

IMC USA's Competency Framework and Certification Scheme for Certified Management Consultants™ (CMC®)

*IMC USA's mission: promote excellence and ethics
in management consulting through certification,
education and professional resources.*

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www.IMCUSA.org

[Full Competency Framework](#)

Introduction

The Management Consulting Competency Framework defines the competences and standards for management consultants, and forms the basis of the IMC USA's Certified Management Consultant™ qualification (CMC®). The competences presented herein set forth the knowledge, skills and behaviors required of successful management consultants. There are three levels of progression covered in the framework— Early, Advanced, and Professional Leader, all underpinned by professional behaviors and ethics.

In 2015, the IMCUSA Board of Directors agreed to adopt the ICMCI 2014 Competency Framework as the IMC USA Framework rather than maintain a separate IMC USA Framework. The ICMCI Competency Framework represents the work of ICMCI Professional Standards and Quality Assurance committees with members from all over the world begun in the late 1990s and carried forward to today. This action will allow IMC USA to focus on moving the global standard forward and meeting that standard.

The CMC® qualification is relevant for all practicing consultants to management, including those in large and medium-sized firms, niche firms, specialty consultants, internal consultants, networked groups, and independent consultants, and will continue to remain a core offering of the Institute of Management Consultants USA. It defines the standards to be met by “fully competent consultants” and broadly speaking, is targeted at those consultants who:

- Are currently active in consulting: able to demonstrate that in three of the last five years management consulting has been a significant part of his or her activity. This can include consulting with clients; selling, managing and / or supporting consulting activity; preparing for and teaching consultancy; publishing and writing on consulting, technical specialties, client business segments, and related topics
- Have at least a Bachelor's Degree or two additional years consulting experience with documented professional development
- Are experienced in all elements of the consulting life cycle;
- Can take full ownership for delivery of a project or a major work stream;
- Have experience in managing others; and
- Have demonstrated their contribution is highly valued by clients.

IMC USA wishes to acknowledge all of the previous original and derivative work by ICMCI members and IMC USA members which has resulted in this document.

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A Higher Standard of Competence and Performance

| Developmental Stage | Early | Advanced | Profession Leader |
|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Expertise | Provides technical skills/ experience to a project. Developing skills defined by Common Body of Knowledge (CBK) and Competency Framework (CF) | Secures, designs, and manages small consulting projects. Practices skills consistent with Common Body of Knowledge and Competency Framework | Can secure, design, and manage large, complex, team-based consulting projects. Meets highest international standards of competence, including IMC USA CBK and CF |
| Scope | Narrow specialty in a technical discipline / industry | Applies expertise across industries and disciplines | Creates new approaches to applying expertise across industries and disciplines |
| Organization focus | Tactical support to middle management. | General business advice to managers and executives | Broad strategic advice to senior managers and executives/Board of Directors |
| Value to Client | Solves technical/tactical problems | Recommends and implements solutions to client needs | Sought by and considered a partner by executives. Long term engagements and retainer relationships are the norm |
| Commitment to Profession | May belong to technical and/or trade associations and to IMC USA. Does not subscribe to a formal code of ethics | Member of IMC USA and bound to IMC USA Code of Ethics. Has obtained CMC [®] certification. Actively contributes to the profession. | Member of IMC USA and bound to IMC USA Code of Ethics. Has obtained CMC [®] certification. Actively contributes to professional organizations and the profession |
| Experience | Up to 3-5 years as an external or internal consultant | 5-15 years as an external or internal consultant with experience managing increasingly large complex projects | Greater than 15 years as an internal or external consultant |

A Competence Based Professional Qualification for Individual Consultants

The Institute of Management Consultants USA believes in a sector-wide definition of the term “management consulting” :

“Management consulting is the providing to management of objective advice and assistance relating to the strategy, structure, management and operations of an organization in pursuit of its long-term purposes and objectives. Such assistance may include the identification of options with recommendations; the provision of an additional resource and/or the implementation of solutions”

and the implementation of solutions” a key driver for the development of our competence framework.

The Competency Framework

The IMC USA Competency Framework defines those competencies required to be a successful management consultant. The competences are the behaviors, skills and knowledge that a management consultant is expected to understand, apply and demonstrate. IMC USA’s Competency Framework is built upon the Common Body of Knowledge and the core competencies described in this document, both of which are aligned with ICMCI’s requirements for reciprocity of the CMC with other affiliated IMC organizations.

An effective Management Consultant requires a balance of behaviors, skills and knowledge

- **Business and Technical Competence**

This is the application of fact-based knowledge of technical skills, business understanding, sector insight, and external awareness.

- **Consulting Competence**

These are the core consultancy skills, tools, and techniques which are essential in delivering consulting services.

- **Values and Ethical Behavior Competence**

These define the professional skills, behaviors, and attitudes which act as “enablers” in achieving market capability, knowledge and Consulting Competence. They establish the level of ethical best practices, credibility and trust between the client and the consultant.