

# JUDGE'S MANAGERIAL COMPETENCES: A CASE STUDY IN A HIGH-PERFORMANCE BRAZILIAN STATE TRIAL COURT

## COMPETÊNCIAS GERENCIAIS DO JUIZ: ESTUDO DE CASO EM UMA UNIDADE JUDICIAL DE ALTO DESEMPENHO

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**ABSTRACT:** This article investigates the managerial competences of state trial court judges most relevant to judicial performance and the interrelationship between these competences in the management practice. The research was carried out from a critical methodological line based on a case study, analysing theories and concepts about managerial competencies. In this regard, we tested and evaluated the judge's managerial competencies at the Brazilian State Trial Court of Espinosa city. This court stood out in performance at the Minas Gerais state judiciary. We interviewed thirteen key actors of that unit, being four judges, the court secretariat manager, five officials, a social worker, a prosecutor, and a lawyer, supported by a semi-structured interview schedule. We analysed the data through content analysis supported by ATLAS.ti and Iramuteq software. Based on these interviewees' perceptions, we identified the outdoing managerial competences for judges and their interaction with court production. The results are discussed, a research agenda, managerial implications and improvements in the Judiciary's management policies are stated.

**Keywords:** Managerial competences. Performance. Judiciary. Management. Leadership.

**RESUMO:** O presente artigo investiga as competências gerenciais dos juízes de primeiro grau mais relevantes para o desempenho judicial e a inter-relação dessas competências na prática de gestão. A pesquisa foi desenvolvida a partir de uma linha metodológica baseada em estudo de caso, analisando teorias e conceitos sobre competências gerenciais. Nesse sentido, são testadas

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e avaliadas as competências gerenciais do juiz na Vara Única da Comarca de Espinosa. Essa unidade judicial se destacou em sua atuação no âmbito do Tribunal de Justiça de Minas Gerais. Foram entrevistados treze atores-chave dessa unidade, sendo quatro juízes, o gerente da secretaria do tribunal, cinco funcionários, uma assistente social, um promotor e um advogado, com apoio de um roteiro semiestruturado de entrevistas. Os dados foram analisados por meio de análise de conteúdo apoiada nos softwares ATLAS.ti e Iramuteq. Com base nas percepções desses entrevistados, foi possível identificar as competências gerenciais do juiz e a sua inter-relação com o desempenho judicial. Os resultados são discutidos e são apresentadas uma agenda de pesquisa, implicações gerenciais e sugestões de melhorias em políticas de gestão do Judiciário.

**Palavras-chave:** Competências gerenciais. Desempenho. Judiciário. Gestão. Liderança.

## 1 Introduction

The Brazilian Judiciary has not well assimilated the concept of “crisis” and attributes the efficiency problems more to the lack of material resources and issues related to legislation than to deficiencies (SADEK, 2010, p. 19). The growing movement of ranking state trial court through productivity indexes exposes the need for the Judiciary to adhere to a broader movement of accountability to society, allowing greater knowledge about what Judiciary branch does and how it does (GOMES; GUIMARÃES, 2013, p. 380). Despite criticism of the restricted focus to quantitative efficiency metrics (OLIVEIRA; CUNHA, 2020, p. 18), the creation of the Justice in Numbers seal in 2013<sup>4</sup> brought to the Brazilian Judiciary the maxim already known in the administration: “what is not assessed is not managed” (DEMING, 1992).

Judiciary performance evaluation involves multidimensional issues, which makes the commonly researched explanatory variables, such as increased human resources, to reach only a part of the phenomenon (SATIRO; SOUSA, 2021, p. 3). Judges, as the main courts’ managers, define the quantity, quality, and pace of judicial production. As Gomes and Guimarães (2013, p. 5) point out, the essence of judicial performance lies in the activities of judges. However, there is a gap regarding to judges’ managerial competences that need to be improved the most aiming to push courts productivity and the quality of the jurisdictional provision.

This article investigates the managerial competences of first-degree court judges most relevant to judicial performance and the interrelationship between these competences in the management practice. The research analyses theories about competences in the practice of forensic. A case study was carried out in a state trial court that stood out in performance in state

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<sup>4</sup> Named CNJ Quality Award in 2019, replacing the Justice in Numbers seal (in <https://www.cnj.jus.br/pesquisas-judiciarias/premio-cnj-de-qualidade/>).

justice of Minas Gerais the Espinosa city court. The competence model applied to Minas Gerais state judiciary officials was adopted by analogy to identify managerial competences of judges.

Next, the methodology is defined, explaining how and why we choose the state trial court, the interviewees, and how we carried them out until saturation. The content of these interviews was analysed, seeking to group and categorize them according to the eight competences of that model. It was also possible to identify other factors associated to the performance of the court studied. Detaching the most recurrent aspects in the interviews enabled diagnosing the relevant competencies for achieving the court results. Finally, we considered how the interrelationship between these competencies occurs in practice, which was fundamental for the state trial court's performance.

## **2 Mapping and applying a competency model to the managing judge**

The Minas Gerais State Judiciary Competency Management model adopted the competence integrative school concept, as suggested by Dutra, Fisher, and Eboli (2001), which conceptualizes competence as how a person mobilizes his knowledge and skills to add value to the organization in which he operates.

The Brazilian National Council of Justice (CNJ) stated, by Resolution 240/2016, the National Policy for the Judiciary People Management, guided by the continuous improvement of working conditions since the ergonomic conception of spaces, instruments, and work processes, covering the return of the officials' experience, judges, and others involved.

This policy relates to guidelines adopted by the courts, such as performance evaluation, turn mainly to the officials. Guidance excludes the assessment of the managerial competencies of judges, despite the growing fact that these professionals should assume the role of manager. The growth and relevance of management in the judge's routine have caused conflicts and ambiguities in their performance. This type of conflict commonly occurs because judges, when performing their function in the trial court, accumulate judicial and administrative activities, as well as need to accommodate demands and expectations of the parties that are generally contrary and conflicting (GUIMARAES; GOMES, GOHETS BELT; OLIVEIRA; PIAZENTIN, 2017, p. 928).

As there is no assessment of the managerial performance of judges, this research used the list of eight managerial competences applied to Minas Gerais state judiciary officials, displayed at Table 1 (TJMG, 2021a) as kicking off the analysis of the judges' managerial competencies. In addition, the study considered that the result achieved by a state trial court is associated to the planning, organization, and control of the work undertaken by the judge. Common sense

attributes the welfare of a trial court to the engagement of leaders. However, it is not clear how this behaviour works.

Table 1: Competencies of Minas Gerais state judiciary officials occupying management positions

<b>Competence</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
<b>Innovative Action</b>	<i>It contributes with suggestions and practical actions for the continuous improvement of the services provided.</i>
	<i>It facilitates the implementation of innovative projects and initiatives for work</i>
<b>Technical Managerial Competence</b>	<i>It applies specific technical knowledge in work in which it operates.</i>
	<i>It seeks to update the knowledge and information necessary to work through professional and personal development.</i>
<b>Communication and Institutional Integration</b>	<i>It acts collaboratively to promote the integration of its area with related areas.</i>
	<i>It communicates effectively to promote institutional integration.</i>
<b>Information Management</b>	<i>It shares knowledge and information regarding your working area.</i>
	<i>It keeps up-to-date information regarding the working process in your area.</i>
<b>People Management and Team Leadership</b>	<i>It monitors, evaluates performance, and promotes the development of your team members.</i>
	<i>It manages conflict between team members and with the institution's internal and external audiences.</i>
	<i>Share with your team the institutional objectives, goals, priorities, and values.</i>
	<i>Distributes activities and guides the team according to capacity, skill and experience of your team members.</i>
<b>Management of the Judicial Work Process</b>	<i>Manages the work process with a focus on the Institutional objective, considering the quality and deadlines set.</i>
	<i>Promotes effective service to internal and external audiences, with security of information provided, prompt response and cordiality.</i>
<b>Managerial Outcomes Orientation</b>	<i>Monitors the execution of the work and makes decisions directed to the results defined by your area.</i>
	<i>It carries out professional activities with a focus on achieving the objectives and area/institution goals</i>
<b>Management Systemic Vision</b>	<i>It directs performance considering the internal and external contexts and the impacts on its working field and the court.</i>
	<i>It promotes the systemic understanding of the institution, favouring the alignment of your team with institutional objectives.</i>

Source: Available in: <https://rede.tjmg.jus.br/rede-tjmg/?accessError=2>. Accessed: Jan. 9, 2021.

Innovative action competence implies "doing things differently" and "doing better" (BAXTER et al., 2011, p. 14). The incremental innovation seems to be better welcomed by the formal and hierarchical environment found on the Judiciary instead of radical or disruptive innovation. In a state-of-the-art review on judicial innovation and performance, Sousa & Guimarães (2014, p. 326) identified 21 empirical articles, being three in the organizational

dimension, 12 in the political-legal dimension, and six in the technological aspect; all characterized as incremental innovation.

Technical managerial competence is a kind of meta-competence that includes a set of other competencies. In the specific case, the managerial competence would be the set of the eight competencies described in the performance evaluation of Minas Gerais state judiciary officials. The manager is the one who achieves objectives by the intermediation of other people, performing, in an appropriate way, the team coordination in the typical activities of the administrative cycle (planning, organization, coordination/monitoring, and control). Competent public managers are "creators of professional sense" who know how to perceive political cues, stimuli, and triggers and relate them to new or existing issues (HORTON, 2000, pp. 313/314).

In turn, in an organization, communication has five essential functions: management, feedback, emotional sharing, persuasion, and exchange of information. In other words, to perform well, managers need to have some control over their team members, give feedback, encourage people to engage, allow emotional sharing, monitor attempts at persuasion, and promote the exchange of information (ROBBINS, 2020, pp. 395/396).

Information management, also known as knowledge management, is the process of applying a systematic approach to the collection, structuring, management, and dissemination of knowledge throughout the organization, to work faster, use best practices, and record lessons learned (DALKYR; LIEBOWITZ, 2011, p. 3). Best knowledge management allows workers to produce more and faster, maintaining continuity of work, regardless of the mobility of human resources, that workers act collaboratively, enabling a harmonic decision-making process and collective learning (HADDAD; PEDROSA, 2019, p. 217).

People Management and Team Leadership is a competence that includes the set of policies and practices that allow the reconciliation between the expectations of the organization and the people who work in it so that both can carry them out in the long term, as Dutra points out (2008, p. 17). For the author, the policies are the guidelines and principles that guide the organizations' behaviour. Practices are procedures, methods, and techniques used to implement decisions (TRENTIN, 2021, p. 85).

Management of the Judicial Work Process is related to efficiency, seen as the ability of a judicial system to prosecute cases without excessive delays. Inefficiency refers to a situation in which there is the presence of "uncontrolled variations" in delays, those that arise from systemic distortions that are not inherent to the process itself and that can be identified and eliminated but are not (PRILLAMAN, 2000, p. 18). Combining the efficiency and effectiveness of judicial work processes means performing the work with the minor use of resources and achieving

results that meet the demands of users. In practical terms, the appropriate combination of effectiveness and efficiency determines the quality of the process (MACIEIRA; MARANHÃO, 2010, p. 34).

Managerial Outcomes Orientation is a participatory process that involves discussing objectives by the team, making everyone committed (AMAH et al., 2013, pp. 47/48). According to this author (p. 57), strict and specific goals are feasible motivating forces leading to high organizational performance under appropriate conditions. The Management Systemic Vision is concerned with understanding the complex network of interactions between officials and identifying the leverage points to solve the organization's problems (VEMURI; BELLINGER, 2017, p. 2).

### **3 Methodology**

The research was carried out through a case study based on qualitative data and real events analysed in a judicial court. The choice of this methodology has been since the case study allows for empirical testing and validation of data, which arise from the close connection with empirical evidence, as Eisenhardt (1989, pp. 548/549) points out. In addition, this methodology is also suitable for generating new research proposals, in which the present investigation goes, and for testing elements of theories (YIN, 2009). Thus, the case study is relevant so that the managerial competences described above could be investigated and assessed in a real context.

To proceed with the cut off for this case study, we initially selected the single court that have completed the Strategic Planning Deployment Program (PDP) of the Minas Gerais state judiciary. These courts have already adopted a competence management model applied only to the officials. The choice of single court was since they share the following characteristics: broad jurisdiction, generally occupied by judges in lifetime training and located in smaller municipalities concerning the other judicial districts of the state. Usually, judges start the career in municipal districts. They have a broad judicial competence.

We ranked the single courts about the Judgment Index. We obtained this indicator by dividing the number of cases judged/sentenced/year by the total cases distributed in the same year. If the rate is less than 1, the number of cases tried was less than the number of distributed ones. This indicator was chosen instead of the closing rate cases due to the possibility of having courts with leaner cases collections, with no room for a high number of closing cases. The other two indicators measured by the PDP are reduced installed cases and backlog. We did not consider these indicators, as we chose to measure the judge's managerial competences, and other factors that would influence the results of these metrics, such as the distribution of cases

and stakeholders' actions.

The top of the ranking is the single Tombos Court, with a judgment rate of 212.5% and a write-off rate of 370.66%, a reduction in paralyzed cases of - 67.73%, and a reduction in the cases collection of -47.16%. Despite all strategies that resulted in this performance, there is a peculiar fact in this region: the number of repetitive demands due to constant energy outages. This region is situated in the end of the line of the Minas Gerais Energy Company (CEMIG). For this reason, we excluded this court in the ranking, reaching second place, Espinosa. It is hard to attract judges to work in this trial court, located in the northern state region, about 900 km from Belo Horizonte, the state capital city. Most of its economy bases on public administration, occupying the 219th position in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) listing in 2010-2018 among the 853 Minas Gerais municipalities.

The district is part of the list of 126 state trial court that completed, until March 8, 2021, the PDP implemented by the Internal Affairs General of the Minas Gerais state judiciary<sup>5</sup>. The PDP is rendering of the PDCA methodology (Plan, Do, Check, Act), with the implementation of the following steps to be developed by the court and presented to the Justice Internal Affairs: 1st) Diagnosis of Trial Court; 2nd) Trial Court Strategy Plan; 3rd) Management Action Plan; 4th) Permanent follow-up.

From July 1, 2018, to July 1, 2019, Espinosa Court presented a judgment rate of 116%, 29% dropping rate, reduction in paralyzed processes of 93%, and a shorten cases collection of 11.51%. To identify what led this court to achieve the indicators, we studied the eight management competencies (CNJ, 2017, p. 25) described in the performance evaluation system applied to secretarial managers and other court management positions (TJMG, 2021a), stated above.

We based this study on video-conference interviews with key actors in the justice system who could provide information about the performance observed in the Espinosa Court in the period indicated above. The inquiries occurred between April 5 and 16, 2021, including a consent form recorded in the Google Meet platform. We selected people who worked in Espinosa during this period and experienced an increase in the judgment rate by 116%. Thus, the judge responsible for the court from 2018 to 2019, the court secretariat manager, five officials, a social worker, a prosecutor, and a lawyer. Next, we interviewed the current judge, the judge who accompanied the lifetime training of the magistrate responsible for the 116%

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<sup>5</sup> According to information provided by the Planning and Management Support Center of the First Instance (NUPLAN/CGJ/TJMG), in <https://rede.tjmg.jus.br/redetjmg/institucional/corregedoria/> (TRIBUNAL DE JUSTIÇA DE MINAS GERAIS, 2021).

trial rate, and one who worked in the judicial district in 2008; to provide a historical overview of the court. The saturation point was 13 interviews. To protect the interviewees' identity, we omitted their names and identified the interviews with numbers 1 to 13. These inquiries generated a total of five hours and 40 minutes of recording.

We supported the interviews with a semi-structured script with three broad questions: 1) In your opinion, what generated the results of the Single Espinosa Court in the period from July 1, 2018, to July 1, 2019? 2) In your opinion, among the eight managerial competences of the performance evaluation of the officials, which one had the most impact on the judge's conduct from July 1, 2018, to July 1, 2019? 3) In your opinion, did the context of the district influence the results? In what way? Initially, we asked the interviewees about the relevance of each competence to the judge's performance, which we avoided ruling out a bias that would compromise the research. We considered a favour interview that the interlocutor talks about what is truly important to him, and the researcher obtains detailed answers (POUPART, 2014, p. 225).

The data analysis was undertaken supported by content analysis according to Bardin (2010). Initially, we transcribed the interviews into text, and then we read the transcriptions. In exploring the second phase's material, we administered the corpus coding techniques (transcription of interviews), which involved a thorough examination in defining categories (coding systems) and identifying registration units in the documents. Meaning "unit" to code corresponds to the segment considered the base, aiming at grouping and frequency (VOSGERAU et al., 2016, p. 96). It started from the deductive logic since the categories of analysis were fixed before data collection (NUNES et al., 2017, p. 237), from the model adopted to measure the judge's managerial competences that resulted in the judgment index obtained by the court in the period from July 1, 2018, to July 1, 2019.

Afterwards, manual categorization was performed, generating codes found on the factors stated in the interviews. Eight codes were created based on the competences described in Table 1, namely: innovative action; managerial technical competence; communication and institutional integration; information management; people management and team leadership; judicial work process management; managerial outcomes orientation; and management systemic view. Additionally, two other codes rest on the interviewees' statements: 1) expansion of the staff; and 2) cooperation between judges.

#### **4 Results and discussion**

After analysing the data, we selected and categorized excerpts from the interviews.



Through the ten codes created, we identified the most relevant competences for the performance of the court studied and the interrelationship between these competencies and performance, following described.

#### 4.1 The most relevant managerial competences

Figure 1, produced with ATLAS.ti software, shows the number of absolute occurrences (citations) of the managerial competences indicated in the interviews.

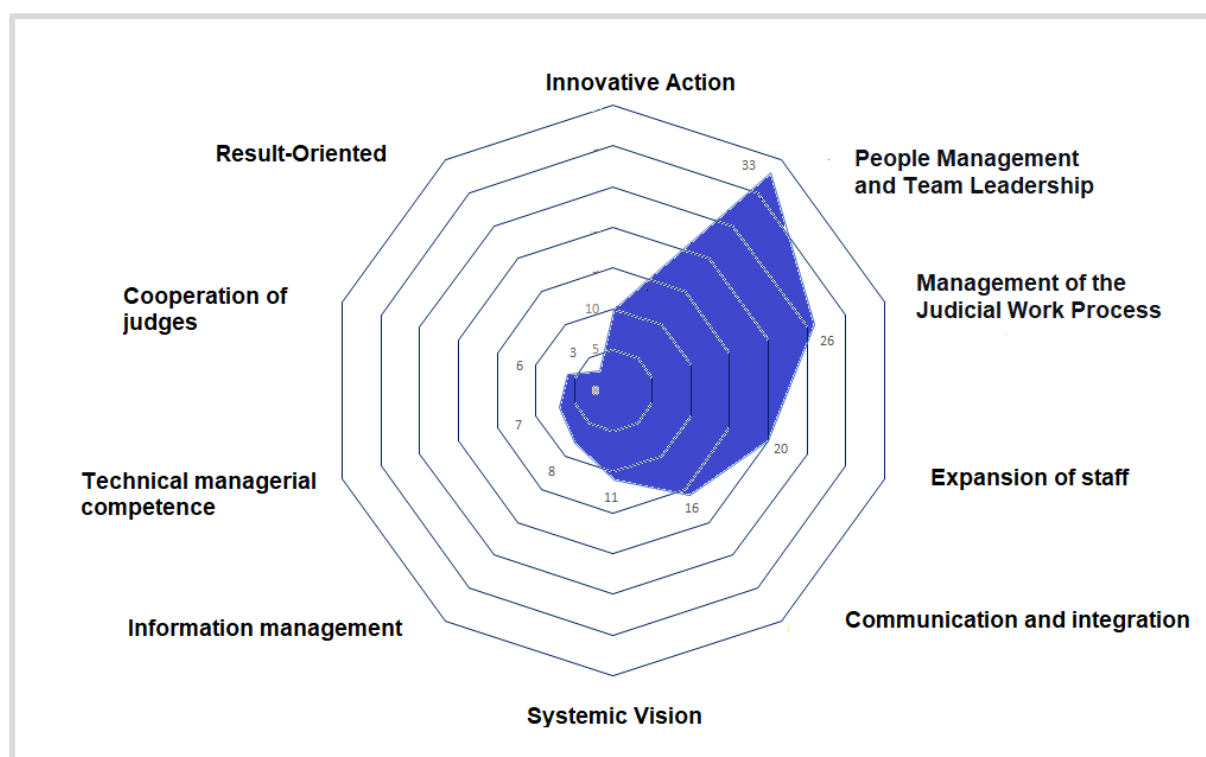


Figure 1: Competences indicated in the interviews.

The judge's competence most highlighted in the interviews was people management and team leadership, mentioned 33 times by nine of the 13 interviewees. It was reported that when the judge arrived in Espinosa, he met with the team and asked for everyone's support. The judge's leadership enhanced the integration and sense of belonging of the civil servants. His performance was noteworthy because he monitored, evaluated the undertaking, and promoted the development of team members, seeking to ensure that everyone worked at a pace that would speed up cases. Although the public servants noted that the work rate had changed completely, they also emphasized that the way the judge worked brought harmony, as he spoke to each team member and sought feedback on the new way of working. Out-of-hours get-togethers, as a

consideration for the achievement of goals, were also mentioned by the interviewees as a relevant factor for people management. It was also reported that the judge always credited the best results to teamwork, when he received praise for the management of the state trial court.

The judge reserved periods of the daily workday to dispatch with the secretariat, which ensures more contact with the team. Encouraging each and closer to the team and among its members was another point emphasized by respondents. We inferred that the judge's role as leader and manager influenced the numbers in the judgment rate. The testimonies below reflect this result:

Now we're working at another rhythm, and he [the judge] walks into the office and checks tasks, and he is someone that calls everyone by name. I believe that the staff worked quietly and competently due to this deference. So, the workers had that pleasure to do, working at his pace, walking there together [...] to give an outstanding result. (Interview 6)

[The judge] he did these regular meetings by placing them [workers] as protagonists also in the state trial court [...]. This question of order, do it, do that, I tried to take some of my manager ideas. We were co-participatory. All the workers brought to the unit like this, as a work. And everyone was charged. (Interview 8)

The behaviour of the leader deserved more emphasis on the task (clarification, planning, monitoring of activities and problem solving); people (support, development, recognition, and empowerment); to change (defense, vision, incentive to innovation, facilitation of collective learning) or even have an external orientation (networking, market monitoring, external representation) (YUKL, 2012, p. 68).

The most relevant competence showed in the studies on leadership focus primarily on the leader, his interactions/relationships with people, and some organizational impacts, but less articulate the four dimensions mentioned above, which would position the leader as the fundamental link in organizational alignment (BIANCHI et al., 2017, p. 50). In addition, the leader can also serve as a filter between the set of people management policies and practices, and the perception of these practices by professionals in an organization (BIANCHI et al., 2017, p. 54). The research results show that the judge was the link between the work someone would perform, the judging unit's officials, the need for change, and the external actors.

Secondly, with 26 citations, the competence Management of the Judicial Work Process stands out, indicated by nine out of 13 interviewees. The investigation showed that at intervals of the hearings, the judge went to the conciliation room to approve the agreements made between the parties, allowing personal subpoena from the approval decision. Interviewee 6 emphasized that the judge gave great importance to reconciliations. It was also mentioned that

when the defendant had more than one criminal case, the case was sent, at the same time, to the public prosecutor and then to the defense lawyer to speed the results. The attitude slowed unnecessary acts and interlocations.

The ability to manage the various judging unit areas, avoiding the so-called "case dead time," besides the dedication to work with the judge and the forensic working time, was also highlighted for the respondents. The judge set quantitative and qualitative goals gradually increased until to zero the stock of approximately 2,000 cases. In this sense, the management maps of SISCOM<sup>6</sup> followed the actions determined by the judge. The need to reconcile people administration with process management was emphasized in the following terms:

[...] one cannot speak in the judicial unit in people management dissociated from process management, because it is our work tool [...], if you do not process command, you will work hard and produce little. (Interview 3)

In third place with 20 quotations, came the factor expansion of the staff. It is an appeal and not necessarily a managerial competence, achieved through the judge's jurisdiction to articulate with external bodies to obtain external cooperation. Through agreements with the City Hall and the City Council of the two municipalities that make up the district, the number of officials increased from two to five. At the same time, the upper administration of the state judiciary provided a technician in the field of law to assist the judge. Thus, the formation of the team influenced the increase in the judgment rate for seven of the interviewees.

Competence Information Management categorized the incentive to the new team members focused on the need for working, as:

[The judge] shared a lot of knowledge of his expertise, with the staff mainly. So he promoted [...] a kind of "classroom" for the intern from time to time, which praises the guys a lot. (Interview 1)

The communication and integration with the team and the stakeholders – mainly public prosecutors and lawyers - and parties positively impacted the trial court. Interview 6 pointed out that the judge went to the secretariat and the Brazilian Bar Association (OAB) room every day. It highlighted that judge was prone to dialogue and had a more open attitude. Check it out:

I think he came fresh, full of things, with good thoughts. He encouraged everyone to look for studies; he was always close to workers in all sectors. Every day he passed by us and that attitude, I think he values us. It is crucial because he was willing to help, he asked about the difficulties: "do you have any difficulties?", "got a problem?" so he always looked at the whole court. (Interview 5)

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<sup>6</sup> Computerization System of District Services (referring to physical processes).

Before starting the work, the judge and his tender colleagues sought to know the community. We categorized this factor in the management systemic vision competence. Contact with the lack of municipalities located in the Northern region of the State of Minas Gerais served as a stimulus to expedite the processes, in addition to encouraging actions to assist families in need:

[The judge] first sought to know the community, the neediness, and everything, which led him to have this place of resolve. Why? He arrived in a county where no one believed, practically, everything of the staff is like this: [...] "I'm not going to go to court because it's going to take so long that I'm going to die and my grandchildren who will get paid." So, there wasn't so much searching for the right, and people disbelief of having a quick result or a result in an average time frame. And then, as he arrived, he verified this anxiety that society has here, and was quickly solving the processes (...), he made a task force every day to solve. (Interview 6)

Four interviewees highlighted that the cooperation of judges influenced the trial rate of 116%, verified in the period from July 1, 2018, to July 1, 2019. It turns out that Espinosa's submission of cases to the Punctuality Project, in which assigned judges rendered sentences from the interior, occurred from July 30, 2019, to October 27, 2019<sup>7</sup>, that is, after the period evaluated in the present article, reason why we cannot consider in the period under analysis.

The innovative action competence was related to a new mode of action inaugurated by the judge on taking up his first judicial district, represented by the new way of working, by the form of interaction with people, and by the search for alternatives, such as the agreements signed to increase the number of interns.

Technical and managerial competence is related to the monitoring of the workflow and focuses on the necessary adjustments. The outcome-oriented competence was seen from the perspective of positive performance influencing the life of society and the quality of life of the team itself, seeking to provide further meaning to the acts carried out.

The judge who worked in Espinosa during the period under analysis pointed out that Edésio Fernandes Judicial School, from the Minas Gerais state judiciary provided all training in judicial management by employing theoretical classes and practical activities, in which it was possible to verify:

We went through many units [...]. I saw what I was learning in theory in the school was already being applied in practice, and it was working out. (...) And I saw how it flowed much more in these managers who had this mentality of planning goals, bringing the team, holding meetings (Interview 8)

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<sup>7</sup> According to information provided by the Project Coordination on April 14, 2021.

## 4.2 The interrelationship of competences and performance

Figure 2 was designed by ATLAS.ti software by the result of the interviews. It shows the network of relationships among the factors that influenced the increase in the degree of judgment in the Espinosa district.

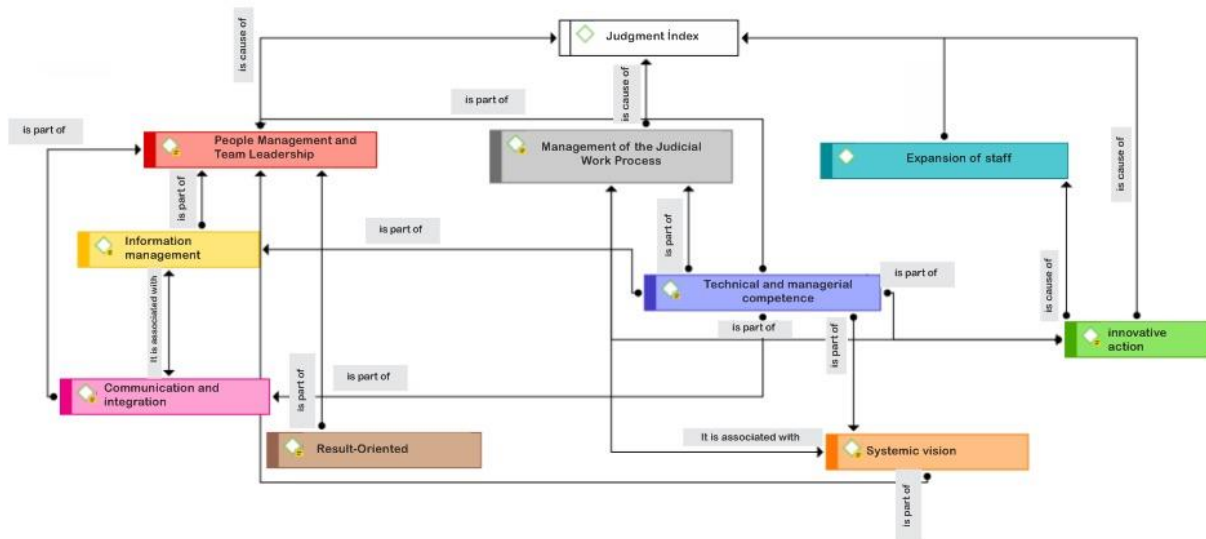


Figure 2: Relationships Network between indicators

This figure shows that the performance, characterized here as the Judgment Index, which increased 116% in the period analysed, is "caused" by the competencies People Management and Leadership, Management of the Judicial Work Process, as well as the resource "Expansion of Staff." In a central position in the diagram, the technical-managerial competence encompasses the other competencies closely related to each other, and the Innovative Action competence.

Information Management, Communication, and Integration are associated competences that integrate People Management and Leadership in the foreground and Outcomes Orientation and Systemic Vision. The latter competence is also associated with Judicial Process Management. In turn, innovative action is part of the judicial work process management and the expansion of the staff, and, in this sense, we said that it also contributed to the increase in the trial rate.

Additionally, we used the software IRAMUTEQ (*Interface de R pour les Analyses Multidimensionnelles de Textes et de Questionnaires*) to extract a linguistic analysis of the





In addition, the judge's leadership, recognized by the interviewees, was pointed out as essential to the performance obtained by the state trial court. Charismatic and people-oriented leaders have a better communication repertoire than task-oriented ones, and the exercise of communication ensures better results (VRIES; BAKKER-PIEPER; OOSTENVELD, 2010, p. 376). The availability for experience (understood as the ability to penetrate the environment), the organic involvement with the team and other actors in the justice system, and the willingness to change (CASTIEL, 1996, p. 227) were also present in the judge's performance, as reported by the interviewees.

## **Conclusions**

We used the competences listed in Table 1, applied to Minas Gerais state judiciary to identify the most critical managerial competencies for the judge. These are the competences: innovative action; managerial technical competence; communication and institutional integration; information management; people management and team leadership; judicial work process management; managerial outcomes orientation; and management systemic view. We interviewed thirteen key actors involved in the study state trial court work, and we analysed the data with the support of content analysis techniques.

People management and team leadership was the competence identified as the most relevant for the role of the judge-manager. It was highlighted that the judge's leadership generated rapport and fostered the sense of belonging of the officials, resulting in a higher work rate, and therefore, high speed in the judicial processes. The judge's performance brought harmony to the team, as he talked to employees, gave feedback about the work, held get-togethers in reward for achieving goals, and credited the trial court's performance to the team's work when there was praise for the trial court's performance.

Management of the Judicial Work Process was the second most relevant competence, according to the interviewees. This competence evolves the judges' role in valuing the conciliation between parties, the speed of the agreement's ratification. Also, judges' dedication to work; reduction of the process "dead time"; and definition of goals to zero the stock of sentences awaiting judgment; various measures adopted to reduce acts unnecessarily, concentrate activities and speed up processes.

Succeeding in descendants of relevance are the following competences and factors: 3rd) expansion of staff; 4th) communication and integration with the team and stakeholders (prosecutors and lawyers); 5th) systemic view; 6th) innovative action, related to a new way of

working inaugurated by the judge; 7th) managerial technical competence, associated with monitoring the workflow and focusing on the necessary adjustments.

The research results allow us to infer that the definition of the judge's managerial competencies, relevant for best judicial performance, can measure the judges' activity. In addition, the research indicates the need to map the judges' competences and focusing on the link that must be established between organizational strategy, management practices, and workers' behaviour. Assessing the judges' managerial skills as a team leader can support this alignment. The management policies of the Minas Gerais state judiciary could, for example, strengthen the training of judges in managerial competences, such as those identified in this research, which could impact the performance of the state trial court.

We suggested for future studies, as a research plan, that the assessment of the judges' managerial competences, identified above and ranked based on a case study, be replicated in other courts using standardized data collection instruments to allow for larger samples. This type of research would allow, in addition to validating the data from this study, identifying other competences relevant to the role of the judge-manager and possible correlations between these competencies and their impacts on the different state trial court' performance.

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