

ARTICLE 2—WHY YOU SHOULD PAYING ATTENTION TO THE COMPETENCIES: NOW THE SELF ASSESSMENT

Submitted by Deb Marshall

So, after reading last month's article, you have engaged—you've accessed and thoroughly digested the ARMA Core Competency document, what is the all important next step? It should be no big surprise; you need to self assess using the companion RIM Self-Assessment tool to the Core Competency Document.

Remember, the RIM Self-Assessment is the phase two product of a three phase competency initiative that ARMA International accepted on behalf of its membership ([1] competency document, [2] self-assessment, [3] specialty and international competencies). Also keep in mind that of all the audiences addressed through the competency initiative, you, the ARMA member and RIM practitioner, are the initial and primary beneficiary.

For the RIM practitioner, the self-assessment tool is just as important as the competency document itself. Why? If you pay attention to your areas for growth presented in the gap analysis provided by the assessment results, you have the ability to plan your career and build your skills to advance by level or specialize by domain within RIM. You can improve your competence to become your organization's greatest asset rather than a liability.

By taking the self-assessment for a particular level, you *can* come away with an honest picture of your current skill set in each of the domains (as presented in the Core Competency Document). Of course, the assessment results will only be as accurate as the input you provide. If you say that you can do everything, then your assessment results will reflect that you are competent in that domain or level, whether it is true or not.

The best approach for taking the RIM Self-Assessment: Now that you are on your personal career highway, here are some recommendations for building some speed and taking the self assessment!

- Access the RIM Self-Assessment on the home page of the ARMA website.
 - Your ARMA membership enables you to take the self assessment for free.
 - You may take the assessment as often as you would like for any of the four levels. (As a result of the gap analysis and recommended resources for improvement, you will probably want to take advantage of some of the learning resources provided before re-assessing.)
- First time users:

- Set aside at least one hour so that you can thoughtfully complete the assessment for one level. There is no time limit; this is not a test. Don't be in a hurry, be reflective and focused on you.
- Read all of the instructions so you know how to navigate the tool (save in case of interruptions, re-accessing the tool, end products available, etc.)
- Do your homework:
 - Be prepared for the knowledge and skills you are going to be assessing by having thoroughly reviewed the Core Competency Document.
 - Have a pad and pencil to jot down anything you may want to revisit, etc. You may want to go back and change a response or have a question you want to ask a peer in ARMA, a resource at ARMA headquarters, or someone in your organization.
- Be honest in your assessment:
 - You will get better and more appropriate resources for improving your knowledge and skills out of the gap analysis.
 - No one else will see your assessment or results, so if you really don't want to know, don't waste your time using the tool.
 - Soon the tool will be available to non-ARMA members for a fee which will enable use for one year.
 - Soon the tool will be available to RIM staff of ARMA members at a discount price which will enable use for one year. Your assessment and gap analysis are still confidential, accessible only to you.

Why self assess:

- Assessing is a step beyond using the Core Competency Document to evaluate where you think you are. Documenting makes the perception of things real.
- You can use the results of your assessment to take actions that improve your skills and increase your market value in general and to your employer specifically.
- You may choose at a level of detail you decide, to use the results of your assessment when you discuss your performance and plan for your development with your supervisor.
- You will be better prepared to set short and long term goals for either a RIM specialty or general career plan.

Components of the RIM Self-Assessment

There are three components of the self-assessment tool. First is the self assessment tool itself with a welcome tab that explains the steps for use and a tab for definitions which includes a review of what is meant by levels 1-4, what each of the domains are, etc. Next is a Gap Analysis which provides you with a

report of the assessment that you have done on yourself, outlining your strengths and weaknesses. Associated with the report, is a listing of education resources (actual events or training) and information resources (publications that provide knowledge for further development of the competency domain). And lastly, tools are provided for outlining a professional development plan.

Appearance of the self assessment tool







What you see in the RIM Core Competency Document is what you will see in the self assessment tool. That is why it is beneficial to familiarize yourself with the Core Competency Document prior to taking the self assessment.

Using the first 5 task statements from Level 2, RIM Practices (Domain 2 of 6) of the assessment tool as an example,

1. Evaluate, assess, and recommend appropriate media and practices for RIM program.

      Not Rated

2. Conduct research to provide input into the design of the records and information management systems.

      3 - Moderate Proficiency

3. Assist in the design of records programs by relating business processes and legal and operational issues to records management requirements.

      Not Rated

4. Perform survey of RIM program by business unit function and requirements.

      Not Rated













Show Details

5. Make recommendations on drafting RIM policies and procedures by reviewing and analyzing RIM systems and requirements in line with RIM best practices.

      Not Rated

refer to the Core Competency Document and you can see that the task statements of Level 2, RIM Practices are an exact match to what appears in the Level 2, RIM Practices section of the self assessment tool.

See task statement #2: The area with the stars is where you choose to record your level of competence for the task statement. As a selection aide in the assessment, you can show the legend which describes what your choices are:

Rating	Description
  0 - Not Applicable	This task is not relevant to me.
  1 - Little or No Proficiency	This is a new task or skill for me.
  2 - Low Proficiency	I have some experience with this task but limited knowledge and skills.
  3 - Moderate Proficiency	I can perform this task fairly well based on past experience and can demonstrate several of the knowledge and skills.
  4 - High Proficiency	I can perform this task very well based on past experiences and can demonstrate most of the knowledge and skills.
  5 - Complete Proficiency	I am fully competent to perform this task.

Notice on task statement #4 the field labeled **show details**. By clicking on it, the knowledge and skills from the Core Competency Document for Task Statement 4, Level 2 RIM Practices are displayed.

Knowledge of:

Business functions and organizational records
 RIM industry trends
 Current RIM theory and best practices
 RIM program and related applications

Skills:

Analyze data and translate it into specifications
 Suggest changes to comply with legal/regulatory requirements, business needs, and RIM industry best practice

Through the competency initiative, ARMA International has provided a valuable key for enabling you to take control of your RIM career. Unlock the possibilities of where you choose to go. Only you have the power to design and control your future. Achieve your RIM professional goals and reach your full potential by moving forward with the tools of the ARMA competency initiative.



DO IT!