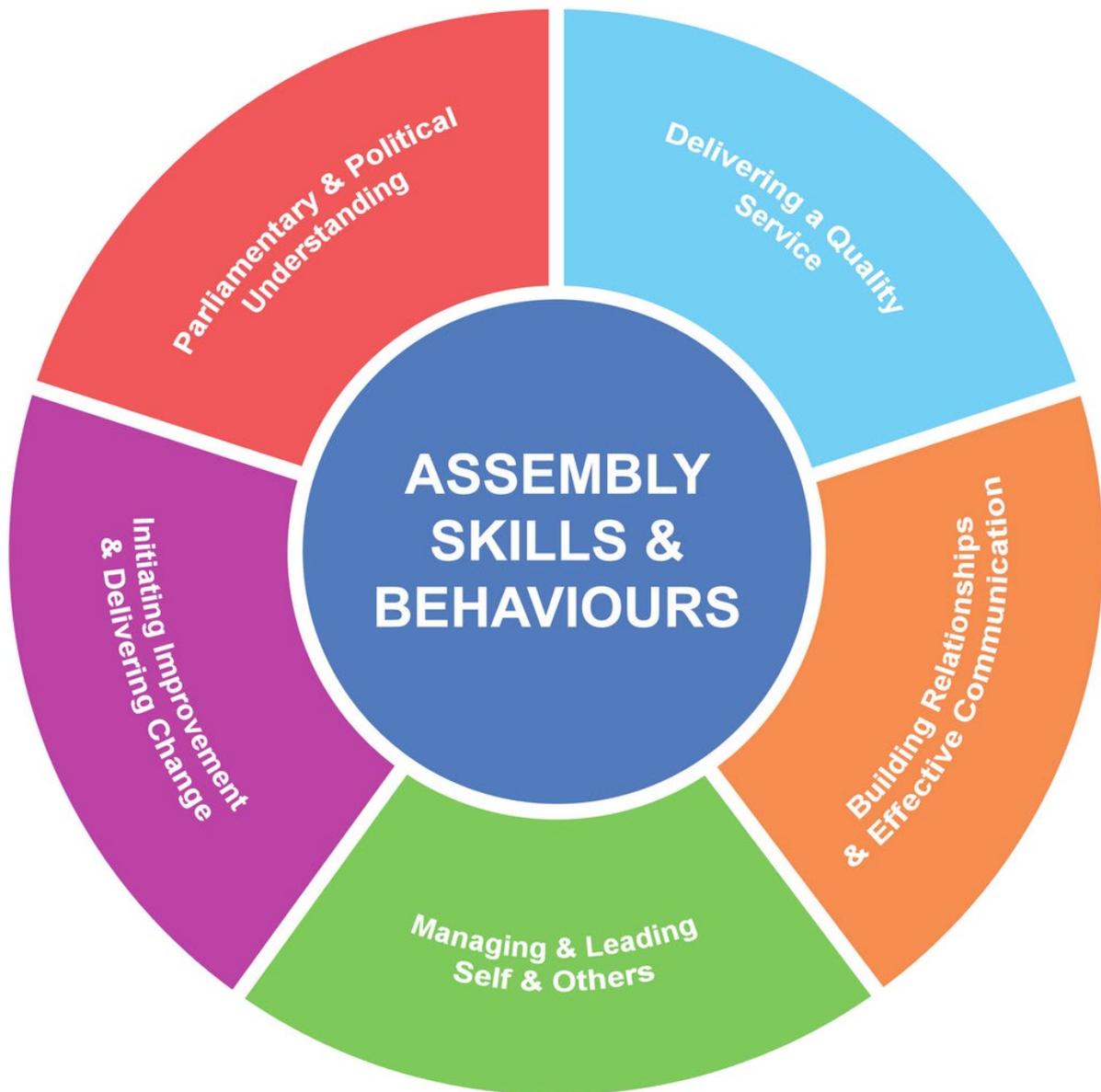




Northern Ireland
Assembly



October 2018

Parliamentary & Political Understanding

... is displaying an appropriate understanding of the wider political environment; what the Assembly does and how our role fits in; and the level of public scrutiny to which the actions and decisions of Assembly staff are exposed. It requires impartiality, integrity and political sensitivity.

Why is it important?

We are a high-profile organisation, balancing statutory responsibilities with operational demands and challenges. We need to be mindful of the unique working environment of a parliament and how our role contributes to the delivery of all Assembly services.

In doing this we all must:

- ✓ behave impartially and treat others with professionalism, efficiency and helpfulness;
- ✓ be sensitive to the political environment within which the Assembly operates;
- ✓ increase our understanding of the Assembly and how our work contributes to the delivery of Assembly services.

And as managers we must also:

- ✓ consider organisational implications when taking decisions and how these could be perceived by Members, the public and the media;
- ✓ help staff to better understand how their role fits within the Assembly;
- ✓ continually update our knowledge of the political context within which we work and take steps to identify factors that may have an impact on Assembly services.

We must not:

- X behave in a way which is not politically neutral;
- X fail to display impartiality and integrity in our work;
- X show little understanding of the Assembly's services and how they relate to our roles.

Delivering a Quality Service

...is about providing a high-quality and efficient service to our customers. It is thinking ahead, managing resources effectively and delivering work on time and to a high standard. It is also using professional or technical expertise to enhance service delivery.

Why is it important?

Success is measured by the quality of our service. We will be judged on how we deliver service objectives, taking account of our customer needs and requirements.

In doing this we all must:

- ✓ take individual responsibility for delivering a high-quality and efficient service;
- ✓ make suggestions to use resources more efficiently;
- ✓ seek out opportunities to enhance professional and technical skills and take responsibility for personal development.

And as managers we must also:

- ✓ continuously review the standard of service being delivered by our team and drive improvement, where necessary;
- ✓ take account of the longer term as much as immediate priorities and plan for change;
- ✓ act as coach/mentor to less experienced staff and encourage and help them to develop their expertise to enhance service delivery.

We must not:

- X fail to deliver a service that is within our control or hinder others from delivering their Services;
- X fail to take responsibility for actions that we have taken which have contributed to poor service;
- X use the Assembly's resources wastefully and unnecessarily.

Building Relationships & Effective Communication

...is creating and maintaining positive, professional and respectful internal and external working relationships through effective and appropriate communications.

Why is it important?

Having good working relationships will help create an organisation which is welcoming to all. Presenting information clearly, accurately and constructively will assist us in the delivery of our services to customers.

In doing this we all must:

- ✓ promote a positive and productive working environment;
- ✓ be a team player and proactively seek to support others;
- ✓ be respectful and effective in our communication with others.

And as managers we must also:

- ✓ foster a working environment where our staff feel respected and valued;
- ✓ promote collaborative working within and across the Secretariat and with others outside of the Assembly;
- ✓ communicate openly and inclusively with others particularly in respect of managerial decisions which may not always be welcomed.

We must not:

- X seek to be un-cooperative, negative and undermine others;
- X Fail to share information when appropriate to do so or to consult others at the appropriate time;
- X be disrespectful to other views that are different from our own.

Managing & Leading Self and Others

... is setting high standards for ourselves. It is about guiding, motivating and developing others to achieve high performance. It is about engaging others in delivering a corporate vision of excellence, expertise and innovation in support of the Assembly as a legislature.

Why is it important?

In order to perform at the highest standard and deliver the corporate aims and objectives, we need to manage ourselves and others effectively and take individual responsibility for achieving high performance. To uphold the Commission's Values, it is important to lead and manage staff with professionalism, respect and integrity.

In doing this we all must:

- ✓ take personal responsibility for completing work to a high standard;
- ✓ respect and support the role of the line manager;
- ✓ reflect on our own behaviours and work to ensure they are consistent with Assembly standards.

And as managers we must also:

- ✓ set clear direction and expectations for our staff members;
- ✓ manage performance issues effectively and support staff with their personal development;
- ✓ communicate the corporate aims and objectives clearly, demonstrate our Values and lead from the front to inspire and motivate staff and others.

We must not:

- X accept poor performance levels in self and others;
- X delegate without giving responsibility or authority;
- X set standards that are unclear, unrealistic and are at odds with the corporate vision.

Initiating Improvement & Delivering Change

...is looking for and being open to new and innovative ideas and improvements to the service provided. It is being flexible and adapting positively and professionally to sustain performance when the situation changes, workloads increase or priorities change. It is about forming sound, evidence-based decisions and being accountable for results.

Why is it important?

We operate in a challenging political and economic context that is constantly changing. We must respond to this positively and with resilience to ensure we continue to meet the needs and expectations of our customers. The decisions we take can have far-reaching implications, and we need to be sure they are fair, well founded and will stand up to scrutiny. In doing this, we all must be willing to try new ways of working, including learning new skills.

In doing this we all must:

- ✓ be willing to suggest or try new ways of working, including learning new skills, and to learn from others;
- ✓ respond flexibly to changing circumstances, remaining calm in pressurised and demanding situations;
- ✓ make decisions to progress own work within agreed parameters.

And as managers we must also:

- ✓ drive improvement in the performance of our teams;
- ✓ lead and manage change effectively, taking account of the impact on staff well-being, motivation and workload;
- ✓ consider the risks associated with decisions before taking appropriate action.

We must not:

- X be unwilling to try new ways of working or learning new skills;
- X create an environment that discourages change, constructive challenge or initiative;
- X make decisions without clear rationale and consultation, if appropriate.