

## Complete Turnaround Teacher Competency List and Definitions

These are the competencies—or consistent patterns of thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking—needed for teacher success in turnarounds. They were derived from a combination of research on successful teachers in U.S. high-poverty schools, studies of successful teachers in the U.K., and cross-sector research on successful turnarounds. Some level of many of these competencies would be needed to teach well in any school. But in a turnaround situation, where failure has become an entrenched way of life for students and staff, teachers need stronger and more consistent habits in these critical areas to transform widescale failure to learning success. Validation and refinement of these competencies will be possible as the number of successful school turnarounds grows. These competencies are arranged into four clusters of related capabilities.

Note: The competency language and levels were updated and improved in 2016 and now align with teacher selection materials on [PublicImpact.com](http://PublicImpact.com) and teacher and teacher-leader materials [OpportunityCulture.org](http://OpportunityCulture.org).

**Driving for Results Cluster**— This cluster of competencies is concerned with the turnaround teacher’s strong desire to achieve outstanding student learning results and the task-oriented actions required for success.

- **Achievement:** The drive and actions to set challenging goals and reach a high standard of performance despite barriers.
- **Initiative and Persistence:** The drive and actions to do more than is expected or required in order to accomplish a challenging task.
- **Monitoring and Directiveness:** The ability to set clear expectations and to hold others accountable for performance.
- **Planning Ahead:** A bias toward planning in order to derive future benefits or to avoid problems.

**Influencing for Results Cluster**— This cluster of competencies is concerned with motivating others—students, other school staff, and parents—and influencing their thinking and behavior to obtain student learning results.

- **Impact and Influence:** Acting with the purpose of affecting the perceptions, thinking, and actions of others.
- **Interpersonal Understanding:** Understanding and interpreting others’ concerns, motives, feelings, and behaviors.
- **Teamwork:** The ability and actions needed to work with others to achieve shared goals.

**Problem-Solving Cluster**— This cluster of competencies is concerned with teachers’ thinking to plan, organize, and deliver instruction.

- **Analytical Thinking:** The ability to break things down in a logical way and to recognize cause and effect.
- **Conceptual Thinking:** The ability to see patterns and links among seemingly unrelated things.

**Personal Effectiveness Cluster**— This cluster of competencies is concerned with the teacher’s self-management of emotions and personal beliefs that affect student learning.

- **Belief in Learning Potential:** A belief that all students, regardless of circumstances, can learn at levels higher than their current achievement indicates.
- **Self-Control:** Acting to keep one’s emotions under control, especially when provoked.
- **Self-Confidence:** A personal belief in one’s ability to accomplish tasks and the actions that reflect that belief.
- **Flexibility:** The ability to adapt one’s approach to the requirements of a situation and to change tactics.

## Turnaround Teacher Competencies: Driving for Results Cluster

This cluster of competencies is concerned with a turnaround teacher's strong desire to achieve outstanding student learning results and the task-oriented actions required for success. Major actions include setting high goals for oneself and one's students; making persistent, well-planned efforts to achieve these goals despite barriers and resistance; holding others accountable for doing their part to achieve success; and putting in extra effort to ensure success when others fall short.

### *Why it matters*

Without significant strength in this cluster, a teacher in a turnaround school is unlikely to achieve a sharp increase in student results, since former practices have not worked and must be changed, and multiple, significant barriers must be tackled to ensure student learning.

**Driving for Results Cluster—These enable a relentless focus on learning results.**

- **Achievement:** Achievement is the drive and actions to set high goals and reach a high standard of performance despite barriers. Achievement is often shown by an individual acting alone—the person craves being the best and acts to achieve this. In a leader, by contrast, achievement includes setting high performance goals for the team or organization, prioritizing the group's actions to achieve the highest benefit relative to cost, and working to meet goals directly and through the group.
- **Initiative and Persistence:** Initiative and Persistence include taking personal responsibility and doing more than is required to accomplish a difficult task or reach a challenging goal. It includes both directing action and enlisting the extra help of others, and may include bending the rules, taking personal risks, and acting without authority when needed to meet a goal.
- **Monitoring and Directiveness:** Monitoring and Directiveness is used selectively by the best managers. It includes such behaviors as assertively demanding high performance, issuing specific directives and standards, publicly monitoring work against standards, and exacting consequences for failure to perform. Being able to set clear expectations and hold others accountable for performance is critical.
- **Planning Ahead:** Planning Ahead is a bias toward planning for future benefit or to avoid problems. It includes both anticipating situations and dealing with them in advance. This does not include mere routine or required planning, but is done voluntarily to achieve more success and avoid problems.