

Solano County Health & Social Services

Public Health Workforce Development Plan

Updated June 7, 2022



"Healthy People – Healthy Community"

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PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION



Health and Social Services Department

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Introduction

With a host of new challenges and opportunities affecting the health of our community, from rapidly changing demographics to emergence of new health threats such as the Zika virus to implementation of the Affordable Care Act, it is critical to develop and maintain a highly competent public health workforce. To be effective, these workers must have a broad set of skills and abilities, ranging from knowledge of public health science to collaborative community-building, from leadership to analytical skills, from financial knowledge to basic communication and cultural competency.

By 2020, the United States will face a shortfall of more than 250,000 public health workers, including public health physicians and nurses, epidemiologists, health educators and administrators (Association of Schools of Public Health, 2008). Moreover, since 2008, nearly 44,000 jobs in local health departments have been lost (National Association of County and City Health Officials, 2013). These statistics present a looming public health crisis, and underscore the need to maintain a highly competent public health.

To assess the skill level and training and professional development needs of the current Solano Public Health workforce, in January 2016, Solano Public Health requested all 141 employees to complete an online self-assessment¹ “to assess Public Health employees on their familiarity with 8 ‘Core Competencies’, a nationally-recognized set of skills that add value to a Solano Public Health workforce, and its ability to serve its clients.”

Methodology

Over a two week period (January 14, 2016 to January 29, 2016), 92 employees, representing 65% of the total public health workforce, completed the nine-question survey. Each employee was asked to rate his or her personal competency at one of five levels:

- Very comfortable and could teach this to others
- Comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply this skill
- Limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill
- Unaware or very little knowledge about this skill
- Not applicable to my job.

¹ Survey Monkey - www.surveymonkey.com



Finally, respondents were asked if they were interested in attending trainings on each of the competencies. All survey responses were confidential, and there were no identifiers in the survey to track individual responses. Results tabulated by Survey Monkey are presented below.

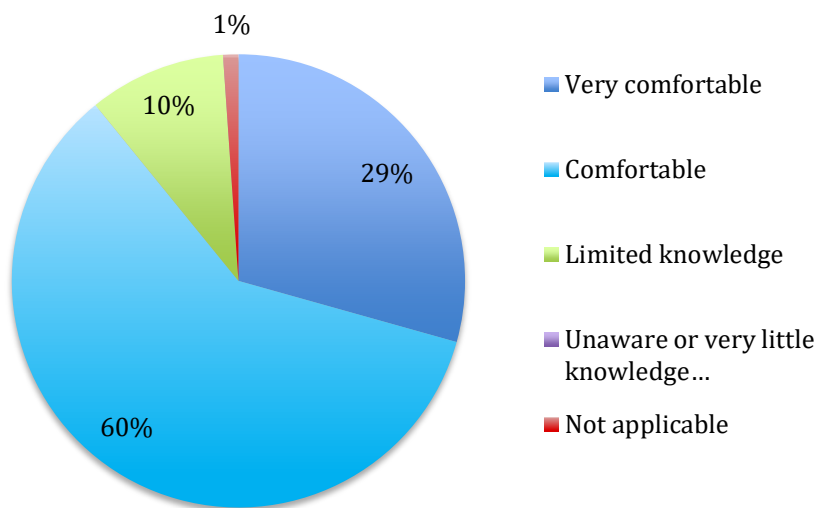
Ratings of Core Competencies

Core Competency 1: Cultural Competency Skills

The survey defined cultural competency as the ability to understand, appreciate, and interact with people or groups from cultures, belief systems, languages and lifestyles other than one's own. Examples of the skill include understanding the concept of diversity as it applies to individuals and populations; understanding the ways diversity may influence policies, programs, services, and the health of a community; understanding the value of a diverse public health workforce; and addressing the diversity of individuals and populations when implementing policies, programs, and services that affect the health of a community.

Solano County employees indicated a high level of knowledge and skill in cultural competency. Fifty-five respondents **(60%) were comfortable with the skill, and an additional 27 (29%) reported that they were very comfortable with the skill.** Only nine employees (10%) reported limited knowledge; one individual reported that it was inapplicable to the job.

Cultural Competency Skills



89% of respondents reported they were **comfortable or very comfortable** with Cultural Competency Skills

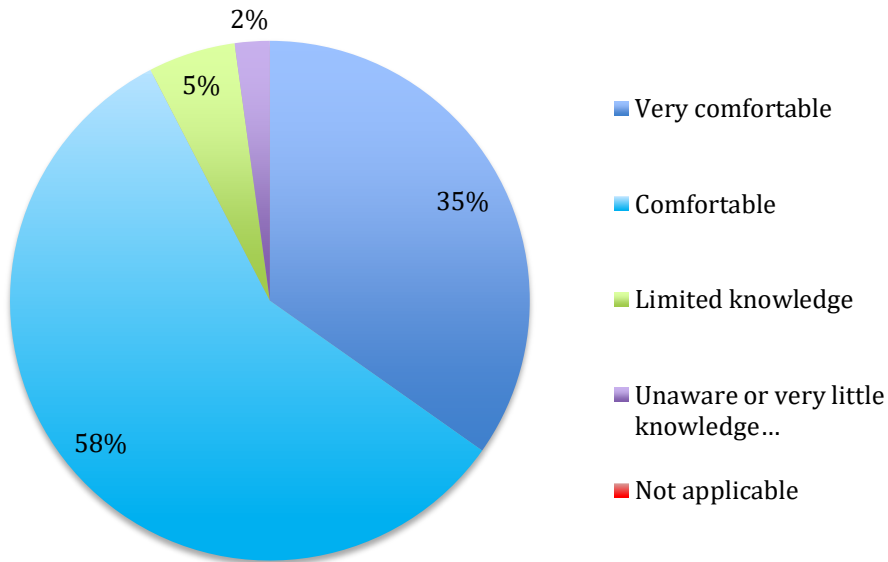


Core Competency 2: Communication Skills

The survey defined communication skills as the ability to use written, verbal and non-verbal language to convey critical information to individuals and groups. Examples include communicating in writing and orally with linguistic and cultural proficiency; suggesting approaches for disseminating public health data and information; facilitating communication among individuals, groups and organizations; and communicating information to influence behavior and improve health.

The public workforce reported a very high level of comfort with communication skills, with 85 of the respondents **(93%) reporting they were comfortable or very comfortable with the skill**. Only seven employees (7%) indicated that they had limited or very little knowledge of these skills.

Communication Skills



93% of respondents reported they were **comfortable or very comfortable** with Communication Skills

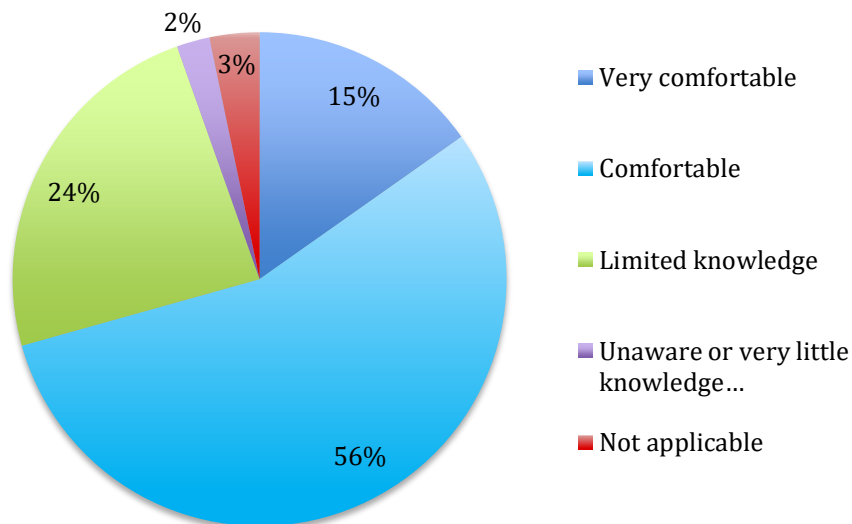


Core Competency 3: Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills are defined as the ability to foster team-building and organizational growth and development, to manage change and to navigate operational, social and political systems to advance public health. Examples include incorporating ethical standards of practice into all interactions with individuals, organizations, and communities; contributing to development of a vision for a healthy community; identifying internal and external facilitators and barriers that may affect the delivery of the 10 Essential Public Health Services; and describing ways to improve individual and program performance.

Most employees who responded to the survey were comfortable with these skills. Fifty-one **(56%) of respondents indicated that they were comfortable with applying these skills**, and an additional fourteen **(15%) reported that they could teach the skills to others**. Twenty-two (24%) reported that they had limited or very little knowledge of the skills, and three individuals (3%) noted that the skill was not applicable to their job.

Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills



71% of respondents reported they were **comfortable or very comfortable** with Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

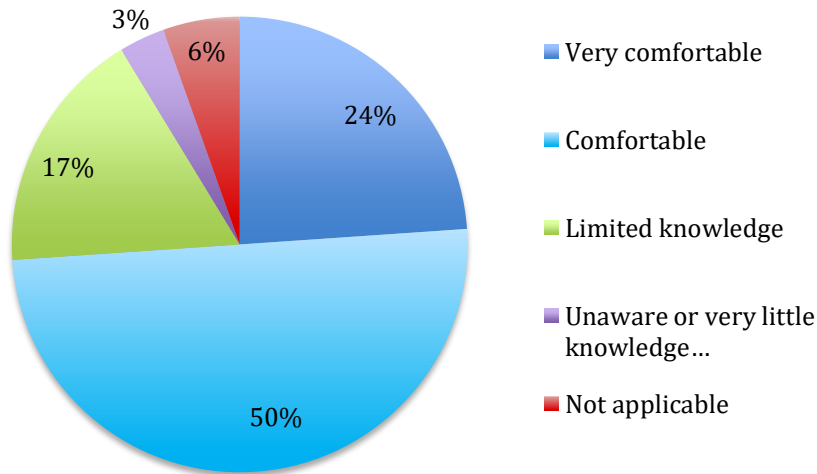


Core Competency 4: Analytical/Assessment Skills

The survey defined the Analytical/Assessment core competency as the ability to gather, study and interpret information, and come to a conclusion based upon that information. Examples include determining factors affecting the health of a community; identifying gaps in data; describing assets and resources that can be used for improving the health of a community; and describing how evidence is used in decision making.

Forty six (50%) of the 92 respondents indicated that they were comfortable with and could apply these skills, and an additional 22 (24%) reported that they could teach these skills to others. Sixteen (17%) related limited knowledge, and three (3%) reported very little knowledge of analytical and assessment skills. Five (6%) respondents reported that the skills were not applicable to their jobs.

Analytical/Assessment Skills



Nearly 2 out of 3 (64%) respondents reported they were comfortable or very comfortable with Analytical/Assessment Skills

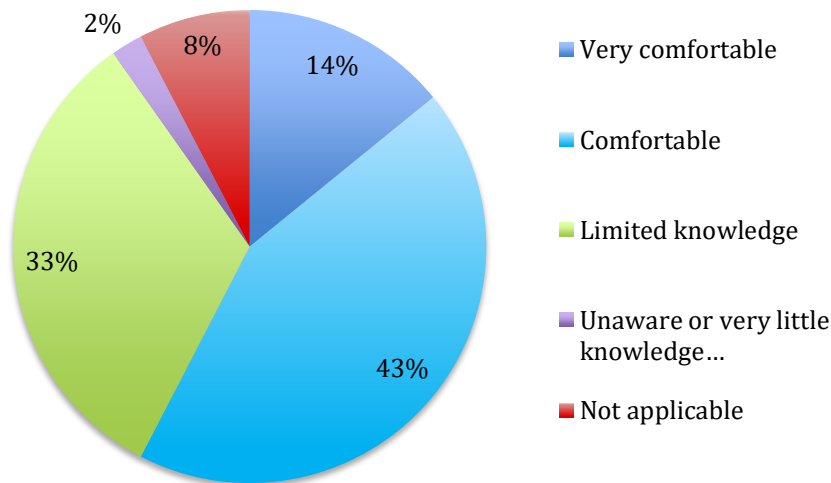


Core Competency 5: Public Health Science Skills

This core competency focused on the knowledge of the scientific foundation of the field of public health and its core and essential functions, as well as the ability to apply scientific methods and evidence to inform and design public health policies and programs. Examples include identifying prominent events in the history of public health; recognizing the limitation of evidence; describing the evidence used in developing, implementing evaluating and improving policies programs and services; and describing the laws, regulation, policies and procedures for the ethical conduct of research.

Forty **(43%)** of survey respondents reported that they were **comfortable with this core competence**, and an additional thirteen (14%) indicated that they could teach the skills to others. Thirty-two employees **(35%)** indicated that they **had limited or very little knowledge or ability in this skill area**. Seven (8%) reported that this competency was not applicable to their job.

Public Health Sciences Skills



Nearly 3 out of 5 (57%) respondents reported they were **comfortable or very comfortable** with Public Health Science Skills

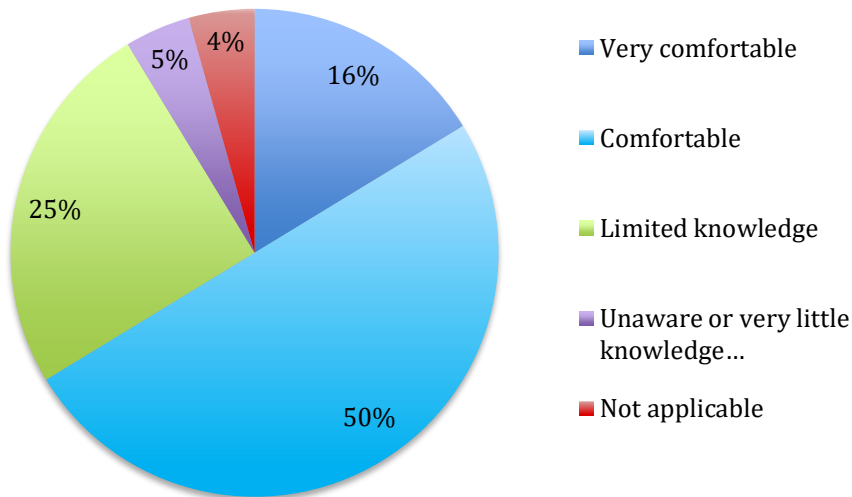


Core Competency 6: Community Dimensions of Practice Skills

Community Dimensions of Practice includes the ability to recognize and use effectively community partnerships, relationships, assets and resources to inform and design public health policies and programs. Examples include collaborating and engaging community partners and community members; using community assets and resources; and informing the public about policies, programs and resources that improve health in a community.

Forty-six respondents (50%) indicated they were comfortable applying this skill, and an additional fifteen individuals (16%) were very comfortable and felt they could teach it to others. Twenty-seven respondents (30%) indicated they had limited knowledge or were unaware of community dimensions of practice. Four employees (4%) noted that the skills were not applicable to their jobs.

Community Dimensions of Practice Skills



2 out of 3 (66%) respondents reported they were **comfortable** or **very comfortable** with Community Dimensions of Practice Skills

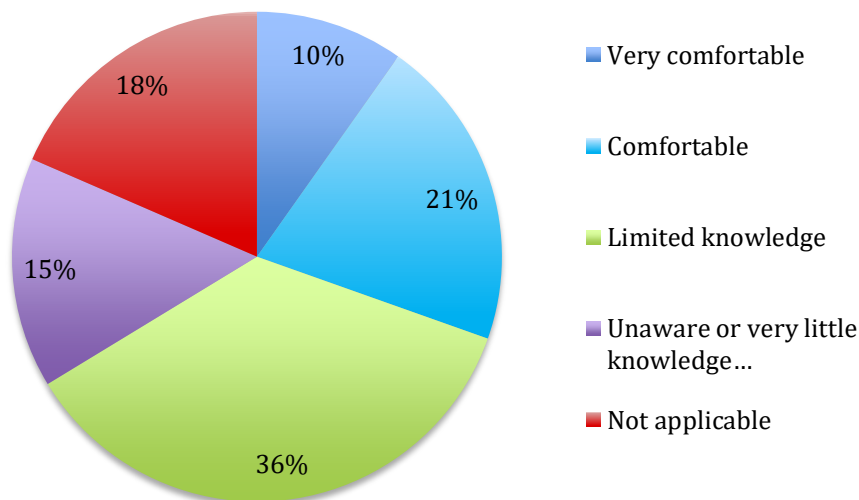


Core Competency 7: Financial Planning and Management Skills

The survey defined this competency as the knowledge of governmental budget processes and cycles; the ability to develop and implement programs within budgets; and the ability to use public health information to improve program and business operations. Examples include describing the structures, functions and authorizations of governmental public health programs and organizations; contributing to development of program budgets; operating programs within budget; and motivating colleagues for the purpose of achieving program and organizational goals.

Respondents indicated less comfort with this core competency than the others surveyed. Only **nineteen respondents (21%) described themselves as comfortable with the knowledge or ability to apply the skill, and nine others (10%) indicated that they were very comfortable and could teach these skills to others.** Thirty-three employees (36%) indicated limited knowledge and ability, and an additional fourteen (15%) were unaware or had very little knowledge of this skill. Seventeen employees (18%) reported that the competency was not applicable to their jobs.

Financial Planning and Management Skills



Less than 1 out of 3 (31%) respondents reported they were comfortable or very comfortable with Financial Planning and Management Skills

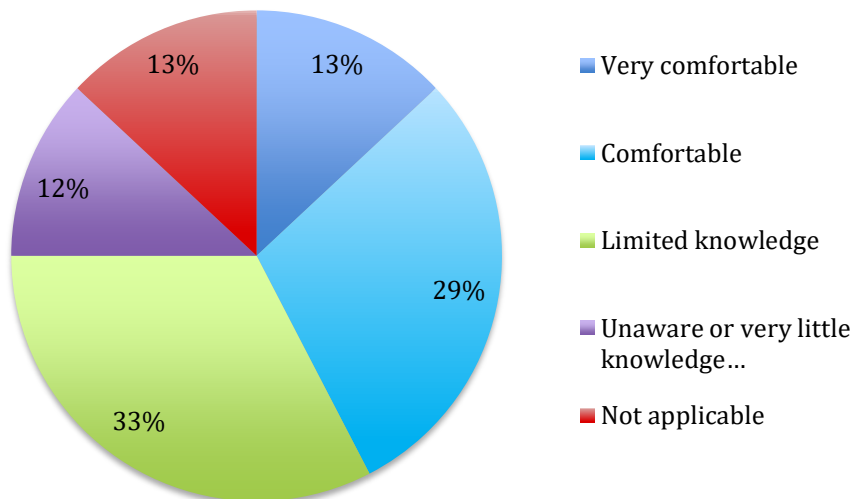


Core Competency 8: Policy Development/Program Planning Skills

This competency is defined as the ability to understand how societal, environmental and political issues impact population health, and how to use that understanding to create laws, regulations and programs/services that lead to long-term improvement in health outcomes. Examples include contributing to development of program goals and objectives; describing implications of policies, programs and services; applying strategies for continuous quality improvement, and describing the organizational strategic plan.

Twenty-seven **(29%) respondents reported that they were comfortable with this competency**, and an additional 12 (13%) indicated that they were very comfortable and could teach these skills to others. Thirty employees **(33%) claimed limited knowledge or ability to apply the skill**, and an additional eleven (12%) reported they were unaware of or had very little knowledge of policy development and program planning. Twelve employees (13%) said the competency was not applicable to their jobs.

Policy Development/Program Planning Skills



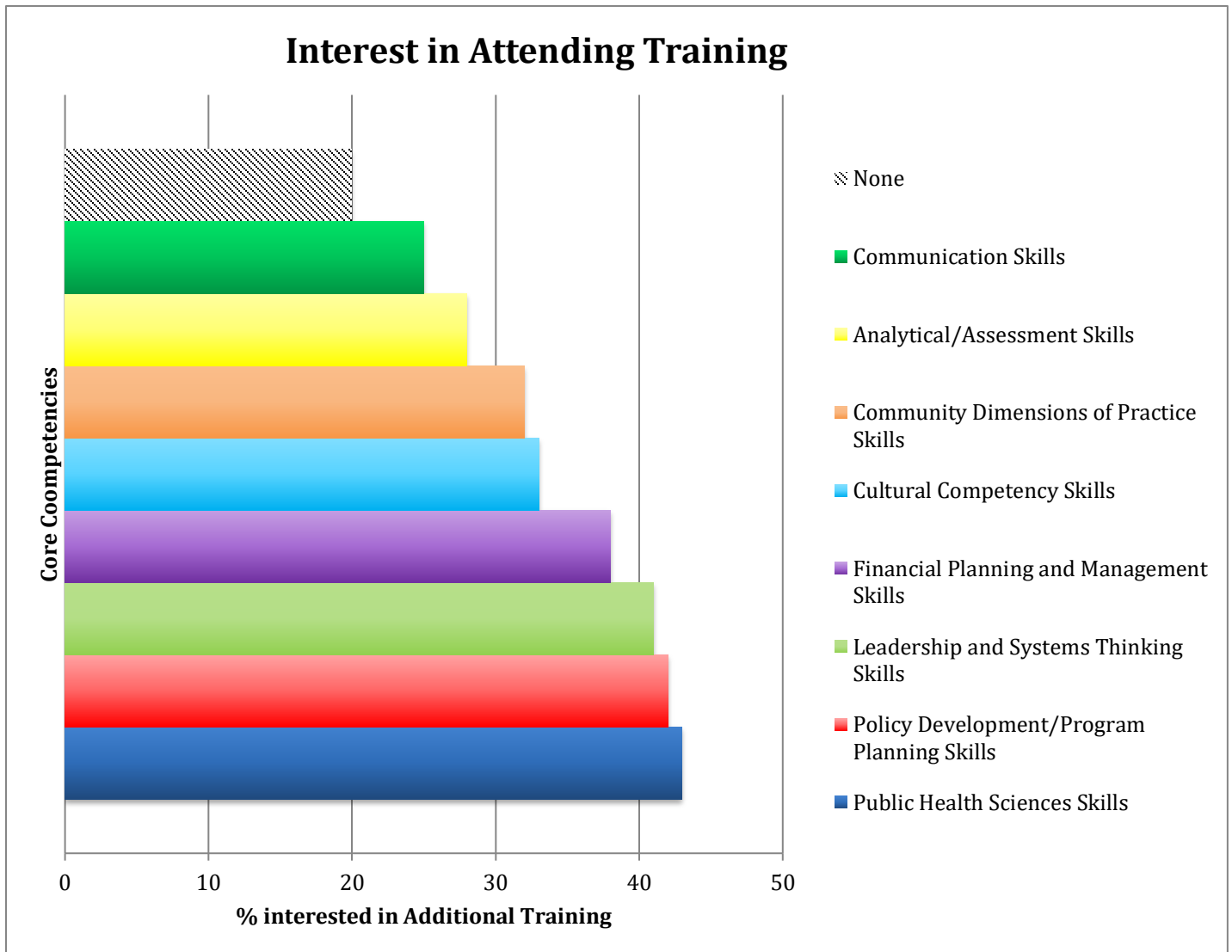
More than 2 out of 5 (41%) respondents reported they were comfortable or very comfortable with Policy Development/Program Planning Skills



Training on Core Competencies

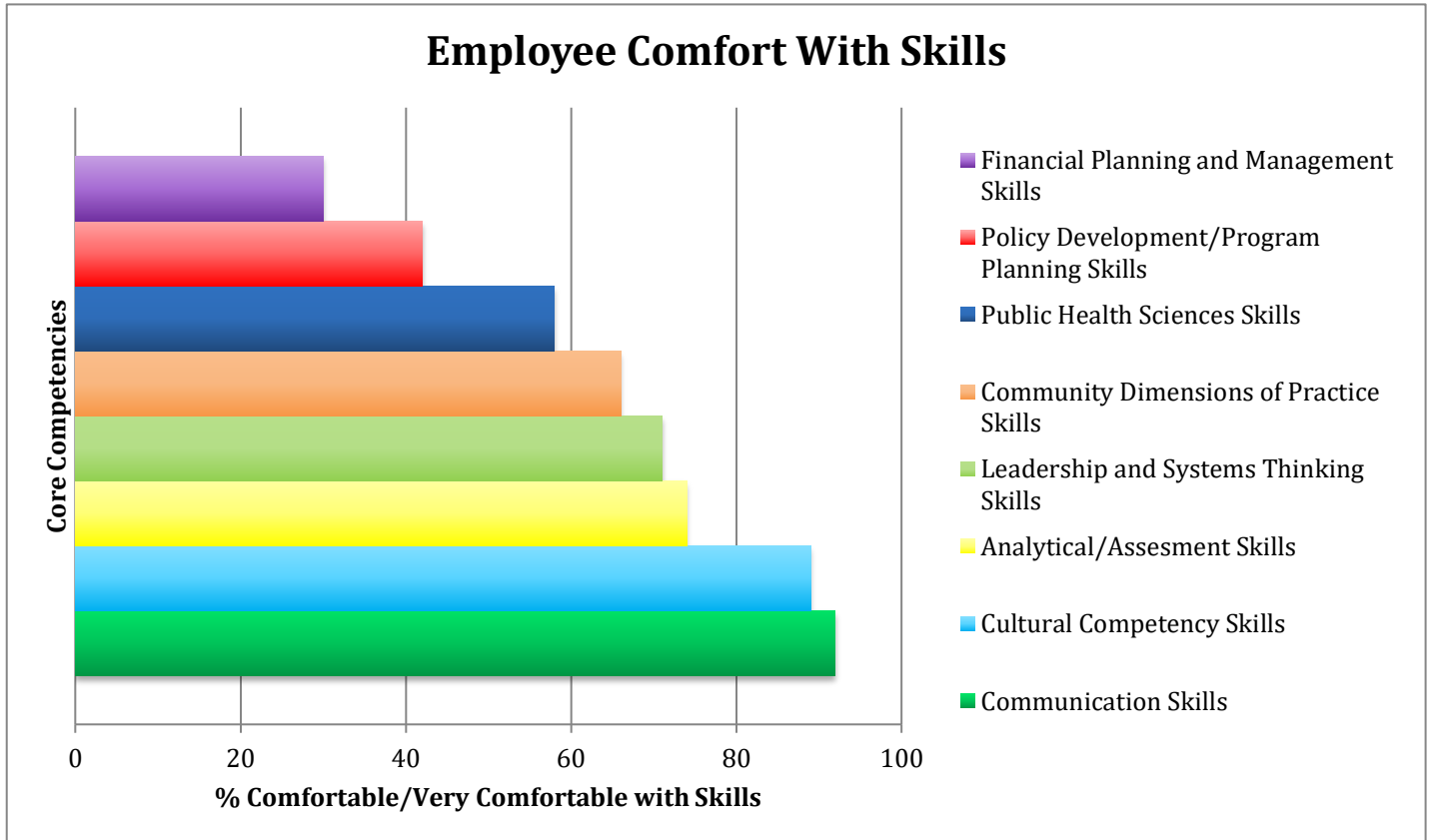
After gauging employee level of comfort with the eight core competencies, the survey asked employees whether they were interested in attending further training in each of the competencies. Employees could indicate interest in as many competencies as they wished. Although twenty percent of employees reported no interest in additional training, eighty percent indicated interest in additional training in one or more areas.

Employees indicated **highest interest in Public Health Sciences, Policy Development, Leadership and Systems Thinking, and Financial Planning and Management**, and least interest in Communication and Analytical/Assessment skills.



Summary and Conclusions

Solano Public Health employees reported a range of comfort and knowledge in the eight core competencies. **80% of employees indicated an interest in attending future trainings on at least one of the 8 Core Competencies.**

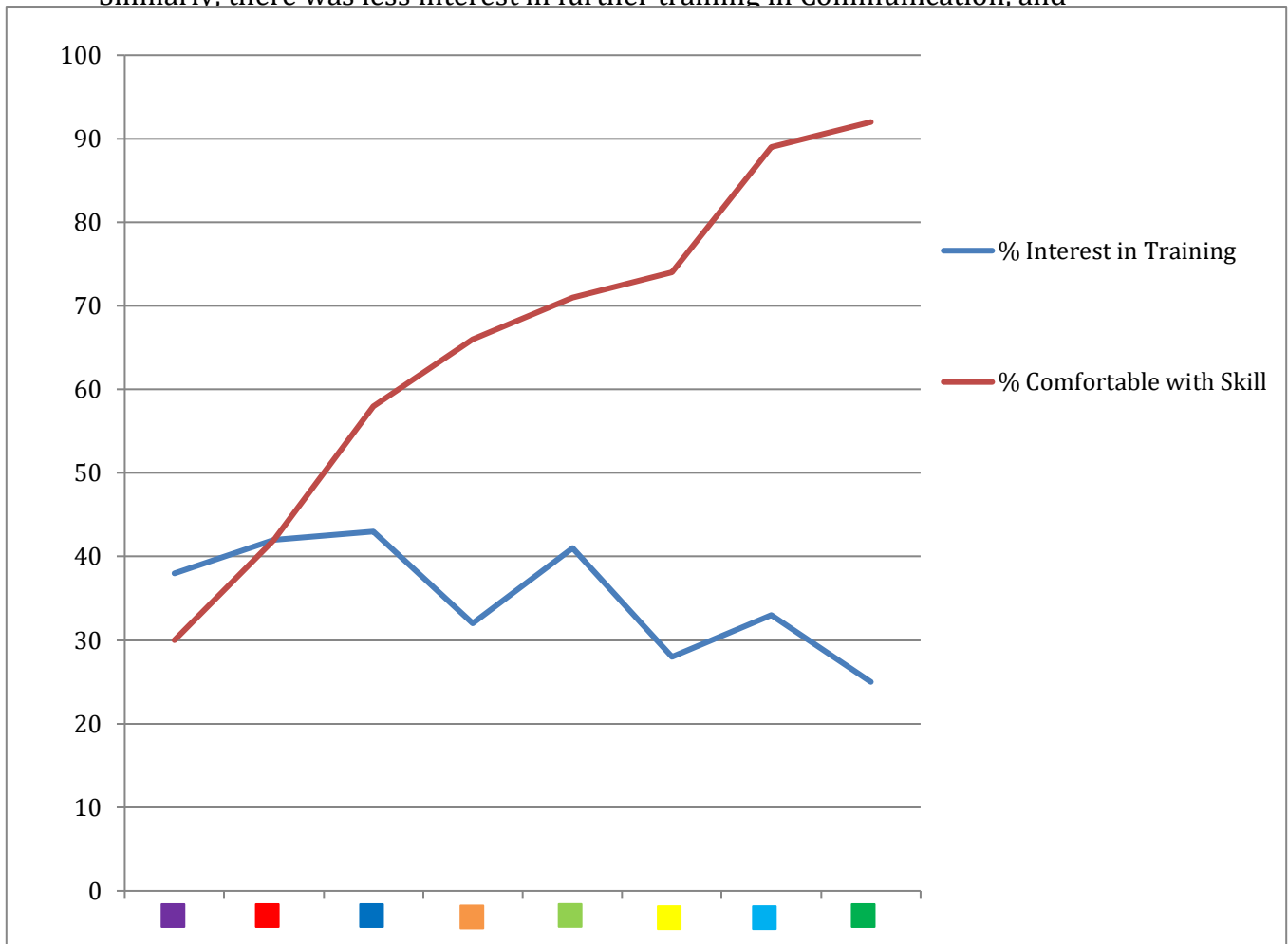


About 90% of employees felt comfortable or very comfortable with Communication and Cultural Competency skills, and over 60% with Community Dimensions of Practice, Leadership and Systems Thinking, and Analytical/Assessment skills. The three core skills with the fewest numbers of employees reporting comfort and knowledge (Financial Planning and Management, Policy Development/Program Planning and Public Health Sciences) were also most frequently described in inapplicable to the respondents' jobs.

To some extent, interest in further training was inversely related to lower degrees of comfort and knowledge in the core competencies: **the three competencies with the lowest reported levels of skill and knowledge** (Financial Planning and Management, Policy Development/Program Planning and Public Health Sciences) **comprised three of the top four areas of interest in training.**



Similarly, there was less interest in further training in Communication, and



- Financial Planning and Management Skills
- Policy Development/Program Planning Skills
- Public Health Science Skills
- Community Dimensions of Practice Skills
- Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills
- Analytical/Assessment Skills
- Cultural Competency Skills
- Communication Skills



Workforce Training Plan

Solano County Mandated Trainings: Supervisors & Managers

Solano County mandates a number of trainings be completed by all supervisors and managers to ensure compliance with State and Federal training expectations. These trainings are hosted by the Solano County Human Resources (HR) department multiple times a year. The HR training calendar is posted to the [Solano County Intranet](#), along with instructions on how to sign up for mandatory trainings.

Due to the mandated nature of these trainings, managers and supervisors must remain up-to-date with the below requirements and be able to demonstrate compliance during each annual evaluation.

Mandated Training	Frequency	Relevant Core Competencies
HIPPA Training	every year	
ADA Training for Supervisors & Managers	once	
Customer Service Foundations Training	once	■
Defensive Driving/Driving Safety Training	every 4 years	
Workplace Diversity Training	once	
Sexual Harassment Prevention Training	every 2 years	
Workplace Violence Prevention Training	every 2 years	
Compliance Training	once	
National Incident Management System Training: ICS-100.b, ICS-200.b, IS-700.a, ICS-701.a, IS-706, IS-800.b	once	
Conducting Effective Employee Evaluations *	once	■
Progressive Discipline Processes *	once	■
Principles of Safety & Risk Management *	once	■
Discrimination & Harassment Prevention Laws *	once	■
Interviewing & Hiring Guidelines *	once	■



* These courses make up five of the nine trainings in Phase I of the HR Leadership Essentials series.

Solano County Mandated Trainings: Line Staff

Solano County mandates a number of trainings be completed by all line staff employees to ensure compliance with State and Federal training expectations. These trainings are hosted by the Solano County Human Resources (HR) department multiple times a year. The HR training calendar is posted to the [Solano County Intranet](#), along with instructions on how to sign up for mandatory trainings.

Due to the mandated nature of these trainings, all line staff must remain up-to-date with the below requirements and be able to demonstrate compliance during each annual evaluation.

Mandated Training	Frequency	Relevant Core Competencies
HIPPA Training	every year	
ADA Training for Line Staff	once	
Customer Service Foundations Training	once	■
Defensive Driving/Driving Safety Training	every 4 years	
Workplace Diversity Training	once	■
National Incident Management System Training: ICS-100.b & IS-700.a	once	
Sexual Harassment Prevention Training	every 2 years	
Workplace Violence Prevention Training	every 2 years	
Compliance Training	once	

New Employee Orientations:

There are several orientations that new County employees must participate in, upon joining the Public Health Division. These orientations are hosted by the County, the Health & Social Services Department, and the Public Health Division.



All Public Health employees must attend the County, H&SS, and Public Health New Employee Orientations prior to their first annual evaluation. Registration for the various orientations happens during the new employee onboarding process.

Orientation	Frequency	Relevant Core Competencies
Solano Human Resources New Employee Orientation	once	
Senior & Executive Manager Orientation	once	
Health & Social Services New Employee Orientation	once	
Public Health New Employee Orientation	once	■

Solano County Optional Trainings

In addition to mandatory trainings, Solano County offers a number of optional trainings for employees who choose to take advantage of the opportunities. Like the mandatory trainings, these optional trainings are hosted by the Solano County Human Resources (HR) department multiple times a year. The HR training calendar is posted to the [Solano County Intranet](#), along with instructions on how to sign up for optional trainings.

“Online” courses are hosted on the Target Solutions website. Instructions for accessing Target Solutions can be found [HERE](#).

Optional Trainings	Relevant Core Competencies
Business Writing Skills	
<u>Computer Training/Microsoft Office 2010 Courses:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Level 1 • Excel Level 1, 2 & 3 • Outlook Level 1 & 2 • PowerPoint Level 1 • Work Level 1 & 2 • SharePoint 	
Continuous Quality Improvement Training	■ ■
<u>County Counsel Workshops:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts & Bolts of RFPs and RFQs • Contracts 101 & 102 	■



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records and Subpoenas Training Working with Boards – Brown Act 	
Effective Coaching for Talent Management	■
Effective Interviewing Techniques for Job Seekers	
Effective Supervisory Skill Building Courses	■
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Health & Safety Trainings:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accident Investigation for Supervisors Aerosol Transmissible Diseases Training (online) Bloodborne Pathogens Safety Training (online) CPR for Healthcare Professionals (Physicians & Nurses) CPR/First Aid Field Safety Guidelines: Dealing with Aggressive Dogs Field Safety Workshop (for non-office staff) General Office Ergonomics (online) Heat Illness Prevention Home Visitation Safety (for H&SS staff only) Industrial Ergonomics (online) Infection Control Training (Medical staff only) WOSH: Taking Action for Safety & Health 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>HR Leadership Essentials: Phase I</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Leave Administration Processes & Procedures Principles of Supervision & Leadership Public Sector Employment Law Conflict Resolution in the Workplace 	■ ■
Making the Transition from Peer to Supervisor	■
Skillsoft Online Training Catalogue (100+ courses)	■ ■ ■
Supervisor University (online webinars through CSAC-EIA; 6 courses for Supervisors)	■
Understanding Multiple Generations in the Workplace	■

Additional Resources:

■ **Leadership**

- County Mentoring Program ([program brochure](#))
- HR Training Resource Library ([library catalog of available materials](#))*

* Some library materials also include Communication and Program Planning resources.



Future Workforce and Training Needs:

As we look towards the future, Solano Public Health continues to adapt and advance to strengthen our workforce. By investing in our employees and continuing to build our training programs, we will retain current employees, prepare the workforce for all-hazard emergencies, and enhance the competencies of staff. Future public health professionals will need to know the evidence-based best practice approaches to improve public health outcomes and be equipped to implement and evaluate these approaches as well as use the evidence base to construct and evaluate new and innovative approaches to a variety of health issues. Below are training needs identified for our staff within Solano County.

Responding to Technology Advancements—

Public health professionals will need to adapt to the ever-changing world of technology as it is being incorporated and will continue to be implemented to meet the demands placed on the public health workforce. Technology supports timely, data-driven decisions, improved business operations, and improved public information and education. A planned approach to ensure that staff can be up to date on their technology skills is essential.

This planned approach includes monitoring the technology landscape and collaborating with our Information Technology (IT) department to ensure confidentiality, privacy, and security are of top priority. Technology landscaping provides an in-depth assessment of the technology area to identify and evaluate the current and future status of technologies as they are developed. Once new technology is onboarded, we ensure our staff is adequately trained to implement the technology. This became pivotal during the COVID-19 pandemic, as we increased remote work and utilized virtual private network (VPN) logins for our staff.

Emergency Preparedness—

Solano Public Health is dedicated to ensuring that our future workforce needs are met in the rapidly changing public health environment. There has been growing concern with public health emergency preparedness as the advent of new **diseases rise**, increases in wildfires, natural disasters, and other unexpected situations occur. We work to incorporate preparedness into our daily work and will continue to do so by offering regular education and trainings to staff.

All Solano Public Health staff are required to complete National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) and Incident Command Systems (ICS) trainings.

Below is a list of the ICS trainings we required upon onboarding staff:

- ICS 100: Introduction to Incident Commands System
- ICS 200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response



- ICS 700: An Introduction to National Incident Management Systems

In addition to the NIMS and ICS trainings, all staff are in-serviced to work in our Emergency Operations Center (EOC). As disaster service workers, staff are informed of the process and cross-trained in roles they could be assigned in the EOC.

Health Equity—

Addressing inequities for all groups, with an intentional focus on those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage, historical injustice, or other forms of oppression such as bias, provides an opportunity for all people and communities to feel empowered to achieve the highest level of health. Achieving health equity is foundation to public health within Solano County. Solano Public Health is committed to developing and promoting trainings to staff and community partners to enhance health equity work and ensuring that public health services and materials are culturally competent, consumer-guided, and community-based. It is important to focus on improving the services delivered by Solano Public Health and its community partners.

Barriers and Solutions:

The majority of identified barriers to the development of an adequate and properly trained workforce rest within our adaptability to changing conditions. Increased workloads, funding challenges, and recruitment difficulties are clear examples of barriers we currently face when trying to meet the educational needs that are required to develop current and future workforce competencies of our employees. As a result, Solano Public Health will foster a culture of professional development that will enable its employees to acquire new skills and build a long-lasting and satisfying career within the organization.

The management team and supervisors will proactively plan for future successions by developing employee competence through progressive and efficient training programs and use best practices to provide performance excellence. It is the responsibility of the employee and their immediate supervisor, working in partnership, to assure personal and professional development goals and opportunities are met. The individual's learning plan will be routinely discussed during performance evaluations and documented on employee evaluation forms. Through partnership with Human Resources and Employee Services, we will seek opportunities to provide our employees with professional development opportunities via the web, video conferencing and on-demand.

Barriers to providing these additional trainings to have a robust Public Health workforce, and strategies for implementation, are provided:



Barriers	Strategies
Trainings not readily accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings will be provided virtually that staff can take at their convenience. Staff can pause trainings and resume at a later time. • Some trainings will be integrated into Bureau specific meetings. • Offer various sessions to accommodate staff.
Time away from work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper management will work with staff to provide adequate time for their staff to take trainings during work hours.
Timely notification of training opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide at least two-week notice for training opportunities.
Availability of remote work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust remote work policy • Adequate technology for remote work



Workforce Training Collaborative Partners

While Solano County offers a wide range of excellent training opportunities, Solano Public Health employees expressed interest in receiving training in some core competencies that may be better addressed by external partners.

The four core competencies in which staff indicated the most interest are:

- Public Health Sciences
- Policy Development/Program Planning
- Leadership & Systems Thinking
- Financial Planning and Management

The Public Health Quality Advisory Committee will explore external partners with the following organizations to utilize existing curriculum and training expertise: UC Davis Extension Program, Touro University, and the County's Managed Health Network.

UC Davis Extension Courses – Center for Human Services

Relevant courses offered by the UC Davis Extension Program include:

■ Leadership & Systems Thinking

- Leadership: [Effective Strategic Planning](#)
- Leadership: [Process Improvement**](#)
- Leadership Development Program: [Determining and Setting Direction**](#)
- Leadership Development Program: [Leadership from a Systems Perspective](#)
- Leadership Development Program: [Personal Influence and Organizational Insight](#)
- Leadership Development Program: [Thinking Skills](#)

■ Policy Development/Program Planning

- Leadership: [Process Improvement**](#)
- Leadership Development Program: [Determining and Setting Direction**](#)

■ Financial Planning and Management

- Fiscal Workshops: [Fiscal Essentials for Public Human Services](#)



**course has components of both Leadership & Systems Thinking and Policy Development/Program Planning

Touro University – Center for Workforce Development & Public Health Practice

Relevant courses offered by Touro University include:

■ **Public Health Sciences**

- [Continuing Education & Training and Open Courses, Certification & Credentialing Opportunities](#)
- Master's in Public Health Courses (?)

Managed Health Network (County Employee Assistance Program Provider)

Relevant courses offered by Solano County's Managed Health Network include:

■ **Leadership**

- Building Effective Teams (Supervisors & Managers)
- Career Planning and Management
- Creating a Positive Work Environment
- Creating a Respectful Work Environment
- Essential Skills for Effective Staff Management (Supervisors & Managers)
- Managing Challenging Workplace Behaviors (Supervisors & Managers)
- Managing Personal and Employees Stress (Supervisors & Managers)
- Resolving Conflict in the Workplace (Line Staff)
- Setting Performance Expectations (Supervisors & Managers)
- Time Management
- Understanding Your Personal Work Style



More Opportunities for Professional Development

Beyond Competency Training: Hiring Information Sessions

2017 Public Health Staff Satisfaction Survey results indicated that many staff are unfamiliar with the processes for promoting or transferring laterally within the organization, and many indicated interest in learning more about professional development and promotional/growth opportunities. Results from the abbreviated 2019 Staff Satisfaction Survey also similarly indicated marked interest in the process for growth within the organization.

To address these interests, in fall of 2018 Public Health Leadership in partnership with Human Resources and the Public Health Quality Advisory Committee instituted a series of “Recruitment, Hiring, and Interview Processes & Tips” trainings to promote understanding of processes and opportunities for organizational growth and development. 3 identical training sessions were offered, and overall were well-attended by over 50 staff and management at all-levels of The Public Health Division. Evaluation results indicated that an overwhelming majority of participants found the training helpful in informing them of “hiring updates, the recruitment process, and interviewing techniques within Solano Public Health.”

Due to the success of the first series, Public Health Leadership and Human Resources plan to continuously offer the training on an annual basis, refining the content based on evaluation results after each series in the spirit of CQI. These sessions may also be expanded beyond The Division to include all of H&SS.

In May 2022, Solano Public Health collaborated with Solano County Health and Social Services Administration – Employee Services to revamp the Solano County Recruitment, Hiring, and Interviewing Processes and Tips training. This training, while crucial to the professional development of our internal staff, was sidelined due to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. As our offices re-open, and we begin offering in-person services, it is critical to have the necessary staffing in place to provide people with the immediate support they need. Providing opportunities for our staff to promote internally is essential to motivate employees, boost retention, and keep productivity high. These individuals are a wealth of knowledge and understand how processes work internally; a skillset that many of us take for granted. Current employees appreciate opportunities for advancement and the potential for growth. Administration and staff want to be prepared and have a plan so that programs can continue to provide services to individuals in our community.



The goal of this revamp is to provide the training online through Adobe Captivate, as well as host in-person sessions quarterly. This training will help backfill open position, as well as allow new line staff to come in that can promote internally down the road.

