptness**	4.570
			TOTAL	**80.045**

Kmo Value = 0.675

Total Variance Explained = 80.045 %

Interpretation: The above Factor Analysis table explores 11 Factors essential for efficient performance of Big Bazaar, Mangalore Employees. As per the analysis the factors essential are Interpersonal, Customer oriented, Core, Organizational, Emotional Intelligence, Process Oriented, Influencing, Job competence, Analytical Ability, Cross Functional and Promptness. To begin with, the Most Important factor needed for the employee in a sales oriented workplace is Interpersonal Factor which is absolutely correct. The second factor essential is that the employee should have emphasis on customer orientation. Interestingly certain core and organizational factors are placed at third and fourth place. Emotional Intelligence and process oriented factors took the lead over other actors. The remaining factors were more or less important but of less importance than the other mentioned factors.

The KMO test which test for sample size adequacy is 0.675 implies that sample size is adequate enough to conduct factor analysis. The Variance explained is 80.045 % which is a good sign as the recognized acceptable standards is above 70% implies that all eleven factors explores about 80% of variance whereas remaining 19.955 % i.e. 20% is not explained and may vary from situation to situation and based upon the firms requirements or may be the individual's hidden capabilities which is not seen form the human eye.

Table 6.3 Role Competency Model

There are various roles which an employee has to be play in the organization. As per the study conducted a retail employee plays four major role in the firm to which the competencies can be linked to successfully link all the aspects in the firm. They are:

COMPETENCY	ROLE	
• Customer Oriented • Cross Functional • Persuading	Customers	**With the Customers** Every retail employee has to deal with customers. They are the ones without which any company would not sustain. Thus, Customer oriented role is a major component so as to retain customers and even recruit newer customers.
• Interpersonal • Other	Team Members	**With its Team Members** Team Members are a crucial factor for the company. Without the team any company cannot reach its goal and vision for what it has set its eye upon. It needs to build a lasting relationship with its colleagues so as to work in harmony and motivation.
• Analytical • Emotional Intelligence • Core	Self-Related	**Self-Related** Self-role i.e. the way it portrays itself to the other. That is the way how an employee shows its characteristics to the others. Self-Image needs to be
• Job Competence • Process Oriented • Organizational	Enterprise	**Enterprise Related** Any employee works for the company it is employed with. The employee is responsible for the company as a whole and had to utilize its skills to the fullest. Thereby Organizational related role for the employee is a mandatory element.

The Role Competency Model mentioned above distinguishes the competencies required for the having optimum efficiency of an employee. This model has wide applicability to all the retail employees and can be used as an effective measure to improving the employee's skills rather than terminating them for lack of performance. In today's world what we need is to grow the employees and make them employable for your firm. Competencies are the major focal point of this model. Roles were identified for an employee so that the necessary competency for the role identified can be combined and given them a clear picture of what they are supposed to do. The above role competency model gives a clear idea that there are four roles an employee plays in an organization which is related to the company, with the

team members, with the customers and its personal aspects. Competencies are linked to it for the successful completion of the role and overall achievement of the objective. This model can be used to analyze in which role the employee is good or bad and can make the necessary arranges. Thus this model can be used for various HR related aspects and can be linked to marketing aspects so as to have effective linkage between the two.

Thus, RCM (Role Competency Model) is a useful tool to connect to the firm s objectives to manage the risk aspect of the firm and thereby create a competitive edge over the other firms. This will make the firm sustainable and grow in the future.

Conclusion

Competency mapping as a Human Resource Management tool helps in meeting various demands that customers are expecting from them. Thus findings of study can help the organization in developing a clear strategy for developing competencies of their workforce. Overall it will support successful performance of the employees within the organization and thus will bring up means to tackle and evolve as a leader in this challenging times taking into consideration the aspects of Risk, Ethics, Governance and Sustainability.

The rise in the online industry, is shaping the future course of action of the firm. This industry already has captured 12% of the market and is creating a sense of emergence in change for the established organizations. To face this new trend, firm must look forward to provide values in its service and in product quality. Competency Mapping is an innovative Human resource management tool to successful achieve the goals and even solve various issue. It is a concept which links all the aspects including Human Resource, Marketing, Finance, Operations and Strategy in the firm. Every retail employees competencies can be tapped used this technique of Competency Mapping.

The competencies were identified and a model was formulated based on the roles they play. The competencies possessed and the roles played are linked to each other and made a strong combination which can achieve any goals without pressurizing the employees. It can be used to map the required competencies and can be used for development of every individual in order to achieve the overall goal of the enterprise. Thus, this paper find out the competencies required for a retail sales employee together with the roles they play in the organization thereby creating a strong link between them.

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