

requirements. The job-spanning competencies—team orientation, adaptability, and communication—are general and behavioral. They are necessary because of task interdependence between engine assembly and final assembly jobs and because employees may be shifted between the two jobs in order to cover sudden employee shortages due to unscheduled absences and to maintain smooth production flows. Each job in the business unit thus has four general competency requirements, multiple job-specific competency requirements, and, where appropriate, job-spanning competency requirements.

### **Organization Usage**

Organizations have increasingly developed competency models and have used them as the underpinnings of several HR applications.<sup>29</sup> Research indicates that the experimentation is occurring in organizations of all sizes, but especially in large ones. The three key strategic HR reasons for doing competency modeling are to (1) create awareness and understanding of the need for change in business, (2) enhance the skill levels in the workforce, and (3) improve teamwork and coordination. Most of the emphasis has been on establishing general competencies, as illustrated by the “Great Eight” competencies used in one framework:<sup>30</sup>

- Leading (initiates action, gives direction)
- Supporting (shows respect, puts people first)
- Presenting (communicates and networks effectively)
- Analyzing (thinks clearly, applies expertise)
- Creating (thinks broadly, handles situations creatively)
- Organizing (plans ahead, follows rules)
- Adapting (responds to change, copes with setbacks)
- Performing (focuses on results, shows understanding of organization)

Competency models are being used for many HR applications, especially staffing, career development, performance management, and compensation. Pertaining to staffing, one important application is in HR and staffing planning. Here, workforce requirements are specified in competency terms and compared with current workforce competency levels to identify competency gaps. Such comparisons may be particularly appropriate in replacement and succession planning. Another important staffing application is in external and internal selection, where applicants are assessed not only for job-specific competencies but also for general competencies. For external hiring, competency-based interviews with applicants are conducted to gauge general competencies as a key factor in selection decisions and then in job placement decisions for those hired. For promotion decisions, competency-based interviews are used in conjunction with supervisory assessments of promotability.<sup>31</sup>