

# Customer Service Directors

(and other such similar leadership roles)

## A Behavioural Competency Framework



The Summary Report

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### The Summary Report

Prepared by  
David Physick MBA, MSc  
Glowinkowski International Limited

Reviewed by  
Don Hales  
World of Customer Service and Founder and Chairman of Judges,  
National Customer Service Awards  
and  
Chris Farrance  
Service Quality International Limited  
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## Summary of Findings

### Background

This report represents the outcome from almost 18 months of quantitative and qualitative research, the objective of which was to define the behavioural competencies associated with high performance delivery in the role of Customer Service Director or other such similar senior roles.

### The Glowinkowski Approach

Glowinkowski International Limited has a long and successful track record in preparing competency frameworks for specific organisations and roles. It retains a purity of thinking about competencies in terms of their being entirely behavioural in make-up. All too often, we see “competency” being abused as a concept in order to provide a single, convenient label, which is used to encapsulate many other different faculties and capabilities that individuals bring to their roles. Where such amalgamation occurs and “competency frameworks” are imposed on organisations, in our experience obfuscation ensues because there is no clear means of measuring or assessing a set of “competencies” that sweep up skills, knowledge, experience, personality and values. Behaviours, like distance or volume, are discrete entities that have their specific measurement calibration.

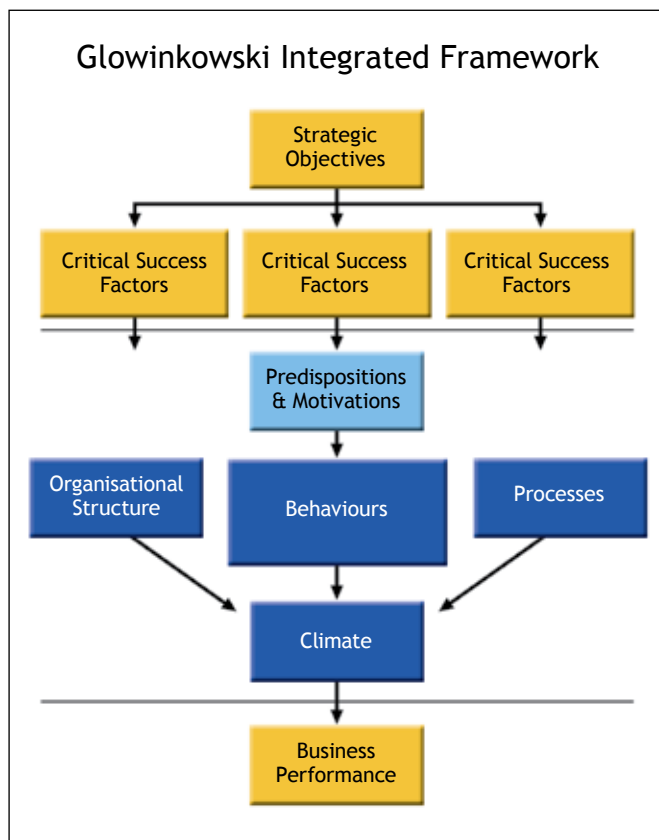
A key reference point is our Integrated Framework. This positions leadership behaviours as a driver of an organisation’s Climate, which is the pre-eminent causal factor of performance. Within the body of the full report that has been produced from this research programme, the concept of Climate is explained quite fully along with the other components of the framework.

In our view, there is a need to distinguish between preferred behaviours (which we call Predispositions) and motivation, which contribute to personality, and actual, delivered behaviour. We make the point that organisations pay for delivered behaviour rather than attributes of personality.

### Our Basic Tenets

In summary we subscribe to a number of basic tenets:

1. When Climate improves, organisational performance improves, including customer service.
2. We define Climate as “how it feels to work here” whereas Culture we define as “how things are done here”. Culture programmes often fail to improve service delivery because they overlook the people dimension of Climate.
3. An organisation’s Climate is significantly affected by the behaviours of its leaders. In turn, the Climate helps shape the behaviours of everyone else in the organisation. If leaders behave in such a way that customer service quality is clearly regarded as important, this will be reflected in an organisation’s Climate and in the manner in which everyone behaves towards their customers. If leaders behave otherwise, service will be regarded as low down the priority list.
4. We use the term competency to describe the underlying behaviour that marks out superior performance. Both relevant technical skills and knowledge and behavioural competency are needed in combination to deliver outstanding performance.
5. A competency is defined as a “characteristic behaviour associated with successful organisational outcomes”.
6. Considering personality, we seek to understand, “Why do people do what they do?” and, “What causes one individual to behave in a certain way and yet different from another in the same situation?”
7. It is vital to recognise and appreciate that organisations pay their people, especially their leaders and managers, for their delivered behaviours and NOT their personality.
8. Actual Behaviours are a function of Personality and Situation. All too often people cope with situations. Their personality doesn’t “work” yet they don’t consciously learn to deliver alternative, effective behaviours.



9. Our research evidences that there is clear blue water in an organisation's service performance if led by a Customer Service Director who has learnt to deliver the distinguishing behavioural competencies defined in our framework.

## Creating the Customer Service Director Framework

The framework identifies two types of behavioural competencies. Firstly, there are eight "threshold competencies", which when delivered effectively will result in good performance outcomes. Secondly, a further set of eight competencies were identified that are "distinguishing behaviours", which when delivered result in superior performance.

We group the competencies into four clusters of behaviours, i.e. those relating to thinking, influencing, achieving and self-managing.

In the full report, we provide a full definition of each competency, including different levels of behavioural contribution together with developmental and coaching tips.

By itself, a competency framework confers no performance advantage on any leader or organisation. To gain that advantage, a number of steps need to be taken.

- Firstly, Customer Service Directors need to be assessed against this framework, which provides benchmarked feedback that helps the essential behavioural development to be identified and mapped out.

- Wider application in organisations is achieved through the Customer Service Director and HR working collaboratively to apply the principles of the framework around the HR operational cycle, i.e. in recruitment, in performance management, succession planning etc.
- It is through this "root and branch" treatment that significant performance advantages can be attained. In our experience, we have seen service quality improvements across the board when working with organisations to implement a behavioural approach to managing their business.
- One example might be enhancing Climate so that the business truly becomes an employer of choice enjoying lower turnover amongst its staff who collaboratively deliver excellent performance. Another example concerns coaching Contact Centre Advisors to improve their engagement skills with customers. As a result, they will listen more carefully to what their customers are saying and be better able to identify their needs.

## The Critical Competencies

The Critical Competencies that have emerged from our research are shown below.

Examples of two of the competency definitions, one threshold and one distinguishing, are provided at the end of this summary report.

### Good Performance (Threshold behaviours)

Thinking	Influencing	Achieving	Self-managing
T1: Customer/ Client Orientation	I1: Engagement style	A1: Getting results	M1: Robustness
T2: Systematic thinking	I2: Customer/client influencing	A2: Investigative	M2: Orientation to excellence

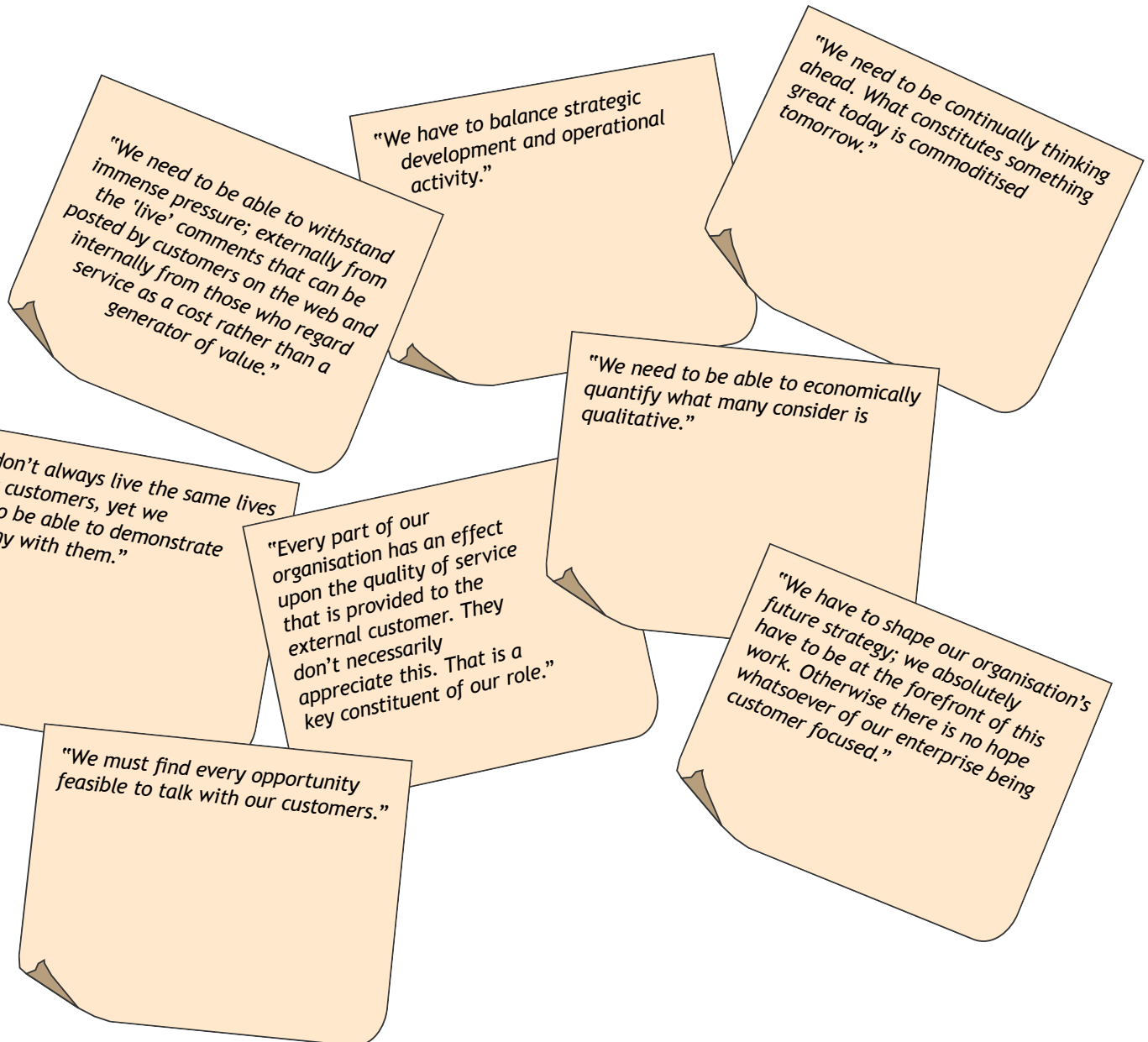
### Outstanding Performance (Distinguishing behaviours)

Thinking	Influencing	Achieving	Self-managing
T3: Organisational awareness	I3: Managing relationships	A3: Developing talent and capability	M3: Perseverance
T4: Strategic thinking	I4: Inspiring change	A4: Innovative	M4: Agility



## Comments from the Focus Groups

Alongside the quantitative research, we held a number of focus groups involving many customer service leaders. A raft of comments was gleaned from these sessions and a small number are provided below. These remarks have provided an immense contribution to the richness and depth of the competency definitions.



## The Way Forward

With an understanding of the Customer Service Director Competency Framework, these findings can be dealt with at both a Personal and Organisational Process Level.



## The Personal Development Approach

### STAGE 1

Complete the Glowinkowski Predisposition (GPI™) and Motivation Indicators (GMI™) questionnaires.

- Receive two to three hour feedback to understand your personality's congruence with or divergence from the required behaviours as defined by the framework.
- Establish behavioural development plan.
- Review in six months

### STAGE 2

Complete Development of Potential (DOP™) to review your strength and frequency of delivering the actual behaviours defined in the framework

- Establish behavioural development plan in order to:
  - Deliver more effectively in current role.
  - Appreciate the behavioural needs in a larger, more complex CSD role.
  - Assess behavioural competence in terms of potential effectiveness in another senior Executive role, e.g. CEO.
- Review in 18 months

### STAGE 3

Apply to wider team/ function so aiding growth of common understanding of behaviours, Predispositions and Motivations and their impact upon performance

- Apply data in performance management, development needs analysis, talent management, succession planning, promotion evaluations.

## The Organisational Process Approach

### PROCESS 1: Recruitment

- Use competency based assessment for recruitment into service function and/or functions providing service, e.g. IT / HR help-desks.
- Become organisationally accredited to use GPI™ and GMI™.
- Train Customer Service Managers and their HR partners to conduct Competency Based Interviews "marked" against the framework.

### PROCESS 2: Performance Management

- Train all leaders within service roles to manage performance using a combination of technical and behavioural evaluations.
- Train all leaders within service roles to deliver behavioural coaching.

### PROCESS 3: Development and succession planning

- Train all leaders within service roles to evaluate the potential of their team members for development and promotion utilising behavioural assessment.
- Use the DOP™ process to assess organisational talent and create a succession planning framework\*.

### PROCESS 4: Development of organisational specific competency framework

- Enables all roles to be defined in both technical and behavioural requirements and for the full HR cycle to be managed against an organisational specific behavioural framework

\* This is the only component of our methodology that we do not train and accredit your organisation's own people to conduct.

Having read this summary of our Report, we hope you found it compelling and thought provoking, and will want to talk to us more fully about how you can use this framework to improve your own performance. We also want to stimulate you to think about how you can apply its philosophy across the service functions in your organisation (remember that almost every area delivers some form of service).

The full copy of the report is available from our office at a cost of £799 (plus VAT). For environmental reasons, we will conserve paper and issue the report in PDF format.

We look forward to hearing from you. Our contact details are provided opposite.

David Physick, Don Hales and Chris Farrance.

## Our contact details are:

**David Physick:** david.physick@glowinkowski.com  
07909 917159

**Don Hales:** don.hales@worldofcustomerservice.com  
07850 874120

**Chris Farrance:** chrisfarrance@btclick.com  
07770 465560

**Gary Winter:** gary.winter@glowinkowski.com  
07737 002714

All can be reached through:  
Glowinkowski International Ltd, 5 St. Peter's Court,  
Middleborough, Colchester, CO1 1WD  
Phone: 01206 710945. Facsimile: 01206 576910  
Web: [www.glowinkowski.com](http://www.glowinkowski.com)





Example of a threshold competency definition

## Good Performance (Threshold Behaviours) - Thinking

Thinking	Influencing	Achieving	Self-managing
T1: Customer/Client Orientation	I1: Engagement style	A1: Getting results	M1: Robustness
T2: Systematic thinking	I2: Customer/client influencing	A2: Investigative	M2: Orientation to excellence

### T1: Customer/Client Orientation

“Understands customers’ and clients’ evolving needs”

#### Essence statement

The Customer Service Director’s thinking is demonstrably shaped by possessing a thorough understanding of their organisation’s customers’ and clients’ current and future needs. This is applied to help shape future organisational strategy. (In the rest of this section, for brevity, reference will be made just to ‘customer’.)

#### Behavioural Strength 1: Understanding how customers think

- Continually and consistently considers what customers think about in terms of service expectations.
- Is “tuned in” to the service needs of customers.
- Appreciates how customers prefer to engage with their organisation (in light of its offering and sector).
- Studies how societal factors, e.g. race, gender, age, affluence, etc. affects their customers’ service needs.
- Considers how customers rate the ease or difficulty of dealing with their organisation.
- Gets to know many customers to understand more intimately their service needs.
- Considers as wide a range of sources of information about their customers as possible to deepen and broaden the understanding of their service requirements.

#### Developmental hints and tips

- Develop a fact-base of customer service needs and expectations.
- Talk with customers and staff who directly serve customers.
- Consider what is happening in the wider world and how this affects customers’ service expectations.
- Challenge yourself to think, “How will the customer regard this?”

#### Coaching questions

- Who are your organisation’s customers and what do they expect?
- What do I need to do to improve the service they receive?
- What happens if they don’t get what they expect?
- What do I do to increase my colleagues’ understanding of the customer’s service needs?

#### Behavioural Strength 2: Practising empathy

- Puts themselves into the shoes of the customer.
- Considers why the customer or client deals with their organisation and what this means for the service they expect to receive.
- Seeks to understand the importance that customers attach to their relationship with their organisation and how crucial service is to that relationship.
- Seeks to understand the enjoyment that customers expect when being served by their organisation.



**Behavioural Strength 2: Practising empathy (cont'd)**

- Considers what customers want to happen when things go wrong.
- Tries to understand what the customer does not want.
- Appreciates how customers' service attitudes may differ across 24 hour, 7 day-a-week, 365 day-a-year service delivery.

**Developmental hints and tips**

- Find ways of monitoring customers being served by your organisation and others and assess how well you compare.
- Use meetings to get people talking about their good and bad experiences as customers.
- Build and use feedback loops from customers.
- Find out if there are ways you don't serve customers, or instances where you don't serve them well and ask why?

**Coaching questions**

- How do I put myself in the shoes of my customers?
- How often do I see things from the customer's point of view or that of someone in my organisation but who is removed from the customer interface?
- How do I demonstrate that my organisation can cost effectively serve the customer how they want?
- How clearly do I understand how the customer wants to be served and why?

**Behavioural Strength 3: Generating creative solutions to meet customers' evolving needs**

- Creates an environment in which innovative, efficient and effective ways to meet customers' service requirements are generated by colleagues and other organisational stakeholders.
- Stimulates methods of thinking to derive novel solutions to customers' service problems.
- Actively considers how every part of the organisation and its supply chain affects customer service.
- Understands deeply the economics of serving their customers.
- Proactively thinks about creative ways to prevent service failures.
- Applies creative thinking to deliver service solutions over and above customers' expectations.
- Thinks about how customers' existing service expectations may decline over time and the consequences for their organisation.
- Thinks forward about the nature of future potential customer demand and associated service needs.

**Developmental hints and tips**

- Is my organisation still serving the customer the same as it did last year (or more long ago)? Is this still appropriate and relevant?
- Who do I need to work with to design and build great service offerings for our customers?
- How do I demonstrate that customer service is a tangible driver of our organisation's economic performance?
- How do I show that improving service, both internally and externally, has economic benefit?

**Coaching questions**

- What service innovations have I led recently?
- What do I do that demonstrates I am palpably thinking about our organisation's customer needs?
- What are some of the issues that I need to anticipate for my customer?
- How do I think about the preventative actions that are needed to avoid repeat instances of service failure?

**However, Customer / Client orientation is not about:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Being unaware of what drives changes in customer service expectations.</li> <li>■ Failing to understand the customers' evolving service needs.</li> <li>■ Not working with the total organisation to improve service quality.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Not considering where the client is coming from.</li> <li>■ Being closed minded to external factors that affect service.</li> <li>■ Not considering the economics of service.</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

Example of a distinguishing competency definition

Outstanding Performance (Distinguishing Behaviours) - Influencing

Thinking	Influencing	Achieving	Self-managing
T3: Organisational awareness	I3: Managing relationships	A3: Developing talent and capability	M3: Perseverance
T4: Strategic thinking	I4: Inspiring change	A4: Innovative	M4: Agility

I3: Managing Relationships

“Building sustainable, mutually beneficial relationships”

Essence statement

The CSD proactively recognises the need to identify, forge and sustain an extensive range of relationships both within and outside their organisation for the mutual benefit of their personal performance and progression as well as their respective organisations. The CSD appreciates that there may be no immediate benefit but it will emerge in the longer-term.

Behavioural Strength 1: Engages in relationships

- Understands the importance of building and developing relationships internally and externally.
- Identifies and proactively engages well with those who can help improve the organisation’s customer service.
- Seeks to cultivate strong, long-term relationships that are mutually beneficial.
- Considers the current and long-term needs of all the organisation’s stakeholders, especially the customer, when establishing and nurturing relationships.
- Respects others’ cultures.
- Seeks to give as much as they take from the relationship.
- Understands the connection between their relationship building and business performance.

Developmental hints and tips

- Build a stakeholder map, use an internet professional networking group; join your industry’s networking body.
- Define the mutual benefits you expect to gain from your relationships.
- Record what you give into relationships and what you have gained; is there equilibrium?
- Demonstrate the value produced from each of your relationships?

Coaching questions

- Can you explain why it is important to forge and maintain relationships and why a particular relationship is important to your organisation’s service delivery?
- Who do you know, how well, for how long, what do they contribute to your organisation’s service delivery?
- What do you understand about equality and diversity? How does this affect how you manage relationships?
- What value have you brought to your organisation from your relationships?

Behavioural Strength 2: Establishes their network

- Networks in a targeted and proactive manner.
- Understands and prioritises the value and relative worth of relationships to both the organisation’s and their personal development needs.
- Invests time networking according to prioritised value.
- Identifies and develops new relationships that reflect emerging opportunities to enhance their own and their organisation’s service reputation.

**Behavioural Strength 2: Establishes their network (cont'd)**

- Actively seeks to develop close relationships across their organisation with a view to improving service.
- Understands the value of cross-functional teamwork to improving service delivery.
- Thinks about the extent of their circle of influence and its impact on improving service delivery.

**Developmental hints and tips**

- Consider who you know in your organisation. What impact does this relationship have on improving customer service? How long does it take you to meet a new colleague?
- Set out a contact plan and what you want to realise from such liaisons.
- Define what you want to get from different relationships; what will the other person want?
- Define your circle of influence; where does it fall short, where does it over-reach?

**Coaching questions**

- How dynamic is your network? Who was last to join and why?
- What are the latest dynamics and how do they affect your network?
- Who do you next want to network with and why?
- What is the biggest impact your network has had on your organisation's service quality?

**Behavioural Strength 3: Strategically manages their relationship network**

- Participates in others' networks, promotes network opportunities for others and brings different groups together to build value for their organisation.
- Leverages coincidental encounters to expand and promote their network, especially in terms of gaining exposure at a senior level.
- Concurrently expands their network and effectively maintains their existing strategically important relationships.
- Attentively manages the changing needs of different customer segments, ensuring these relationships generate extra value for the organisation.
- Draws on strategically important relationships to optimise business development opportunities that will enhance service.
- Uses networks to influence organisational change, especially in respect of service improvements.
- Seeks to evolve open, honest, authentic and candid "strategic partnerships" within their network.
- Encourages others to network for organisational benefit, personal growth and development.

**Developmental hints and tips**

- Demonstrate how someone you know has introduced you to someone else, which has been of material benefit to your organisation.
- Define your customers' emerging service requirements; how does your network help you meet these?
- Set yourself a goal to introduce new service initiatives as a result of your networking.
- Support your team and peers to network.

**Coaching questions**

- Explain how you network with others to reach others.
- Who has been in your network longest and what has this relationship produced for your organisation?
- Give an example of being candid in your networking.
- Who have you helped to network and what has been the result?

**However, Relationship Building is not about:**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Being insulated from the rest of the organisation or outside world.</li> <li>■ Not involving and collaborating with others.</li> <li>■ Taking inappropriate advantage of relationships.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Being culturally insensitive.</li> <li>■ Courting relationships with anyone without due reason.</li> <li>■ Stepping too far outside the circle of influence.</li> </ul> |
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**Glowinkowski International Limited**

5 St Peter's Court, Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1WD. United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)1206 710945 Fax +44 (0)1206 576910

[www.glowinkowski.com](http://www.glowinkowski.com)